

STREET ROOTS

A ROLEPLAYING GAME OF CYBERPUNK INTRIGUE

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Street Rats was first officially published on December 24, 2015, and this document was created on December 24, 2015. The Major Version that this corresponds to is Alpha 1.0.

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At the beginning of this document, I would like to take the opportunity to thank God, the Great Designer, without whom my works would not exist.

I would also like to thank my family; my proofreaders and playtesters; the programmers and designers behind the excellent LibreOffice suite used to create this book; and the designers of the fonts used in Street Rats: Capture it by Koczman Bálint, Armata by Sorkin Type Co., and Boston Traffic by Vic Fleger.



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GOING SOUTH

"Say, why do they even call us Rats anyway?"

Kyrne was the newest of the group. He'd only started going on runs a few months ago, but he was a master of staying undetected.

"It's because we're the first ones off the sinking ship." Mongrel looked pleased with himself. A fast-food funburger and a soda had restored his usual cheer.

Ghost said nothing. She sat watching the signs pass as they rolled down the highway. Southern. Elliot. Warner. They had arrived.

Locke slowly tilted the steering wheel, gliding off of the highway as if born to drive a car. "It's just a pejorative. It's been in use for centuries. Nobody has any reason to stop using it now."

"Rats are tough. They're everywhere. If you kill one, you'll find two more." Ghost leaned back in her seat as they turned across the overpass. "That's all. We're just a rule of nature."

A hush fell over the group as they passed red and blue lights on the side of the road, but the officer didn't seem to be paying attention to them. A half-crushed sedan had been deposited on the sidewalk a few minutes earlier.

"Think that Vargen will keep his promise?"

Locke sighed. "I've known Vargen for years. I don't know that he's got the antidotes, but he's certainly not going to betray us."

They pulled into the parking lot, and Locke turned the car off in a hurry, betraying his concern. The lights were off in the office. A pull at the handle sent the door springing open, and he waved the others inside.

"Vargen?"

The lights flipped on.

"Locke! My old friend, how are you?"

"Do you have the antidote?"

"Of course, always businesslike. That's what I like about you." He opened his hand to reveal four autoinjectors in his palm.

"Good. We need it now."

The two men approached each other, and Vargen whispered in his compatriot's ear.

"The police are pulling up out front. Go out the back door, take a right, and climb over the fence to the apartment complex. I have a driver waiting."

Locke nodded. "Thank you."

Each of the Rats injected the antidote, and Locke motioned for them to follow him.

"What's up?" Kyrne broke the silence before Locke hushed him.

A flash of light flooded the room in a roar of thunder. Locke and Ghost ran, and Mongrel turned to grab Kyrne, who had fallen. The ringing in their ears subsided just enough for them to hear someone yell "Police!" over a loudspeaker.

Vargen stood in the floodlight, hands visibly empty. The police entered with caution. The Rats would get away to fight another day.

"What happened back there?" Kyrne's voice was too loud, still fighting with the ringing in his ears.

"They must've followed us from Scottsdale. Don't worry about it, Vargen's got us covered."

A black sedan honked twice in the parking lot. Locke motioned his team toward it.

"Locke, why did you come with us tonight?"

He grinned. "I'm old, but I'm not out. I only send you on missions I would accept myself. I knew the risks of a run on Avalon. I want to make sure you know that you can trust me."

Kyrne sat in the sedan in silence. He was a Rat now.

WHAT'S A RAT?

The term "Rat" refers to one of three types of individuals: those who live off the grid but remain in urban society, those who lack a working IBT profile, and hardened criminals who have somehow managed to evade capture by the police.

Rats face prejudice, discrimination, and legal barriers as parts of their daily lives. As a result, they have often formed their own communities, with their own social groups and codes of conduct. Many of these communities of "street rats" are found in massive urban sprawls.

The IBT (Identification and Biometric Tagging) profile system governs almost all aspects of daily lives. It has replaced most government identification systems for all but high-clearance positions, and also is used by advertisers and corporations. There are flaws in the system; it occasionally conflates two individuals, and loopholes in the system make it discard data that matches certain parameters. Those savvy in fooling the system exist in a blank space, trapped between the rapidly approaching twenty-second century and the past. Community and personal relationships are made less common by the near-infinite availability of personal data, and even those who lack an IBT entry find themselves subject to constant surveillance and snooping.

Rats reject this system; they not only avoid selling out, but many choose to disobey the rules that society as a whole has tried to set for them.

THE DECLINE OF CIVILIZATION

The twenty-first century was baptized in bloodshed, started by three decades of war in the Middle East and in Europe and northern Africa. Civil liberties in most nations quickly fell by the wayside; though most democratic societies retained their representative governments, individual rights were sacrificed for the collective. As terrorism became an increasingly common method of resolving international geopolitical and ideological conflicts, surveillance

crept into everyday life at an exponential rate. Combined with the ubiquity of technology and the internet of things, and the advent of nanotechnology, it was only a matter of time before the world came to a halt.

The singularity hit just as the first bombs of World War III fell, with artificial intelligences able to compete with even the brightest baseline human controlling conventional and nuclear weapons as they were deployed on every continent except Antarctica. The flames died out quickly, as formerly independent governments consolidated into the Great Pacts, globe-spanning institutions that allowed political affinities to grow nations no longer limited by geographical borders.

THINGS YOU HAVE WRONG

Street Rats looks at an alternate future through the lens of alternate history. There are a few things that readers need to understand to get a good feeling of the way that the 21st century has been shaped by events.

The Soviet Union only fell in the late middle 21st century, following the repercussions of WWII. Some Warsaw Pact and NATO states had their alliances flipped, and German reunification never occurred; by the time the two states were independent there was no living memory of a unified Germany. The United States was victorious in Vietnam, securing it as a US-aligned Asian partner state. Watergate never happened, and American politics were permanently altered. The Bay of Pigs invasion went off without a hitch, and Cuba was annexed by the United States as the fifty-first state.

In the Middle East, the Islamic movements of the 60's, 70's, and 80's were put down by Western or Soviet influence, and the region served as home to a number of proxy wars, with Israel, Jordan, and Iran being western-aligned, and Syria and Egypt serving as major Warsaw Pact allies. Turkey, Iraq, and Afghanistan were third-world states, though Afghanistan and Iraq served as frequent bases for conflict between American and Soviet interests.

The EU played a more prominent role in European politics, being founded during a late 20th century period of decreased East-West tensions. While the EU would later become limited to just the Western European states that were not part of the Warsaw Pact, it played a role more similar to NATO as a joint-defense treaty. The European states still adopted a more socialist democratic position than America, which wound up being more conservative with a central government heavily in favor of free market capitalism.

In the late 90's, fusion power became available for military and civilian applications. Petrochemical fuels lost most of their value in light of the immense power and safety of fusion, and several oil-dependent states like Venezuela and Saudi Arabia suffered a complete economic collapse. Although petrochemical products are still in use globally, the end of demand for oil-based fuels caused a shift in the balance of world power.

THE STATE OF TECHNOLOGY

THE WAR TO END ALL WAR (AGAIN)

World War III began with a number of whispers, not a violent confrontation. Many of the old nation states began to fracture. The United States, crippled by debt, split into the United American States (including many Western states, but not California, which would not join the UAS until after WW III). This caused tensions, especially as debtors and creditors disputed who owed money and political systems struggled to adjust to the consolidation and separation of states.

In 2048, NATO dissolved under internal pressures, and many of its former members and previously unaffiliated nations joined the Warsaw Pact following Soviet coercion. This included Egypt and Turkey, as well as Greece. In the vacuum, the nascent European Union rose to power as the primary Western military force in Europe. Peacekeeping offers were extended to the majority of unaligned states bordering the Warsaw Pact, and many of these offers were accepted in the face of rising international terrorism and strife.

A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE

North Korea and Russia started the hot war. A border dispute escalated into a shooting war, with China remaining neutral. A rogue North Korean officer fired a nuke at Moscow, which was intercepted. In retaliation, Russian nuclear weapons decimated the countryside of North Korea as China, desperate for more land, joined Russia's military effort against the dictatorship.

Months later, the first Chinese soldiers arrived at the border to South Korea, and their military aggression led to the involvement of the rest of the world. As the hostilities of the Korean War reignited, the United States and China had a rematch that had been waiting almost a century. Immediately, strategic nuclear weapons were employed against population centers of both nations, fracturing the Chinese infrastructure and devastating large swathes of the American heartland. The Soviet Union capitalized on Chinese weakness, launching follow-up attacks to destroy as much of the remaining Chinese military power could be damaged to clear a path for ground invasion.

Europe got involved in the war following a number of nuclear exchanges in the Middle East; the EU deployed peacekeeping forces to the Mediterranean, only to have their soldiers caught in the second wave of Eastern nuclear attacks as Russian-aligned Syria, Egypt, and Turkey were targeted and their neighbors wound up caught in the crossfire of nuclear holocaust. Britain retaliated with nuclear weapons, despite Russian threats, and a handful of nuclear first strikes were carried out by Britain against Russian targets. Many of the sites targeted had already deployed their arsenals against Chinese and North Korean targets, and behind the scenes the leaders of both countries knew it to be a ploy for public opinion.

Russia maintained a policy of neutrality with regards to European affairs, even following the nuclear "retaliation", but with the fall of the Soviet Union many of the Eastern European states, who were not privy to the mutual agreement between Russian leaders and Britain, brought themselves directly into conflict against the Western European state. While there was a limited nuclear exchange, the fighting devolved primarily into conventional, chemical, and biological weapons after two tense weeks of both combatants depleting their nuclear stockpiles against each other.

The United States, in its rush to war, wound up on the losing side of the fight. Many of its soldiers had been deployed to mainland China or Korea, and were trapped or killed by the nuclear exchanges between the US and China, as well as Soviet strikes that treated both Chinese and US targets as targeting priorities.

As it cut its client states loose, Russia began a unilateral offensive against the United States' westmost holdings, capturing Alaska as well as portions of Washington and California. Canadian forces allied with US troops to help repel Russian invaders in many areas, but the ground war would continue for six long years.

REBUILDING

In the decade since World War III, the world has begun to be rebuilt. Many of the new states that were formed as nations were separated from each other have since formed Pacts, similar to NATO or the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War, which serve as governing bodies for international trade and military efforts. These Pacts are more numerous, and are more closely aligned to political and economic ideologies than they are to territorial interests. While there are still numerous independent states, these "third-world" countries are keenly aware of their tenuous grasp of power.

None of the superpowers are as powerful as they once were; the United States has been split into two countries, the Soviet Union has been reduced into Russia and a handful of confederations of former client states, China and India are decimated by nuclear war, and most of Western Europe has been destroyed. Many nations have benefited from the shift of power. Africa, while still impacted by internal turmoil, largely remained neutral and was not heavily impacted by the war. South America, as well, saw an influx of refugees and increased civil turmoil, but most of its nations practiced military neutrality during the largest time of conflict in human history.

War in the traditional homelands of humanity has allowed its most recent colonies to become independent. Antarctica has a thriving refugee population, utilizing high-tech solutions to live far away from military conflict. Moon bases and Mars terraforming efforts formerly controlled by the great superpowers have since affiliated with each other, banding together to form humanity's first independent nations in the stars.

A new peacekeeping body, the Pact Council, was formed from the eight "Great Pacts", which represent 80% of the world's population and the vast majority of its resources and military strength. Unlike previous attempts at peacekeeping, the Council is limited to solely military jurisdiction, regulating the creation of nuclear weapons, standing armies, and other concerns to ensure that no nation or pact achieves sufficient military power to overwhelm another.

THE PACTS

There are eight Great Pacts, as well as a number of smaller pacts across the world. Each of the Pacts is hallmarked by a common set of laws and ideologies shared by its member states, shaping economic policies and lifestyles of millions, if not billions, of people.

The eight Great Pacts are the Libertas Pact, the Commonwealth Pact, the Maksimov Pact, the Dragon Pact, the Crescent Pact, the Nkrumah Pact, the Europlan Pact, and the Amazon Pact.

The Libertas Pact contains parts of the modern-day United States, Canada, and Mexico, primarily in regions near the western coast of North America, parts of Australia and a handful of Pacific island countries. Its governing body is a representative board from each of its member states; most of the nations included in the pact have a single representative, though nations with more than ten million members are eligible for a second representative. The Libertas Pact enforces free trade between its members, and supports liberal policies toward personal rights, at least on paper. The Libertas Pact also controls the Antarctic colony of Refuge and has orbital interests. Member states include the, United American States, the Philippines, American Samoa, Vietnam, and Western Australia. A number of former states in the NACZ have protection from the Libertas Pact pending reorganization.

The Commonwealth Pact contains several northern European countries including nations within the modern borders of the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Scandinavian countries, parts of Canada and the former United States, South Africa, and Australia, sections of India and Japan, and several other countries across the world. It is run via a ministerial cabinet, members of which are elected by popular vote between all the member states based on ideological platforms. The Commonwealth Pact is known for its military strength and its close ties with the Libertas Pact and the Europlan Pact. Australia, the Federated States and Canadian Provinces, South Africa, Australia, Japan, and the Republic of India all are member states of the Commonwealth Pact.

The Maksimov Pact consists of the remnants of the former Soviet Union and several other former Communist states, such as Cuba, Venezuela, and North Korea. The Maksimov Pact recognizes the fewest internal boundaries of any of the Great Pacts, and has a centralized economy run by a central council, the members of which are chosen through an obscure political system. The Maksimov Pact includes Russia and most of the former members of the USSR, Greece, the Baltics as member states.

The Dragon Pact contains territory in modern-day China, India, Vietnam, Thailand, and a number of other Asian countries. Formed at the advent of World War III, it was heavily hit during the war, and has been subject to international sanctions and tariffs as part of reparations demanded by the other Great Pacts. The political situation within the Dragon Pact is volatile, and it is known for engaging in high-stakes political intrigue and high tensions between its member states. The Dragon Pact includes the Socialist Democratic Chinese and Tibetan States, Bhutan, and Nepal as member states, many of which have de facto autonomous regions that identify with other Pacts.

The Crescent Pact controls much of the Middle East, but its borders extend well into North Africa, Southern Europe, and as far as India in Asia, with a handful of scattered member states. Founded on Islamic principles, its member states have widely differing policies with regards to secularization. Unfortunately for the Crescent Pact, its member states were heavily targeted by nuclear strikes early in World War III, and it remains highly impoverished due to the depletion of its population and the irradiation of its territory. The Crescent Pact calls Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, Libya, Algeria, the Republic of Mindanao, and Malaysia member states.

The Nkrumah Pact represents states across continental Africa and Madagascar. Some of the members of the Nkrumah Pact are also members of the Crescent Pact, and the only major African nations not to join the Nkrumah Pact are the South African and East African nations that

joined the Commonwealth Pact. The Nkrumah Pact controls one of the only functional lunar bases, and has a strong space program; its nations were among the least heavily impacted by World War III, and it has a greater degree of diversity than most of the other Pacts. Notable member states include Nigeria, Kenya, Angola, Sudan, and Ethiopia.

The Europlan Pact is primarily centered in Europe, though it has a handful of South American and Asian member states, and an enclave in modern-day Canada. Socialist and technocratic, the Europlan Pact mandates full human rights for artificial intelligences and engineered sapient organisms, though some critics point out that the member states' governments have great latitude in how to determine classification for these protected categories. The Europlan includes Germany, France, Spain, the Austro-Hungarian States, East Poland, and Italy as member states.

The Amazon Pact holds much of South America, though it has a number of member states in Oceania and Central America. Much like the Nkrumah Pact, its members were less heavily impacted by World War III. Run by a charismatic autocrat, the Amazon Pact has relatively little power over its member states, and a high degree of social unrest over the situation is brought on by the high populations of expatriates from Libertas and Commonwealth nations. The Amazon Pact's member nations include Brazil, Argentina, Chile, the Guyanas and Suriname, Paraguay, and Uruguay are prominent member states.

CORPORATIONS AND CABALS

CORPORATIONS

Although far from an exhaustive list of corporations, this register includes a handful of the most influential international corporations that are known to frequently deal with Rats, using them as deniable assets for covert operations. Many of these companies produce gear that is useful for Rats, such as augmentations, vehicles, weapons, and infiltration tools.

ANHUI CONSOLIDATED ENGINEERING

Originating in China, Anhui Consolidated Engineering provides defense contracting and manufacturing for the Dragon Pact clients, including China. Anhui was the seat of major industrial centers, and ACE took over most of the lion's share of factories at the advent of WW III. As a result of sheer luck, the company survived the war more or less intact, becoming a rising star of the region.

ACE is known for its tendency to manufacture things that are cheap but unremarkable. While the quality of its products are above average, it does not typically innovate, instead choosing conservative designs. One of the largest firearms manufacturers in the world (if not the largest), ACE's weapons often feature real or fake wooden furniture, and simple, rounded designs, a visual calling card of Soviet and Communist glory days.

BLACKTHORN GROUP

The Blackthorn Group is an Australia-based conglomerate with dozens of subsidiaries. Although Blackthorn Industries, its flagship corporation, was originally an automotive and military vehicle manufacturing corporation, the Blackthorn Group has interests in most major industries, including consumer goods, electronics, and firearms.

The Blackthorn Group has attracted some controversy over the years. A staunch supporter of Commonwealth Pact interests, it is a defense contractor with significant business interest in many other countries. It has, as such, had to fight legal battles on every continent and on Mars. There are some rumors that many of the Blackthorn Group's shareholders are involved in cloak and dagger affairs. Alexander Blackthorn, the group's founder, is an alleged member of the Sentinels.

In any case, the Blackthorn Group is known for simple, reliable, and affordable products. Although they do distribute products under a variety of luxury brands, they are most well-known for Blackthorn Arms, which manufactures primarily small arms, and Blackthorn General Industries, which produces automobiles and military vehicles, including aerospace vehicles. Visually, most Blackthorn products have distinctive boxy styles, with rectangular and hexagonal designs.

BRENNEN

Brennen is an American corporation dedicated to the creation of consumer products. Although they have a small arms line, which produces high-quality small arms for clients in the United American States, the company does most of its business in the Federated States. Brennen is known for its manufacture of high-end consumer goods, including vehicles, drones, and clothing. While they are not considered to be technological innovators, their focus on quality in design and manufacture has earned them a fair deal of fame.

Brennen functions almost as two companies; its UAS branch manufactures small arms and drones, while its FS branch is more closely known for their automobiles and small aircraft. Despite this, the company attempts to keep a single public face. Brennen is one of the few companies to have as many deniable asset operations executed against itself by itself as by other corporations. There is a large faction inside the company that supports the use of deniable assets to steal research from other corporations in the face of a technology gap that seems to be widening to disfavor Brennen.

CARTRIDGE COLLECTIVE

Although not a corporation in a traditional sense, the Cartridge Collective is a UAS-based anarchist collective dedicated to firearms R&D. They are known for creating weapons designs that are able to be printed off of standard three-dimensional printers and low-end manufacturing tools by novices. While this limits the complexity of their common designs, they do have a number of more complex patterns used for weapons.

Although they often run afoul of intellectual property laws, the Cartridge Collective maintains an underground manufacturing presence. While their ammunition production facilities are legitimate and provide a significant portion of the world's ammunition (about a 10% market share for non-proprietary designs), they run a number of underground manufacturing facilities through "subsidiary" groups. As the Cartridge Collective is more of a common brand than a unified organization, many of its members belong solely to legal or illegal operations, with only a handful of members having mixed interests.

EUROFOUNDRY

A conglomeration of manufacturing interests in France, Germany, and Spain, Eurofoundry provided manufacturing on demand for a large number of corporations, but was

also known for its own work as a defense solutions provider manufacturing small arms, artillery, and armor for the European Union.

Eurofoundry has a trademark design scheme revolving around hexagonal external components; most Eurofoundry machines are built with interlocking hexagon designs, and their small arms are noted for being able to be disassembled and assembled using captive pins, allowing the frame of the weapon to be stripped of functional components and have any necessary replacements made in very short amounts of time with few or no tools.

GLOBAL TACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Global Tactical Solutions is an international security contractor with an interest in munitions manufacture. Although it was originally a private military contractor at its core, in the aftermath of World War III it acquired manufacturing interests in a variety of small arms and light military vehicles.

GTS is heavily aligned with the Libertas Pact, and it is not uncommon to see members of its Global Tactical Operations subsidiaries working closely with UAS groups to augment special forces efforts. GTS acquired Sahara Wolf, Fidelis Forge, and Brennen licensing rights, as well as rights to produce most common NATO-pattern weapons. As such, their products are common sights in many arsenals, especially where end users are unwilling to pay the premium for Brennen-manufactured munitions.

Due to the fact that they are more of a manufacturer than a designer, GTS does not have a signature look for its products. Their contractor uniforms are black with red or light blue stripes denoting paramilitary or security roles, except when camouflage is desired instead.

GRAVES BIOPHARMACEUTICALS

Graves Biopharmaceuticals pioneered the bioborg and was responsible for the modern extensible cyberbrain. Leaders in the fields of human augmentation and experimental biology, Graves sets industry standards for augmentations and transgenic creatures. While critics point out that the company's ethics could be summed up as "nonexistent" or "situational", Graves has accomplished breakthroughs that have advanced humanity by leaps and bounds.

Graves operates out of the UAS primarily, taking advantage of the close proximity to the North American Containment Zone, which provides plenty of room for their clandestine tests. The corporation is affiliated with the Plutarchs, who appreciate their work in life extension and augmentation. Although there are a number of nations that have banned the sale of products manufactured or designed by Graves, the company has a large deniable operations budget solely for smuggling and underground augmentation clinics, which are often quite profitable for the company.

As a result of their clandestine sales, Graves is heavily involved in organized crime rings across the world. When combined with the fact that they produce a small but lucrative number of designer recreational drugs, this only serves to make them more profitable. The company does suffer from the occasional information leak, which has led them to acquire a dubious reputation globally, but the quality of their products and the fact that they remain a decade ahead of their competitors, developing and deploying Dalet-grade fifth-generation augmentations worldwide.

JENSEN ATOMICS

Jensen Atomics manufactures fission and fusion power plants, as well as a variety of aircraft, satellites, and spacecraft through its Jensen Aerospace subsidiary. Although it is a defense contractor for the Libertas and Commonwealth Pacts, its products have global adoption, in part due to their ubiquity. While they are not the only manufacturer of fusion plants, they have enjoyed popularity since the turn of the 21st century.

Jensen Aerospace got its start as a defense contractor, designing missiles and military aircraft, and eventually shifted into the space industry in the 1980's. It was one of the first companies to market fusion-powered aircraft, allowing for much faster and heavier combat units. No strangers to corporate espionage, they won military contracts for satellite and ICBM platforms, and many of their weapons would go on to fan the flames of World War III.

Jensen Aerospace is known for their distinctive styles, which involve large rounded fuselages designed to accommodate fusion plants. They have a large portion of the electronic warfare market share, which includes surveillance and intelligence aircraft. One of their most iconic modern products is the B95 hypersonic bomber, which played a major role in World War III.

KURIYAMA INDUSTRIAL

Kuriyama Industrial is a Japanese corporation focusing on agricultural and industrial machinery. While it has interests and market shares in a variety of other markets, the primary focus of Kuriyama Industrial is on heavy equipment such as cranes, tractors, and roadwork vehicles. Despite this, Kuriyama maintains a relatively small automotive division, which is largely unknown outside Japan. Kuriyama Industrial also has fingers in other pies, since it prefers to rely on subsidiaries for base components, rather than purchasing goods from third parties.

Kuriyama Industrial leans towards bulky designs with sleek corners, favoring bold red colors for its industrial machinery. While it is somewhat rare for a Rat to see Kuriyama Industrial as a target of an operation, KI does occasionally finance covert actions against its competitors to steal trade secrets regarding technologies they do not have access to.

MARS CONSOLIDATED ENGINEERING

The first extraterrestrial megacorporation, Mars Consolidated Engineering came about following the Martian Revolution in 2062. As the Martian League reordered its manufacturing, small businesses were encouraged to band together to form a large competitive front, so that shipping and logistics between the planet and Earth could be hammered out on a more uniform basis.

Mars Consolidated Engineering was the result; while it was originally a conglomeration of industrial design and manufacturing firms, it has since grown to include a variety of biotech and software concerns. While much of the company's profits come from the terraforming effort, it still participates in trade across the solar system, and is quickly rising to become a star of the economic scene.

USTER ARMSWORKS

Uster Armsworks is a Swiss company that has long been one of the leading designers of

firearms. Primarily exporting its weapons or supplying to the Swiss military, Uster has a reputation for producing solid small arms, including many weapons that have been adopted by armed forces across the world, including the venerable MP32, which has become the standard US sidearm.

STAFFORD GLOBAL AGRICULTURE

Leaders in hydroponics and biofuels, Stafford Global Agriculture has produced transgenic crops for almost a century. With a large market share and aggressive patent protections, Stafford is one of the most reviled and profitable names in business. Although the company has come under scrutiny for its expansion into augmentations under the Bodycare brand, many of which are believed to be either reverse-engineered or directly copied from controversial Graves Biopharmaceutical research, it remains one of the largest players in the corporate scene.

URAKAWA MANUFACTURING

Urakawa Manufacturing is a tech giant; if someone has owned more than one digital device in the past decade, they've probably owned at least one Urakawa product. Urakawa caught its lucky break at the turn of the century, when one of its portable media players caught international acclaim for cutting-edge features and a sleek and stylish design. Since then, Urakawa has become known not only for quality electronics, but its distinctive rounded metal designs and marketing campaigns.

Although Urakawa is most well known for its electronics, they maintain a large defense contractor subsidiary, Hokkaido Defense, which is known for providing cutting-edge body armor and small arms to the Japanese and UAS armed forces, as well as its role in providing arms for proxy conflicts since the early 2020's; the number of warlords armed with Hokkaido-manufactured firearms has earned them more than a small share of media scrutiny.

VOIGHT DM

Voight Digital Manufacturing is a Swiss technology giant that makes both consumer and military-grade computing hardware. Responsible for the formation of many industry standards, Voight introduced the modern hacking rig, a 4' by 18" design that is durable and portable while offering as much power as a standard desktop.

Voight is one of the few megacorporations not to have any listed subsidiaries. While it owns a few "independent" factories, the company keeps its main business its focus. The company has come upon financial difficulties in recent years, leading to the licensing or sale of many of its patents to the Blackthorn Group, Global Tactical Solutions, and Jensen Atomic. As a result, the company has lost some of the technological supremacy that it enjoyed for the majority of the middle 21st century, but its sales are still strong. Rumors abound that the financial crisis is the result of the CEO, Ansgar Voight, living a life of luxury on the company's dime.

WEBER IRONWORKS

Weber Ironworks was a German defense contractor. Known for futuristic, boxy designs, often centered on a brutal-looking metal chassis, they rarely manufactured anything other than small arms, but were an early pioneer of caseless ammunition and other innovations.

Although their corporate structure was essentially destroyed in WW III, Weber R&D information remains a sought-after secret decades later and many of Weber Ironworks' designs are still being manufactured.

CABALS

THE PLUTARCHS

The Plutarchs are one of at least three cabals responsible for shaping world history during the 21st century. The first records of the Plutarchs date back to the 2020's, when a group of American and European business magnates and statesmen got together to create an international think tank, the Plutarch Institute. By the end of that decade, the Institute had disbanded, but many of its sponsors and members continued meeting behind closed doors.

While the Plutarchs are highly secretive, and do not count any famous world leaders among their ranks (at least as direct members; the faction's influence is reflected in many major government bodies), they have incredible financial resources at their disposals. The Plutarchs are known for advocating technoprogressive policies in regions that they are active in. They are believed to be partially or wholly responsible for the splintering of the United States, and served as an early benefactor for the UAS, which was armed and supplied by Plutarch-run corporations. The Plutarchs also finance the Cartridge Collective, an anarchist sect fostering open access to weapons blueprints and desktop forge technology.

One of the noteworthy incidents involving the Plutarchs occurred in the NACZ, where UAS and US joint exercises stumbled upon a Plutarch-controlled black operations squad. The resulting conflict left twenty five people dead, including one of the Plutarch operators, whose neural computer was dumped for information which would later be leaked from the US DOD servers. Although the information confirmed the existence (or at least a very elaborate hoax of the existence) of the Plutarchs, there was relatively little useful data, and the group was merely elevated in the eyes of conspiracy theorists worldwide.

The Plutarchs are believed to have been behind Hundarna and Vargarna, using it as a false flag operation to draw attention away from their political maneuverings in Sweden. As a result, many other modern conflicts around the world have been re-examined with an eye to potential Plutarch involvement by those who are aware of the existence of the cabal.

The Plutarchs are suspected to have extraplanetary operations, including a base on Luna as well as a Martian exploration, both of which operate under the auspices of UAS space operations programs, as well as being directly responsible for joint-corporation cybernetics research, some of which they leak through the Cartridge Collective. Their exact motives are unknown, but they seem to favor the destabilization and fracturing of large nation states and international superpowers, such as China, the Soviet Union, and the United States, and have been largely successful.

The Plutarchs' long term goal is to create utilize cultural and philosophical memes to achieve grassroots level political change in favor of technoprogressive policies and individual rights.

THE SCIONS

The Scions represent the last of the old world. They attempt to maintain order, and have existed in some form or another since times immemorial. The Scions, as they are currently known, have been bound together by the fires of World War III, but elements of their order have existed in the Illuminati, aristocratic secret societies, and economic power brokers for centuries.

The Scions exist on several levels, operating overtly in a variety of political think tanks and influence groups, but also covertly in the form of government cabinets across the world. Unlike most other secret orders, the Scions maintain their own secret standing army, a group of about seventy-five thousand hand-picked operators with experience from military and paramilitary organizations from around the world. This army goes by a number of names, but is most widely known to exist under the quasi-mythical banner of the Templar Knights. The Templar Knights are, of course, only activated in that guise for the purpose of misdirection; the actual operating names and codes for the force are subject to change, and members often impersonate members of other military, paramilitary, or security organizations.

The Scions were dealt a major blow with the outbreak of World War III, which showed that their power among world leaders was lacking. As a result, they have begun more fervent attempts to limit the influences of external cabals as well as reinforcing their ties with central power structures. With the rise of human augmentation, the Scions have found ways to coerce and control many of the powerful and influential figures in world politics, and as the organization tends to have more concrete long-term plans rather than abstract goals like the Plutarchs, the Scions find influence over current events a more direct way to achieve their goals.

The Scions' main centers of influence are in Europe and Asia. They have no extraplanetary resources, due to their focus on concentrating power in central powerhouses. The Scions favor stability, consolidation, and the formation of governments that favor a powerful ruling elite. Despite the fact that they have been around longer than most other influential cabals, they are characterized by their impatience and use of direct force.

THE SENTINELS

The Sentinels are a secret organization dedicated to ensuring a static global status quo. The Sentinels are responsible for the creation of the IBT system. Their influence led to many of the loopholes and exceptions that plague the system, as they attempted to let their own operatives fall through the cracks. Although they have no centralized power structures for field operations, the Sentinels maintain a decentralized network of spies, saboteurs, and their handlers.

Although the Sentinels have fewer resources and political connections than the other major cabals, they have one advantage: propaganda. The Sentinels have active memetic campaigns in many areas. Although most outsiders aware of their existence associate them with social conservatism, this is an intentional facade that members who fear that they have been compromised present. In actuality, the Sentinels are less about unfolding issues, such as the rights of bioborgs and infolife, and more about the concerns that will determine the balance of power in the 22nd century.

World War III is believed to have been orchestrated by a rogue Sentinel, although some

intelligence organizations believe that the rogue agent responsible may have been acting under orders from higher up in the chain of command. Due to the decentralized nature of the Sentinels' organization, in which cells are coordinated through heavily encrypted digital forums and the majority of interaction is pseudonymous or anonymous, it is difficult to fully ascertain their motives and interests. From known operatives that have been captured and interrogated, it seems that their own members lack the same cohesion that many of the other cabals enjoy, but this may be a ruse.

SPRAWLS

Most of the action of Street Rats takes place in urban sprawls. The term "sprawl" refers to any metropolitan area with a population of at least ten million people. The ten largest sprawls are Tokyo, Mumbai, Phoenix, Refuge, London, Moscow, Neo Paulo, Kinshasha, Chengdu, and Johannesburg.

TOKYO

One of the few sprawls to closely resemble its early 21st century counterpart, Tokyo was spared the scourge of World War III when Japan declared neutrality. Although the war in Korea nearby causes occasionally high levels of radiation, Tokyo has no need for some of the superstructures that characterize other sprawls, and it has miles upon miles of skyscrapers stretching to the sky. Unfortunately, a weakening of Japan's economy and sharp population decrease means that the once vibrant city is now severely underpopulated, with vacant spaces spread throughout the sprawl as more pressing concerns than demolitions weigh on the minds of its inhabitants.

MUMBAI

Unlike Tokyo, Mumbai was heavily damaged in WWII, but only by conventional weapons. Many residents moved underground, and Mumbai's heavily damaged surface city is rivaled by the tunnels of the massive shelters built offshore, where the depths of the Arabian Sea shelter them from fallout and threats of further attack. Mumbai is still very populous, owing to an influx of immigrants, and it is home to some of the most inspiring advances in humanity's corpus of achievements as well as some of the most soul-shattering injustices to occur in the modern day. It is part of the Republic of India.

PHOENIX

The replacement capital for the UAS, after it split from the greater US, Phoenix was spared most of the fighting in WWII due to the missile shields and geographical distance standing between it and the UAS' enemies. Phoenix is centered in the middle of a desert, but with irrigation from inland, which is occasionally threatened by the United States. It has a massive dome built as part of a recycling and sustainability project; although the Hardy Arcology covers only a small portion of the sprawl, it holds the UAS government seat as well as the being the seat of municipal and regional government offices, support infrastructure, and crucial defense manufacturing.

THE VALLEY OF THE SUN

Phoenix is a sprawl in the truest sense of the word, but it has less vertical development than most of the other sprawls. It makes up for this by containing over fifteen thousand square miles of development, much of which is industrial and suburban, and having large agricultural areas further on the outskirts. Phoenix has a population of fifty million people, many of whom live in the "Dark Valley", sections of the sprawl that were developed in the post-war period to accommodate refugees, and the neighboring areas that have fallen into disrepair. The sprawl is peppered with newly-developed arcologies and hastily erected shields against the radioactive debris that is often carried in by winds from Mexico.

Phoenix's position shielded it from war and from most natural disasters during the 21st century. While there have been a handful of floods, modern engineering has mitigated the worst of the potential issues, with massive underground channels directing the worst brunt of storms. This mostly applies to the more well-off portions of the sprawl, however, and many sections of the sprawl still flood during major storms.

The "Dark Valley" is something of a misnomer; the giant sprawl is peppered with security exclusion zones and slums. With a massive influx of refugees following the Third World War, Phoenix has grown to more than ten times its size a century ago, and it is in a major wind current for radioactive fallout. As the more affluent regions of the city have shifted residences and offices into sealed arcologies, the slums and outskirts of the city have become dotted with massive shade structures that also block radioactive dust and keep it out of sensitive areas.

PHOENIX LANDMARKS

The city of Phoenix and its surrounding towns are over two hundred years old, and while that is relatively young for a major sprawl, it has a storied past. The city has always been home to a diverse population of people from all walks of life, and its geographical position shelters it from most natural disasters; it is possible to walk around Phoenix and step between a building built months ago and a two-hundred year old historic site. The city has skyscrapers and arcologies, but as one approaches the edge of the sprawl, development continues outward rather than upward. A large part of the reason for this is the city's ever-expanding need for drainage, as flooding is known to occur during wet seasons.

MEATSPACE

MeatSpace is one of the last old-school clubs in Phoenix, and it maintains much of its traditional format, with a few twists. Located in Tempe, the club originally catered to a university clientele, but has since become a haven for Rats. The internal temperature of the club is kept at human body temperature, regulated by steam and mist released into the central areas. Patrons are required to wear wristbands that track their hydration status, and drink water or leave when they approach dangerous levels of dehydration.

MeatSpace is favored by underground types, mostly due to the fact that it still pumps live music (and white noise) out through its speakers, and the fact that the immense heat of the place makes it hard to conceal all but the smallest weapons. Sound masking complements the white noise, ensuring that conversations are only intelligible over a very short distance and providing a unique acoustic environment. The bar's owner, Rick Lawson, treats this as a

fringe benefit, and does his part to provide privacy for customers who want to discuss business away from prying eyes.

Although the club is a surveillance nightmare, security is relatively tight; weapons are allowed on the premises (if declared at the front desk, which flags their wristband so that they can only purchase non-alcoholic beverages), but a complex system of chemical sniffers and augmented security guards means that any emergencies can be responded to quickly.

— You never hear of just one murder at MeatSpace. Once you start something, security takes you down with extreme prejudice. The authorities turn a blind eye because, honestly, it's rare that anyone they like gets killed, and a lot of the trash gets taken out at MeatSpace. Also, I strongly recommend ear protection for anyone entering the place, especially if you've got cyberears. They use the good white noise and sound masking technology, and you'll be effectively deafened unless you trim some of it out.

THE COOLANT STATION

Located in Surprise, where a nuclear weapon was detonated in a terrorist incident in the early 40's, the Coolant Station is an underground facility for smugglers and Rats who want to move military-grade hardware and augmentations. A full-service stopover for most troublemakers, the Coolant Station includes an underground clinic and a variety of different vendors.

Internal issues are taken care of by the Zoners, a band of anarcho-syndicalists, but a large portion of the local residents are anarcho-capitalist or unaffiliated with any political movement. The Coolant Station is in an exclusion zone for local law enforcement; the region it is in is still considered dangerously radioactive, and the inhabitants of the Coolant Station make sure to limit the amount of trouble that they can get into by closely vetting their clients, and ensuring that most of the goods that they sell are things like augmentations or armor, rather than weapons and infiltration equipment, which tend to receive less scrutiny.

One of the important things to remember about the Coolant Station is that many of its most prominent members refuse to accept UAD and FSD, which means that one is required to use alternate currencies. Money-changers are available, and there are people willing to perform the necessary bartering for outsiders, but this process leads to inflated prices on many of the common goods that could be easily acquired by Rats affiliated with the Coolant Station's factions.

ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Arizona University is the result of a combination between the three state universities of Arizona in 2053. With a shift toward online and telepresence education, and with the pressing need to eliminate overhead, the university has shifted toward automation and away from physical presence. The Old University Campus, located in Tempe, has fallen into disarray; originally planned to be used for museums and art galleries, a lack of interest coupled with the economic decline of the area led to an influx of squatters and criminals. In 2060, Tempe became an exclusion zone administered by Global Tactical Solutions, and many parts of what was once the Tempe campus of Arizona State University were turned into training facilities for GTS operators.

The campus itself is still open, and many Rats with connections use it as a source for

gray or black market hardware. GTS recruits deniable assets and occasionally full-time operators for GTO from the area around the campus, offering private training and assessment sessions for a marginal fee. A handful of Arizona University faculty and students still reside on campus, as the law colleges were never shut down and still remain functional. They have enjoyed the addition of GTO private security.

REFUGE

Refuge has the dubious honor of being one of the few sprawls that is in and of itself a nation state. Designed in the first half of the 21st century as an extraterritorial grounds where research projects could be completed without government intervention, the coalition of corporations that built the massive arcology at Refuge's core fell into infighting, which led to UN intervention. With the dissolution of the UN, Refuge fell into a brief period of anarchy during World War III, until its internal governing body was reformed as a direct democracy and earned membership in the Libertas Pact. Many of its more radical citizens insist that Refuge remove itself from international politics. Refuge is home to people of many cultural and linguistic backgrounds, though most of its citizens can remember corporate rule and the anarchy that followed, and work toward unity.

LONDON

London's glory days are past, but even after the immense damage it suffered in the war it remains a bustling city. Built on rivers, it remains a central hub for trade and the seat of much of the United Kingdom's political influence, and is often considered to be the actual seat of the Commonwealth Pact. One of the best-kept secrets of London is the fact that the city's subterranean waterways are home to a massive community of squatters and survivalists, some of whom have shunned contact for long enough periods of time to form distinct cultural and linguistic trends. Contact with these subterranean refugees is often short, violent, and deadly for both parties.

A RAT'S GUIDE TO NORTH AMERICA

At one point, North America was the most peaceful continent in the world. With three major powers in the form of Canada, the United States, and Mexico, it had not seen a major international war on its own soil for over a century when WWII began.

Canada's withdrawal from NATO represented one of the first steps in NATO's disbandment, and within years NATO had shrunk to include only the United States and a handful of European countries, most importantly Germany and France. With the United States' involvement in South Korea, the remaining powerful NATO countries quietly left the alliance, leaving only the United States and a handful of weak client nations.

A preemptive strike against the United States was carried out by Russia two years after the United States became involved in South Korea. Nuclear strikes against the American heartland were intended to cripple agricultural production and draw attention away from conventional bombardments and invasion of the west coast. The United States consolidated most of its military around the East Coast, recalling many of its units from Cuba, which had been annexed in the early 21st century. A Russian nuclear submarine slipped past the Navy's

dragnets, and launched a successful nuclear strike against Washington DC in a largely symbolic gesture (the core functions of government had been evacuated previously).

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the Western United States carried out guerrilla warfare against Russian and allied forces. A working missile defense shield was activated prior to the second wave of Russian nuclear attacks, limiting most of the damage to coastal regions where tactical nuclear weapons were deployed. The new-fledged United American States, consisting of most of the west half of the United States (excluding the anarchic wastelands that would become the North American Containment Zone) and some parts of Canada, retaliated with their own nuclear weapons which had been taken from the United States military. A month later, Russia announced a formal armistice with both the United States and the United American States, and withdrew troops from the region.

The US would not attempt to re-enter the war.

THE UAS AND THE FS

The UAS and FS are theoretically still the same state under the banner of the United States; they split without a civil war due to the infrastructure damage caused during Russian nuclear attacks. Ostensibly, the flag of the United States flies over both regions, but practically the two factions have evolved their own legal codes and military forces and have independent foreign affairs.

Prior to the war, a plan had been created to facilitate the continuation of independent government despite the deployment of WMDs against the heartland by decentralizing the central government into multiple central nerve clusters, resulting in a country with multiple capitals. While the first steps to achieve this resolution were being carried out, the war began and military forces were heavily shifted to the East Coast, which had not been invaded. The citizens of the unoccupied Western states, like Montana, Arizona, and Utah, responded by bringing the nascent government structures to fruition, but severed their ties to the formal United States when doing so.

Combined with the increasing internal tensions against the United States, this West-coast focused movement rebranded itself the "United American States", maintaining a more politically conservative ideological stance and a more directly democratic government as the United States proper shifted toward a government structure that relied more on representatives due to concerns about social shifts. Most of the survivors of the nuclear attacks on the heartland wound up moving to the UAS, where the pressing need for manpower led to increased attempts to recruit these survivors. The Federated States attempted to draw in some of the survivors, but a miserable response from the US had predisposed many of the survivors against joining forces with the remnants of the old government.

The UAS still views the FS with some suspicion and distrust, convinced that it represents a self-interested splinter state, while the FS shares a similar suspicion. Despite this, citizens are allowed to travel freely between both (de facto) nations, though the legal systems of both countries have diverged greatly over the post-war decade.

One of the most striking distinctions between the UAS and FS is their Pact membership; both are large enough to qualify for member state status in any of the Great Pacts, but the UAS founded the Libertas Pact in the early days of the Pacts, and the US was explicitly excluded

from membership.

LIFE IN THE UAS

UAS Quick Facts	
Population	275,000,000
Government	Confederated presidential constitutional democracy
Motto	Annuit cœptis ("He favors our undertakings.")
Anthem	"The Battle Hymn of the Republic"
Official Languages	None (English predominant)
Denonym	American
Currency	UAS dollar (1:1 with UASD)
Pact	Libertas

The United American States have a strong message of personal liberties, military strength, and transparent government. They have explicitly outlawed mass surveillance, and Rats have a fair degree of privileges and opportunities. The UAS has lax firearms laws, partly due to its ideals of a citizen militia (stemming from the war), and due to its emphasis on personal liberty.

In the UAS, the main criteria for citizenship are birth in the United States or UAS, or military service. Immigration is open for adults willing to spend a one-year term in the military, two years in reserves or working as civilian support staff, though a second term or two additional years in reserves or as support staff is required for full citizenship with voting rights to be granted. Minors who are dependents of immigrants receive citizenship automatically when their parents do.

The UAS has a high population of Rats; the IBT system is legally enforced as an opt-in database for both commercial and government purposes, and the creation of an IBT profile for a minor is explicitly prohibited. As a result, the UAS is one of the last places in the world where social anonymity is possible. The UAS still runs independent military, criminal, and education databases, but these files have heavy access restrictions.

With its light restrictions on armaments, the UAS also has the least restrictions for personal augmentations of any North American country; augmentations require approval to be sold (though augmentations may be freely implanted in trial programs or if no money changes hands, which has resulted in a gray market of work-for-aug programs), but there is no distinction made between civilian and military grade augmentations for legal purposes: only augmentations which contain firearms or contraband are regulated, it is illegal to remove an augmentation (though illegal augmentations may be disabled, and the law only applies to deliberate removal of augmentations as a surgical procedure, not damage or destruction as a result of violence) without the host's consent, and anyone permitted to own something may own or install an augmentation that serves a similar purpose (for instance, firearms permit holders may own implanted weapons and physicians may prescribe drug glands for restricted substances).

The UAS is a heavy importer with a poor trade balance; it relies on high-tech exports, and has few readily available raw materials due to infrastructure damage from the war. The nation has heavy, compulsory, recycling programs and food rationing, but the government's

limited centralization means that there is little national debt: rather, it is UAS-based corporations that bear the brunt of the country's trade gap, and the economy has suffered for it.

Life in the UAS is often difficult and somewhat dangerous; while policing and military is a top concern, the lack of government surveillance means that many crimes go unreported or unnoticed, and many of the pre-war US institutions, especially pensions and government-funded healthcare, have been largely uprooted, as the UAS' government lacks the financial resources to provide such services. The UAS dollar has about a quarter of the US dollar's value, and even with rationing food and consumer good prices are easily twice or thrice the price of their counterparts in the US (the average meal in the UAS costs around \$80, versus USD 7 in the US). To counter this food price, the Ration and Supply Committee has commissioned vat-grown food, which has a reputation for being awful tasting (by design, no less) but nutritious and economical. Despite issues with food and raw materials supply, the UAS economy has rebounded under the resurgence of industry and a free market approach that has attracted many international companies to the UAS, where tax and business law are very friendly to international corporations. The ease of importing goods and resources has led to a heavy manufacturing presence, even though the UAS produces few raw materials.

The UAS has high degrees of decentralization. While it has its own legislative and judicial branches (the Western Congress and Western Supreme Court, respectively), it ostensibly functions under the joint executive branch of the United States of America. In practice, while the UAS pays lip service to the President and its interstate military and intelligence bodies are combined with those of the Federated States, its real military and political power structures are oriented around individual states. Crossing borders can be somewhat difficult in the UAS, as each state has varying degrees of regulation, and business and intellectual property law concerns are common for corporations trying to work across state lines. However, the Western Congress is capable of exerting influence over each of the state bodies, serving as a stand-in for the role of the President when coordinating state military efforts or providing solutions to interstate disputes.

THE NACZ

NACZ Quick Facts	
Population	5,000,000 (FS estimate), 20,000,000 (UAS estimate)
Government	Regional; some FS and UAS enclaves.
Motto	Varies
Anthem	Varies
Official Languages	None (English predominant)
Denonym	Zoner
Currency	UAS/FS dollar, corporate scrip, barter.
Pact	Regional enclaves aligned with the Commonwealth and Libertas Pacts.

The North America Containment Zone (NACZ) is one of the most heavily irradiated places on the planet. Over five thousand impact and airburst nuclear weapons were deployed in the course of a single year's conflict in which over twenty million civilians perished. Fires raged on and off over the course of the two following years, resulting in a large portion of territory with few human settlements. The land quickly became overgrown without travel or large

population centers, and although it is heavily irradiated many parts of the NACZ are verdant and full of life.

One of the main dangers of the NACZ is the residual radiation; it was attacked in a scorched earth campaign of aggression, and the number of nuclear detonations is immense. There are rumors that several nuclear attacks were accompanied by chemical or biological attacks, but to this day most reports on the subject remain highly classified. While there is known chemical contamination in addition to the radioactive fallout, much is believed to have come from industrial or military activity in the region.

The truth is that the NACZ is more heavily settled than most outsiders believe; both the UAS and US operate black sites in the NACZ, have training and defense outposts, and many of the original inhabitants of the region survived. In addition, however, pre-war and post-war research bunkers and facilities are fairly common finds for the dedicated.

Most of the survivors have become "Ferals". Although the term comes with additional stigma and associations outside of the NACZ, the label is applied to anyone who prefers to live in the irradiated zones, regardless of their reasons for doing so. Ferals all lack IBT identifications (or at least recently updated identification), and they have a reputation for being violent bogeymen that haunt the NACZ. Their numbers are bolstered by deserters and thrill-seekers who leave the UAS and FS from time to time. Most Ferals are actually hunters or farmers, and communities vary heavily based on the local moods and atmospheres: some enclaves are practically democratic, while others are despotic or anarchic.

Two of the major concerns for those living in the NACZ are "mutants" and rogue warbots. While some speculation exists over the exact origin of the so-called mutants, they are native and unique to the NACZ. Although ostensibly human, they have adaptations that seem to increase their combat prowess and their own society and languages. None have integrated into human society outside the NACZ, and official reports deny their existence, leading some to believe that they are a rogue strain of rapidly reproducing bioborgs. Rogue warbots are more easily explained: US prototype war machines and deployed Russian machines roam the countryside after losing contact with their home base, still operating under standard combat procedures. With the EMP effects of the nuclear detonations, this is somewhat likely.

Needless to say, both the UAS and FS have fortified their NACZ-facing borders, though neither country has had the resources or popular support to fully wall off the region. The NACZ's technical boundaries extend well past the worst of the contamination, and regular military patrols attempt to ensure that none of the more dangerous elements of the zone escape into insecure territory.

Despite the fact that the NACZ is "uninhabited", there are anywhere from five to twenty million people living within its borders. Many of these people enjoy UAS or FS citizenship, although those with FS citizenship have likely had their citizenship benefits lapse. Although a good portion of the NACZ's inhabitants are Ferals, there are also dedicated task forces operating in the zone to restore infrastructure and maintain transportation links between the two countries. Although most of these people belong to military or civilian organizations that do not keep members in the zone for long periods of time, there are also a number of enclaves within the NACZ, such as New St. Louis on the FS border, or Albuquerque in New Mexico. These enclaves provide law and order for ground convoys traveling through the zone, as well as providing a locus for trade with the scavengers and reclaimers living in the zone.

The NACZ in particular is known as one of the most lawless and dangerous places on the planet. Although the Zone has law and order in pockets, especially in cities established by reclamation efforts or corporations to retake parts of the wilderness, much of the Zone is still made up of ramshackle fortifications and controlled by any of a variety of warlords. People traveling from one side of the zone to the other should expect to encounter bandits as well as mutant animals.

LIFE IN THE FS

FS Quick Facts	
Population	125,000,000
Government	Federal presidential constitutional republic
Motto	E Pluribus Unum ("Out of many, one.")
Anthem	"The Star Spangled Banner"
Official Languages	None (English predominant)
Denonym	American
Currency	FS dollar (1:4 with UASD)
Pact	Commonwealth

The Federated States have rebuilt, and life in the region appears to be much the same as it was prior to World War III. However, political tides have changed. The savvy note that government intrusion into personal privacy is ubiquitous, with surveillance cameras on every street corner and digital equivalents in cyberspace. The Federated States have adopted a more strongly centralized government than their UAS counterparts, and as such more of the decision making is left up to Congress and the President.

The FS has two central identification systems: the universal IBT and a secondary Citizens' Biometric Database, which has fewer loopholes than the IBT. As a result, many Rats living in the FS exploit the fact that UAS-issued identification, which relies solely on state databases, is not easily checked in the FS even though it is still legally valid. This has led to a number of jokes and stereotypes about UAS citizens in FS territory, but the actual level of suspicion is low enough that many Rats can pull off jobs by relying on assumed identities, rather than compromising real identities.

The FS has more social safety nets than the UAS; with socialized medicine, pensions, and education for all levels. While the FS economy took a hit following World War III and has failed to recover, there is relatively little concern regarding its long-term stability. In response to what it decried as irresponsible spending policies, the UAS began minting its own currency, which is backed by commodities.

Life in the FS is relatively stable and secure. Every citizen is ensured a number of basic amenities in exchange for tax earnings and federal service days, which usually involve eight hours of labor on civil infrastructure or public interest projects. It is possible to pay someone to complete federal service days for you. Citizenship is provisional, and benefits may lapse if someone is found to have failed to pay taxes or complete service days. A history of military service exempts citizens from having to complete service days.

Although it is socially very open, the FS has an increasing undercurrent of xenophobia;

fears about foreign agitators, operatives, and saboteurs have been raised following a number of successful terrorist attacks. Some conspiracy theorists believe these to be false flag actions carried out to justify the FS's surveillance activities, but most experts are in agreement that a number of domestic and foreign terror cells operate within the FS's borders.

Personal liberties are somewhat more limited in the FS than in the UAS. Firearms are more tightly restricted, in line with most Commonwealth Pact nations, augmentations are limited to people who can demonstrate a need for them, and financial transactions across borders are heavily limited. Compared to the UAS, where few restrictions exist and many of the restrictions that are on the books are unenforced, the FS has much more stringent controls on contraband and illegal behavior.

CANADA

Canada Quick Facts	
Population	65,000,000
Government	Federal parliamentary constitutional monarchy
Motto	A Mari Usque Ad Mare ("From Sea to Sea.")
Anthem	"O Canada"
Official Languages	English, French
Denonym	Canadian
Currency	Canadian dollar (1:2 with UASD)
Pact	Commonwealth

MEXICO

United Mexican States Quick Facts	
Population	180,000,000
Government	Federal presidential constitutional republic
Motto	La Patria Es Primero ("Homeland is First")
Anthem	Himno Nacional Mexicano ("Mexican National Anthem")
Official Languages	None (Spanish predominant)
Denonym	Mexican
Currency	Peso (4:1 with UASD)
Pact	Unaffiliated

EUROPE

Europe was one of the centers of the early fighting of WWII, but was spared nuclear attack until the end of the war, when Chinese nuclear weapons were deployed against the continent.

BRITAIN

Britain Quick Facts	
Population	65,000,000
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy
Motto	Dieu et mon droit ("God and my right")
Anthem	"God Save the King"
Official Languages	English
Denonym	British (description) Breton (individual)
Currency	Pound Sterling (1:5 with USD)
Pact	Commonwealth

Britain, as an island separated from the rest of Europe, had better luck than its continental neighbors during the war. Although it still suffered four successful nuclear attacks, Britain was largely intact. Two of the four impacts were in Scotland, causing a controversy that nearly led to victory for a Scottish independence movement, while one weapon impacted Oxford and another landed several miles from London after being damaged by an anti-missile projectile.

In the early 2040's, England proposed the Common Defense Agreement, as the impending collapse of NATO seemed imminent. The US, Canada, India, South Africa, Australia, and a handful of former British colonies and societies based on British law signed the CDA, which was essentially a mutual defense agreement. Many of these signatories would become members of the Commonwealth Pact.

GERMANY

Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) Quick Facts	
Population	55,000,000
Government	Federal parliamentary constitutional republic
Motto	Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit ("Unity, justice, and freedom")
Anthem	Deutschlandlied ("Song of Germany")
Official Languages	German
Denonym	German
Currency	Euro (1:3 with USD)
Pact	Eurozone

East and West Germany were power-houses during the early 21st century. While West Germany had achieved de facto independence, East Germany would continue to be a client state of the Soviet Union until the Third World War. While both nations were home to impressive foreign and domestic intelligence apparatuses and manufacturing interests, West Germany blossomed while East Germany was stifled by the demands of the ever-hungry Soviet Union. With the Berlin Withdrawal in 2021, West Germany effectively broke all contact with the East following a series of border clashes at the Berlin Wall.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, West and East Germany were free to re-unify. Unfortunately, most of the country was blasted into radioactive wasteland by tactical and

strategic nuclear exchanges. Germany was home to the lion's share of conventional battles during the Third World War. A few failed efforts at reunification were made, but German reunification seems unlikely, in part due to the extreme economic disparities between West and East Germany and also due to the cultural isolation between the two nations.

Visitors to West Germany will note the sheer extent of desolation. While most of the population was kept safe in shelters or across the border in France, war ravaged the industrial and research facilities of Germany, and as a result there is an ongoing economic crisis. High levels of radiation still plague much of Germany, and those brave enough to return face adversity from a number of fronts.

German Democratic Republic (East Germany) Quick Facts	
Population	15,000,000
Government	Marxist-Leninist single-party socialist state
Motto	Proletarier aller Labderm vereinigt Euch! ("Workers of the world, unite!")
Anthem	Auferstanden aus Ruinen ("Risen from Ruins")
Official Languages	German
Denonym	German
Currency	Deutsche Mark (20:1 with UASD)
Pact	Maksimov

GREECE

FRANCE

SWEDEN

Kingdom of Sweden Quick Facts	
Population	25,000,000
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy
Motto	F r Sverige — i tiden ("For Sweden — With the Times")
Anthem	Du gamla, Du fria ("Thou ancient, thou free")
Official Languages	Swedish
Denonym	Swedish (description) Swede (individual)
Currency	Swedish krona (40:1 to UASD)
Pact	Unaffiliated

As one of the countries to avoid WWII, Sweden has seen itself grow in power in the last few years. The 21st century has been a rocky one for this Scandinavian country, which has been plagued by internal strife. Long heralded as a bastion of neutrality on the lines of Switzerland, it has been forced to become a military power due to Russian aggression. Although Sweden and Finland are ostensibly independent countries, many Finns have resettled across the border following a number of nuclear exchanges with Russia, and Sweden has assumed a joint protection pact with its fellow Scandinavian countries.

By 2089, Sweden's population has increased to almost 20,000,000 people, due to

foreign refugees (especially from Finland, Denmark, and other European nations). This has caused some concerns, because in recent years almost 40% of the population has become non-Swedish, though there is less concern than there was at the beginning of the 21st century when refugees and immigrants from outside Europe flooded the country.

In the 2020s, a number of terrorist attacks swept across the country, including a noteworthy attack on a Saab Bofors manufacturing facility, as a retaliation for Sweden's involvement in the Middle East. Around 150 people were killed across dozens of incidents before the cells responsible were shut down by a counter-terrorism task force.

The Swedish Purge of the 2040s gave Sweden a dubious international reputation. An extremist group known as Hundarna, and its military wing, Vargarna, had begun operating in the country. With only 3000 members, Hundarna was formed on anti-immigrant sentiment, targeting mainly immigrants of non-European descent. One of the important factors for Vargarna's relative success was the fact that it was made up primarily of ex-military forces and had augmented combatants at a time when few forces, including Swedish and EU counter-terrorism organizations, could field suitable responses. The fledgling Isräv Arsenal won military contracts supplying the forces intended to hunt down Vargarna.

Ultimately, many members of the Hundarna and Vargarna re-integrated with society, in part due to the underground nature of the organizations, and only around one hundred of their members were ever identified. As a result, purges of right-wing organizations from political offices were carried out, intended to exclude former Hundarna and Vargarna members from positions of influence.

As the political purge was being carried out, a rogue government agency hunted down and imprisoned a number of potential political agitators. Although this was accomplished in secret, the fact that a number of formerly influential figures vanished over night did not go unnoticed, and investigations into their disappearances were suspiciously sparse. The incident came to a head when one of the government's targets responded by opening fire on the operators sent to arrest him, resulting in three deaths (his own and two members of the security forces), and sparking a political firestorm.

The response from right-wing organizations was to file formal complaints regarding political oppression and persecution, which resulted in a simmering conflict that threatened to devolve into a civil war or coup. Internally, political alliances shifted toward the center and right, as the primarily leftist government at the time was compared to 20th century Communist regimes and Russia.

Fortunately, the nascent conflict never unfolded, but simply coming so close to a civil war and having a political controversy of such a magnitude would be an indelible mark on Sweden's reputation throughout the 21st century.

Part of the Eurozone Pact, but only as part of a joint military defense alliance like most of the other Scandinavian nations, Sweden has found itself in a new position of power in Europe.

THE MIDDLE EAST

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan was one of the most troublesome client states in the Soviet Union. Decades of war tore the country apart as the US supplied insurgents with hardware and training, while the USSR would continually attempt to prop up the Communist Party. Although the Party had lost legitimacy years earlier, the USSR was eventually successful in setting up a puppet state. In 2029, independent elections were held that upheld the Communist Party, if only due to a lack of qualified opposition groups.

Afghanistan was spared the worst of World War III, since the Soviet Union had decided to keep nuclear weapons away from potential conflict zones and American influence. While there was some conventional warfare fought, the majority of the time that the rest of the world was fighting WW III was spent in a bloody civil war for Afghanistan. The resulting government is vaguely democratic, though it is heavily decentralized and many regions have political autonomy. Since the foreign powers using Afghanistan as the battleground for a proxy war have withdrawn, the region is relatively stable, even if corruption and inefficiency plagues the fledgling government.

EGYPT

IRAN

Imperial State of Iran Quick Facts	
Population	100,000,000
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy
Motto	Mar d d farmoudo xod d var ast ("Justice He bids me do, as He will judge me")
Anthem	Sorude Š hanš hiye Ir n ("Imperial Salute of Iran")
Official Languages	Persian
Denonym	Iranian or Persian
Currency	Rial (4000:1 with UASD)
Pact	Libertas

IRAQ

ISRAEL

ASIA

CHINA

INDIA

JAPAN

THE KOREAS

RUSSIA

THE GAME SYSTEM

Street Rats is built to utilize a single die system, with some minor adjustments on the side. Each player will need a d20 (twenty-sided die), and the GM will need not only a d20 but also a d6 (six-sided die). You can find these at any hobby shop.

Rolls are used to settle questions about what would happen in the setting when a character attempts something that they may or may not be able to accomplish. They may also be used to determine if the larger context of events is favorable or unfavorable for a character.

Every roll has a Roll Threshold, which is a static number. A character attempting an action that requires a roll will add a number of modifiers to the result on the die. Typically, when the term "roll" is used, it refers not only to the result of a rolled die, but also the modifiers applied to it by the environment, GM fiat, characters' training and personal aptitudes, and other potential factors in an event. A roll with a final result equal to the Roll Threshold is called a "Marginal Result", which may have special consequences depending on the context in which the roll is resolved. A result less than the Roll Threshold is a failure, and a result greater than the Roll Threshold is a success (at least in the eyes of the character attempting the action). For every 5 points above or below the Roll Threshold, the Margin of the roll is increased or decreased by 1 (so a roll of 15 against a Roll Threshold of 10 has a Margin of 1, while a roll of 5 has a Margin of -1).

The GM has their own die that they sometimes roll to add some more chaos to the mix. When a character attempts an action, they may roll a six-sided die, and adjust the Margin up or down based on the result. This d6 is called the Complication Die; a result of 1 reduces the Margin by 2, a result of 2 or 3 reduces the Margin by 1, and in the opposite direction a result of 4 or 5 on the Complication Die increases the Margin by 1, and a result of six increases the Margin by 2. Players shouldn't be privy to the outcome of the Complication Die, and the GM may alter the effects of the Complication Die to fit the mood of the story and make events more dramatically appropriate.

Furthermore, *Street Rats* is a game of secrets. Each character will have a Secret, something that they need to keep hidden. Having a Secret revealed has mechanical consequences in gameplay, and once a Secret is out of the bottle it can only be made secret again through bloodshed. Since a Secret usually has a unique activated ability, players are encouraged to pass notes to the GM frequently, both to use their abilities without immediately outing themselves, and to use Instinct.

Instinct is a limited resource; every Rat has it, and when things go wrong it's the difference between dying and living. Unfortunately, a Rat's Instinct is only good for themselves; they can use Instinct to learn what the final Margin of an action was, or to bump the Margin of an action up or down. Once Instinct is used, however, the player cannot inform other players of its use. More rules for Instinct will be detailed in the Character section.

ROLL TYPES

There are three general types of rolls in *Street Rats*: Standard Tests, Opposed Tests, and Margin Tests.

A Standard Test is the most common sort of test. When a single character wants to see if they succeed or fail, they will roll a standard d20-based test. If the result plus or minus the sum of any modifiers they are applying to the roll is equal to or greater than the Threshold (a number set by rules in this book or by the GM on the fly), they succeed. If the result is less than the Threshold, they will then fail. For every multiple of five points the result scores above the Threshold, 1 Margin is added to the roll, and for each multiple of five points below the Threshold the result is at the Margin is decreased by 1. For instance, a roll of 5 with a Threshold of 10 would have a Margin of -1, while a roll of 15 would have a Margin of 1; a result from 6 to 14 would have a Margin of 0.

An Opposed Test is a measure of two character's direct strengths and weaknesses. When two characters are attempting actions that can only result in one of them being the victor, they both roll. The highest result wins, with a Margin dependent on the other character's result. For instance, if one character rolled 10 and the other rolled 15, the higher-rolling character would be a Margin 1 victor. Opposed Tests are typically called only when one character will always succeed; if there is a chance of both characters failing two Standard Tests should be made (one by each character), with the character with the greatest Margin succeeding. Instinct can be spent openly on an Opposed Test, which is the only exception to the usual rules for spending Instinct.

A Margin Test is used when multiple characters are participating in something that they both will succeed in (barring catastrophe), and in which the degree of success matters. Margin Tests are often used for chases. In this case, both characters roll against a Threshold determined by the GM (this Threshold may be different for each character). The outcome of the independent tests will be used to determine the outcome of events. If two characters have an equal Margin, the character whose roll is best wins the tie; in the case of a perfect tie the test is simply re-rolled.

MARGIN

Margin is used as a measurement of how well an action succeeded or failed. On any test, the Margin is equal to a fifth of the difference between the original Threshold of the test

and the final result. This number is always rounded down; a character who rolls a 19 and needed a 15 will have a Margin of 0. Negative Margins are referred to as "Margins of failure"; if a rule says to add the "Margin of failure", you will usually treat this as a positive number. Positive Margins are called "Margins of success", and provide additional bonuses.

Note that the Margin is not the same as success or failure; it is the degree to which a character has succeeded or failed. The rules for tests determine whether or not the character has succeeded in their core intent, but Margins simply provide clarification as to the degree of success or failure.

At the GM's permission, if a Standard Test does not list any additional benefits for having certain Margins, it can be assumed to either occur ten percent faster (to a 50% limit), or otherwise more quietly, cheaply, or finely than a simple success.

PUNKS GO FIRST

Whenever there is a question regarding a tie, which character goes first, or whom bad luck should befall, Rats and their allies will almost always come out on top. In particular, the rule of thumb is that player characters are favored, then other Rats, then everyone else. If a player character loses this advantage, for instance because their Secret is revealed, or because they failed to follow up on a Responsibility, then all ties and other random events are resolved in anyone else's favor before it would go to them.

In the case two characters have identical tie-breaker status, the tie is resolved with a coin flip (for results in which one character must win or lose), there is a stalemate, or they move simultaneously.

THE CHARACTER

Characters in Street Rats are built from a number of components to allow for rapid play, but are advanced using experience points freely allocated between all possible improvements and abilities. Character creation is shopping around for the parts to build a character, and then advancement is the fine-tuning and diversification of that character's skills and abilities.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes form the backbone for a character, and are divided into three categories.

Attributes provide a direct 1:1 modifier to any roll in which they are applied; only one attribute may be applied to any given roll, however, and the GM decides which attribute (if any) should be applied.

MENTAL ATTRIBUTES

Mental Attributes reflect a character's mental potential, particularly in areas such as abstract thought, calculation, and self-control.

Awareness: Awareness reflects a character's ability to observe events in their environment and form a context from them. It plays a part in a broad range of skills.

Intellect: Intellect governs a character's ability to think abstractly and recall details, it is

used primarily with regards to academic skills, hacking, and sciences.

Will: Will measures a character's raw force of personality and drive. It is used primarily to calculate a character's ability to withstand problems thrown at them and focus on complex matters, and is used to calculate Insight.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

Physical Attributes reflect a character's physical abilities and the degree to which they have honed or upgraded their body's potential.

Strength: Strength reflects a character's overall muscle and bulk. It determines how much damage they are able to do in close quarters combat, as well as providing them with the ability to carry heavier gear without penalty.

Speed: Speed measures a character's ability to move quickly, their physical dexterity and agility, and their ability to react quickly with their body. It improves their Initiative and can help them stay out of harm's way in combat.

Toughness: Toughness encapsulates a character's ability to keep doing their usual tasks, even after taking damage. Toughness helps to reduce incoming damage and provide a character with more stamina so that they can keep going when others would give up.

SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES

Social Attributes reflect a character's ability to deal with society, both influencing it and keeping themselves clear of associations they wish to avoid.

Composure: Composure is a character's ability to keep calm under pressure, maintain the image that they like to project, and do damage control when things get out of hand. It also reflects their nerves and conditioning and their ability to remain calm.

Diplomacy: Diplomacy reflects a character's ability to ingratiate themselves with others. It handles picking up on and responding to social cues, forming solid arguments and negotiating policies and agreements, as well as smoothing over past injuries.

Invention: Invention encapsulates a character's ability to tell bald-faced lies, come up with stories on the fly, and keep track of the stories they have already told. It also measures their ability to come up with clever solutions.

INSTINCT

Instinct is a measure of a Rat's moxie, luck, and desire to live. Each character starts with 5 Instinct, and may gain or lose points during play. At the beginning of each session a character's Instinct is refreshed. Instinct can never make an event that has unfolded change, though it may change the Margin of these events for the purposes of determining consequences (or, say, damage against an NPC).

Prior to taking a roll, Instinct may be used to increase or decrease the result by 5 points. Instinct may also be used to learn the result of any secret roll. Instinct may also be sent to change a hit location of an attack, so long as this is done before the final hit location is announced. Instinct may also be used to ignore a wound's effects for the rest of the session, though it is still there and will require the normal healing process.

Instinct can be used to preserve a Rat's life; if a Rat would ever die, one point of Instinct may be permanently burned to prevent their death. This works even in seemingly implausible ways, so long as some excuse for their survival can be found. Instinct is not a normal attribute, and as such cannot be increased with GAU. Rather, Instinct is increased when characters survive seemingly impossible ordeals, at the Game Master's discretion.

SKILLS

Skills add definition to a character, representing their training and experience in particular categories. Each skill has its own use cases; sometimes two skills may overlap, and it is up to the GM to determine which skill should be used, but for the most part skills represent a clear-cut category of actions.

ACROBATICS

[Physical, Speed]

The Acrobatics skill governs a character's ability to move gracefully, exerting themselves to perform feats of agility, grace, and speed.

Acrobatics is used to climb, jump, or balance, and is impacted by environmental conditions such as strong winds, wet surfaces, or carrying large loads.

Acrobatics Examples	
Action	Threshold
Climbing a ladder	0
Jumping across a two meter gap	15
Maintaining balance as a car decelerates one Speed increment	10

ATHLETICS

[Physical, Strength]

The Athletics skill is a measure of a character's physical conditioning and their ability to use their muscles efficiently and prevent injury during strenuous tasks.

Athletics is typically used when accomplishing feats of strength, such as lifting or throwing heavy objects, clinging to an object for long periods of time, or wrestling.

Athletics Examples	
Action	Threshold
Lifting 200 pounds for five seconds	10
Hanging from a balcony for a minute using only one's hands	15
Shoving someone out of a doorway	Opposed

BANTER

[Social, Invention]

Banter reflects a character's ability to integrate themselves within a crowd. It can shape conversations and allows someone to enter a social group that they are not an established member of, but which they appear to be appropriate for.

Banter focuses on talking to people of similar social status who are not known to the user; it is less focused than etiquette, focusing on ways to avoid causing offense while also building a notion that the character should be considered a friend.

For more information about Banter, see the **BANTER** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

BIG GUNS

[Combat, Awareness]

Big Guns measures a character's proficiency with heavy weapons, such as assault cannons, launchers, and machine guns. It also handles large mounted guns, such as autocannons.

Big Guns weapons are used against vehicles or heavily augmented cyborgs and androids. These weapons fire high caliber rounds or guided or unguided explosive projectiles.

The use of Big Guns is governed by the rules in the **COMBAT** chapter.

CON

[Social, Invention]

Con determines how likely a character is to be able to build confidence with a character when dealing with entirely or partially fabricated situations and concepts.

The Con skill is used to appear trustworthy in spite of circumstances, or to bypass the usual social connections that would be required to seem trustworthy.

For more information about Con, see the **CON** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

COUNTERSECURITY

[Technical, Speed]

Countersecurity is a reflection of a character's abilities to circumvent locks, security systems, restraints, and other physical security via physical or electronic circumvention that does not involve hacking into a control system.

Countersecurity is limited to proficiency with jammers, autopicks, drills, and so forth, as well as basic electrical bypass techniques for digital or hybrid locks and security devices. In addition, countersecurity can be used to counter tracking devices by disabling or shielding them.

Athletics Examples	
Action	Threshold
Picking a five-pin lock in thirty seconds	10
Bypassing an electronic door panel in a minute	15
Removing a GPS tracking bracelet/anklet without setting off an alarm	20

DEMOLITIONS

[Technical, Intellect]

The Demolitions skill handles a character's ability to plant, disarm, and fabricate explosive devices.

Demolitions also governs the practical use of these devices, such as how they are used to demolish structures.

Demolitions Examples	
Action	Threshold
Prepare a non-dud explosive without immediate detonation	10
Prepare explosives from raw materials	15
Determine the amount and types of explosives required to demolish a structure	20

DIAGNOSTICS

[Technical, Awareness]

The Diagnostics skill is used by a hacker to assess system status, determining which users have access to a system, the current security protocols, and the hardware and I/O of a system.

Diagnostics is used for a variety of system functions, usually with specialized software, but also with some core system-level functions.

Diagnostics Examples	
Action	Threshold
Determine the OS that a system with a custom shell is using	5
Check for hardware failure remotely with core system tools using logs	15
Track down a cause of critical failure without logs or diagnostics	20

DRIVE

[Technical, Awareness]

Drive represents familiarity with a broad range of ground vehicles, but is typically used with cars, trucks, or motorcycles. A character's Drive skill determines how well they can maneuver their vehicle.

Drive also assists with every-day vehicle maintenance tasks, such as replacing a flat tire or old oil, but not with repairing damage to a vehicle.

Most examples of the Drive skill can be found in the VEHICLE ACTIONS section.

Drive Examples	
Action	Threshold
Jump a battery, replace a spare tire, or undertake basic maintenance	10

EARTH SCIENCE

[Knowledge, Intellect]

Earth Science governs a character's knowledge of chemistry, geology, ecological systems, and many other scientific fields.

Earth Science is a measure of a character's skills with chemistry, though it covers a

variety of skills and includes a variety of physical sciences (discrete from physics), such as geology, mineralogy, hydrology, ecology, climatology, and meteorology.

Earth Science Examples	
Action	Threshold
Identify a common chemical with laboratory equipment and a large sample	10
Forecast weather for a week	15
Identify a rare substance based on a small sample	25

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

[Digital, Awareness]

Electronic Warfare is used with signal jammers, wireless access points, and other wireless hardware to increase the Signal of other hackers while decreasing noise for the hacker deploying it.

Electronic Warfare is used to provide a favorable environment for hacking, shut remote operators out of drones, and prevent file transfers.

Rules for the use of Electronic Warfare can be found in the ELECTRONIC WARFARE subsection of the Hacking chapter.

ENERGY WEAPONS

[Combat, Speed]

The Energy Weapons skill reflects a character's ability to handle railguns, lasers, and plasma weapons, as well as other exotic and high-tech weapons.

Energy Weapons are cutting edge, and while they are very expensive they have unique benefits over conventional weapons with exotic firing modes and the ability to be specialized for certain battlefield applications that traditional firearms fare poorly at.

The use of Energy Weapons is governed by the rules in the COMBAT chapter.

ENGINEERING

[Technical, Intellect]

Engineering serves as a baseline for a character's ability to create new mechanical or electrical systems from scratch, or jury rig inappropriate components to make repairs.

Engineering as a skill covers a variety of disciplines. Engineering plays a vital role in creating replacement parts, designing new gear, or building things from scratch.

Engineering Examples	
Action	Threshold
Identify a common chemical with laboratory equipment and a large sample	10
Forecast weather for a week	15
Identify a rare substance based on a small sample	25

ETIQUETTE

[Social, Diplomacy]

Etiquette is a general set of skills that allow a character to blend in with a social group, avoid offending others, and generally “speak the language” of a group.

Etiquette is the understanding of a broad variety of social norms and when to apply them, as well as an understanding of the basic psychology and concepts behind these norms for improvisation in unfamiliar contexts.

For more information about Etiquette, see the **ETIQUETTE** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

FAST TALK

[Social, Composure]

Fast Talk represents a character's ability to come up with a convincing lie at the drop of a hat, as well as subtly influence those around them to keep them from double-checking facts.

Fast Talk is a character's ability to speak to others in a way that preys on their preconceived notions and presents false information as correct by using the biases of others and a little creative connection on the speaker's part.

For more information about Fast Talk, see the **FAST TALK** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

INTIMIDATION

[Social, Composure]

Intimidation represents a character's ability to coerce others into doing what they want through threats or innuendo. Intimidation is also used for interrogations.

Intimidation is used to frighten or coerce others, often so that they will carry out a course of action beneficial to the speaker and detrimental to themselves or their values.

For more information about Intimidation, see the **INTIMIDATION** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

INTRUSION

[Digital, Will]

Intrusion governs a hacker's ability to break into secure systems and encrypted files to get what they want. It also reflects a character's ability to crash or damage systems remotely.

Intrusion is used when attempting to interface with a hostile computer system, avoiding detection and manipulating the system to suborn it for the hacker or their allies, or locking out the legitimate users of the system.

Rules for the use of Intrusion can be found in the **CRACKING SYSTEMS** section of the Hacking chapter.

INVESTIGATION

[Technical, Awareness]

The Investigation skill reflects a character's ability to search an environment for clues and evidence while preserving the scene of an event of interest.

When using Investigation, characters look for small and minute clues, and often are forced to think outside the box. While even a character with poor Investigation may be able to find evidence, Investigation helps a character piece together the evidence; it reflects the ability to deduce more from clues as well as picking up more fine details.

Investigation Examples	
Action	Threshold
Spot footprints in soil	10
Determine if a lock has been picked hastily	15
Gather each unique passerby's fingerprints, hair, and skin samples in an open area	30

LIFE SCIENCE

[Knowledge, Intellect]

Life Science governs a character's knowledge of biology, pathology, and cybernetics. While it doesn't govern practical trauma medicine and therapy, it provides scientific context for the actions that emergency personnel and physicians take.

Life science governs a number of fields; immunology, biology, abstract medicine, botany, and zoology are all covered by it, and as such it is used to identify unknown diseases, substances produced by living things, and animals or plants and their products.

Life Science Examples	
Action	Threshold
Identify a pathogen in an infected patient	10
Test an organic substance to deduce its origins	15
Identify a pathogen by microscope	30

LONG GUNS

[Combat, Awareness]

The Long Guns skill reflects a character's proficiency with carbines, assault rifles, hunting rifles, sniper rifles, and battle rifles.

The use of Long Guns is governed by the rules in the COMBAT chapter.

MEDICINE

[Technical, Intellect]

Medicine reflects a character's familiarity with medical procedures, both for trauma medicine and recovery care. Medicine does not necessarily refer to a familiarity with the scientific processes surrounding medicine, such as cybernetic augmentations and pathology, but indicates street level knowledge.

The rules for using Medicine are detailed more thoroughly in the HEALING section.

MELEE COMBAT

[Combat, Strength]

Melee Combat governs a character's proficiency and training with weapons designed for use as bludgeons, blades, or stabbing weapons; this enables them to both attack and defend against attack when they have these weapons equipped.

The use of Melee Combat is governed by the rules in the COMBAT chapter.

NEGOTIATION

[Social, Diplomacy]

Negotiation involves a character's ability to convince others that a deal that they are offering is a fair trade, or to secure agreements that would normally run against another character's interests, frequently by compromising some of their own personal objectives.

For more information about Negotiation, see the NEGOTIATION section in the Social Skills chapter.

OVERWATCH

[Digital, Will]

Overwatch governs a character's ability to act to defend digital systems from intrusion. In addition to governing the use of defensive techniques on networked systems, Overwatch is used when setting up automated defenses for matrix nodes.

Rules for the use of Overwatch can be found in the COUNTER-HACKING section of the Hacking chapter.

PERCEPTION

[Physical, Awareness]

Perception is a measure of a character's ability to notice things going on in the environment around them, such as people or things they are looking for or traps and ambushes.

Perception Examples	
Action	Threshold
Detect an opponent using the Stealth skill	Opposed
Spot a tail	Opposed
Find a phone-sized object hidden in a cluttered room	20

PERSUASION

[Social, Diplomacy]

Persuasion reflects a character's ability to convince people to follow the course of action that they lay out, including their affinity for changing political or ideological stances of an individual or group.

For more information about Persuasion, see the **PERSUASION** subsection in the Social Skills chapter.

PHYSICS

[Knowledge, Intellect]

You have a working knowledge of physics, atomic sciences, and other cutting-edge scientific techniques, including quantum physics. This is helpful when dealing with very advanced technology or space travel.

Physics represents a knowledge of mathematics as well as cutting edge sciences, and handles theoretical and complex mathematical tasks.

Physics Examples	
Action	Threshold
Diagnose an error with a quantum computer	15
Calculate the fuel and time required for space travel	20

PILOT

[Technical, Speed]

The Pilot skill indicates a character's proficiency with a number of airborne vehicles, such as helicopters, planes, and lighter-than-air vehicles and drones. The skill also covers routine maintenance, but not repairs, of these vehicles.

Most examples of the Pilot skill can be found in the **VEHICLE ACTIONS** section.

Pilot Examples	
Action	Threshold
Identify mechanical problems and undertake basic maintenance	10
Identify electrical problems	15

PROGRAMMING

[Digital, Intellect]

Programming is the general ability of a character to create new software or improve existing software. It is also used when setting up matrix nodes to perform automated actions or for handling large amounts of abstract data, and for the creation of natural language processing shells and infolife.

Programming as a skill represents a character's ability to identify software's functions, write new software, and integrate software with operating systems, hardware, and firmware for optimal efficiency.

Programming Examples	
Action	Threshold
Write a script to execute an action at a later time	10
Identify a program by looking at its structure	15
Create a new program	20+

REPAIR

[Technical, Intellect]

The Repair skill governs a character's ability to physically create and perform maintenance on a broad range of physical objects. While routine maintenance may be covered by other skills, Repair indicates that a character has knowledge of ways to fix serious damage that may render a piece of gear or augmentation inoperable.

The rules for using Repair are detailed more thoroughly in the REPAIR section.

RESEARCH

[Technical, Will]

Research reflects a character's ability to find leads and sift through information. Although characters may be focused on specific disciplines, the general elements of gathering information are typically universal across fields, and involve fact-checking, utilizing stores of information, and occasionally finding experts to pose further questions to.

Research is used as a way to measure a character's knowledge of uncommon things: cutting-edge science, obscure political movements, historical events, or distant lands.

Research Examples	
Action	Threshold
Find credible and scholarly sources of information on a subject	15
Find an expert in a field	20
Find obscure information about complex topics	25+

RUNNING

[Physical, Toughness]

Running measures a character's endurance, ability to withstand minor impacts (such as with another pedestrian), and navigate urban and natural environments over prolonged periods of time.

Running Examples	
Action	Threshold
Run faster than comfortable speeds without falling	10
Participate in a Chase	VARIES

SLEIGHT

[Physical, Speed]

Sleight covers a character's ability to conceal items. It is used when stealing from other people, as well as when a character attempts to hide things from search or scrutiny.

Sleight is used for a number of actions, such as stealing small objects from another person or concealing objects on the user's body.

Sleight Examples	
Action	Threshold
Conceal an object	VARIES
Steal an object undetected.	Opposed

SMALL ARMS

[Combat, Speed]

Small Arms governs a character's skill with tasers, handguns, sub-machine guns, shotguns, and carbines.

The use of Small Arms is governed by the rules in the **COMBAT** chapter.

SPACECRAFT

[Technical, Intellect]

The Spacecraft skill is used when piloting a spacecraft or maintaining facilities in outer space, and handles both basic technical skills and the piloting skills needed to keep a spaceship functional.

Spacecraft is not used for repair, as Drive and Pilot are, but is used to get a sense of a spacecraft's controls, to perform basic flight functions, and for managing a spacecraft's life support and environmental systems. Traveling between planets requires a course to be plotted using the Physics skill, though short flights may be accomplished by a sufficiently experienced pilot.

For more information on how the Spacecraft skill is used, see the **SPACE AND ZERO GRAVITY** section.

STEALTH

[Physical, Speed]

Stealth governs a character's ability to minimize noise and tracks as they move, find concealed hiding places, and blend into shadows to avoid detection by guards and surveillance tools.

The rules for using Stealth are detailed more thoroughly in the **STEALTH** chapter, and Stealth is also used to evade pursuit following a chase.

SURVIVAL

[Physical, Toughness]

Survival measures a character's ability to survive without the luxuries of civilization, both for finding food and water and avoiding disease and contamination.

More examples of survival can be found in the **SURVIVAL** chapter.

THROWING WEAPONS

[Combat, Strength]

Throwing Weapons indicates a character's familiarity and proficiency with thrown

weapons such as grenades, knives, and axes, as well as more exotic thrown weapons.

The use of Throwing Weapons is governed by the rules in the COMBAT chapter.

UNARMED MELEE COMBAT

[Combat, Speed]

Unarmed Melee Combat governs a character's ability to fight without weapons, grab and throw opponents in close quarters combat, and disarm attackers with a strike or grab.

The use of Unarmed Melee Combat is governed by the rules in the COMBAT chapter.

ZERO-G OPERATIONS

[Physical, Speed]

Zero-G Operations governs a character's ability to move in free-fall, perform EVA with appropriate equipment, and operate under hard vacuum exposure conditions.

Zero-G Operations reflects familiarity with equipment and structural design intended to mitigate the impact of microgravity, the ability to rapidly adjust to changing gravity, and general aptitude with moving in free-fall.

For more information on how the Zero-G Operations skill is used, see the SPACE AND ZERO GRAVITY section.

TOKENS

Tokens are one-off abilities that characters have that do not normally have a rating. They will get these as the advance through duties, but may also get some additional tokens from a number of sources, or at the GM's discretion.

LANGUAGES

Each language a character speaks is handled as a token (Language: English, for instance). This measures conversational fluency and literacy; characters who do not have a language token in common may be able to communicate with each other, but there is some room for error. While characters with at least Rating II of a language are able to speak, read, and write the language, they may have a distinctive and confusing dialect and stand out as less eloquent than more fluent or sophisticated speakers of the language.

INTERESTS

ABILITIES

Some abilities may be unlocked via token. This is often done by spending GAU or as part of the process of switching between Duties, but the GM may also award ability tokens. On some occasions, augmentations give an ability token as well. Abilities given as tokens will share a name with their original source (e.g. a "Rapid Shot" token for the Gunslinger duty special) and will appear in the Abilities Index. Depending on the ability, it may or may not stack from multiple sources; if it does the effect is simply multiplied or additional uses are gained

equal to the original amount offered by the token.

FORMS

Forms are the token that has the most impact on a character: a form token determines how they live their daily lives, representing the body (or infolife form) that they inhabit. Each form has its own benefits and penalties, and there are social stigmas attached to some.

HUMAN

ANDROID

CYBORG

Cyborgs make up

BIOBORG

INFOLIFE

AUGMENTATIONS

As characters progress, they gain the ability to install more augmentations. Augmentations have both advantages and downsides for characters; while they extend capabilities well beyond the human norm, they can also cause massive loss of normalcy. Although augmentations have advanced a long way since it was necessary to take immunosuppressive drugs after implantation, there are still challenges with integrating foreign objects into a host body, especially when advanced integration is required.

— Note that it is no longer necessary to take immunosuppressive drugs, but you might wind up on them if you get an augmentation that doesn't agree with you. I found that out the hard way when I got a Dragonskin implant prior to going on a month-long radio silent operation in a radioactive hellhole. Fortunately, the street doc had bad enough allergies to have a bank of glucocorticoids handy, but being allergic to your own skin is a rough time. Mongrel

Most augmentations that have an activated component or require information output will do so via a neural hub, which can then output data wirelessly, via communications port, or to an embedded computer.

SPIRITS?	myself, and most of that's cyberware. Maybe they're running knock-off gear from China that got hit with some bug. Studies haven't shown any psychological impact from augmentations that doesn't have an undertone that people who permanently modify themselves for combat	tend to be more violent than the average person on the street. Mongrel ·Isn't that what you did? Ghost ·I'm a walking case study, ain't I? Mongrel
·Anyone know what's up with the rumors floating about that people who get augmentations have blackouts where it's almost like they're possessed? Jacksin		
·Not a clue. I'm heavily augged		

FERAL MUTATIONS

Ferals, those born and raised in war-torn regions contaminated by nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare, suffer mutations as a result of their origin. Some of these Ferals have been more heavily impacted by the mutagens common to these regions, and as a result, choose three mutations: one Major Mutation, one Minor Mutation, and one Negative Mutation. The majority of Ferals, however, have only minor mutations, as heavy mutations have a tendency to lead to early death or miscarriage. These Ferals choose only one mutation, a Minor Mutation. When a Feral character is created, with the GM's permission they may have either heavy or mild mutations, and pick from the following lists.

MAJOR MUTATIONS

DWARFISM

The character suffers a -1 penalty to Strength and its associated skills (though its rating is not decreased) and count as having a Size rating two points smaller than usual. As a result, their movement speed and the size of weapons and gear they can carry on a strap decreases, but they gain two points of Defense. This is typically a result of a growth hormone deficiency, and may be accompanied by minor side effects. Turner's syndrome and Laron syndrome are known to be common mutations due to retroviral strains, while radiation induced mutations vary and may be linked with other issues. Note that most of the dwarfism caused in this manner is proportional, and the average height of affected adult Ferals is about 4' tall. Some cases of dwarfism in Ferals are caused by malnutrition rather than being the results of genetics or disease.

GIGANTISM

A common mutation in the pituitary gland, often caused by experimental retroviral strains, gigantism causes rapid growth and increases the ultimate size of a character affected with the mutation. Gigantism increases the character's Size by 2, and reduces their Agility by 1 due to the result of size increases to the bones in the character's hands and feet, making fine maneuvering and manipulation difficult. As a consequence of their size, characters with gigantism may carry and use weapons that are up to two sizes larger. They also have their Defense reduced by two points.

PREHENSILE TAIL

The character gains a tail that can be used for grasping surfaces or for providing additional balance. They gain a +5 bonus to all tests involving balance, including Acrobatics, though this is not applied to tests that simply involve jump distance. In addition, the character can make a melee attack with their tail, although it cannot grasp weapons. Cybernetic augmentations for unarmed combat may be applied to the tail, however.

THICK SKIN

The character has developed a thick skin that gives them a two-point increase to their Protection rating. They are not considered to be wearing armor unless they are wearing armor. The character has a distinctive look, and all tests to identify them in a crowd or in witness surveys are made with a +5 bonus.

MINOR MUTATIONS

RADIATION RESISTANCE

Less one individual mutation and more of the result of a selection pressure or inadvertent exposure to retroviruses, many Ferals exhibit extreme levels of radiation resistance. These double the thresholds for Acute Radiation Sickness, and greatly reduce an individual's risks for cancer following exposure to radiation. These benefits are added to any other benefits that improve radiation resistance.

IRON STOMACH

The character can eat almost anything that they encounter. This includes spoiled food or things that may be toxic to most humans. When scavenging for food, all tests are made at a -10 penalty, as the character can also digest things most humans cannot.

PROTECTIVE HIBERNATION

The character can voluntarily slow their metabolic processes. This allows them to "sleep" for weeks without requiring more food, but also allows them to slow blood loss significantly during hibernation (any hourly blood loss test is done daily instead, and any blood loss tests made each minute are made each hour instead). If the character entered protective hibernation to stave off wounds, they may continue healing at the usual rate, but will need food as usual (and must leave hibernation to eat).

PAIN IMMUNITY

The character feels pain, but not in an incapacitating way. Likely the result of experimentation, this mutation is still startlingly common among Ferals across the globe. The character ignores penalties from minor wounds.

NEGATIVE MUTATIONS

ANTIGEN INCOMPATIBILITY

A mutation in the production of blood antigens results in incompatibility with other blood types. While the character may still donate blood for themselves, they cannot donate blood for another character or receive a blood transfusion from anyone else. Doing so results in a severe hemolytic reaction in which they receive no benefit from the transfusion, and require immediate treatment, as fever, hypotension, and internal bleeding result. This results in a critical wound to each limb; the blood loss from these wounds can only be treated in an advanced medical facility.

BETA THALASSEMIA

The character suffers the effects of a moderate blood disorder. Hemoglobin chains form improperly, leading to anemia. The character may require cycles of transfusion and bloodletting (or more advanced iron reduction therapies) to prevent critical health issues. Due to the anemia, the character suffers a -5 test to resist any Fatigue effects. Afflicted characters often suffer from pallor, stunted growth, and have additional negative effects. While beta thalassemia may be curable, most Ferals with the condition are too old to be permanently cured by a blood marrow transfusion. Chemical therapies can negate the effects of the iron

overload, but not anemia.

PRIMARY IMMUNODEFICIENCY

The character has a reduced immune system. Being more prone to infection, they suffer a -5 penalty on all tests to resist infection or disease. In addition, opportunistic infections are more likely to afflict the character, leading to the potential for infection after handling undercooked animal products, domestic animals carrying a number of common human-transferable diseases, and other personal contact with potential disease sources, including fungus. Biological weapon exposure, even to degraded agents, is highly dangerous.

CHARACTER CREATION

Character Creation in Street Rats is a relatively quick process due to the nature of the game. Characters are built initially with an Origin, Society, Background, and Duty, plus a pool of 40 GAU. These elements combine to make characters strongly rooted in the world who are still able to fulfill the requirements of an archetype.

The order of character creation is somewhat flexible; packages should be selected in any order as the player works through their concept of their character. Once all packages have been selected, the player tallies up all the skill and attribute increases granted by their selections. These are added together to determine the level of a character's skills and attributes. No attribute or skill can be increased above a Rating of 4 at this point; if a skill or attribute would be increased past 4 the increase may be transferred to any other skill or attribute, though a skill increase cannot be applied to an attribute and vice versa. All attributes and skills start at a Rating of 0.

Once a character's packages have been calculated, they can continue to spend GAU to fill out their character by buying more abilities for their character as if the character were being advanced during play. They may also convert up to five GAU to ten AAU and receive standard or aleph grade augmentations to fill those AAU at no cost, and they may convert a further five GAU to ten AAU with free standard grade augmentations.

Note that collaboration with the Game Master is crucial during the Character Creation process; they should approve any concepts, make sure that rules are followed appropriately, and collaborate to fill in the gaps between a character's preselected packages.

ORIGIN

A character's origin determines their form as well as any particular benefits they might have.

HUMAN

Humans make up 90% of the world's population. In terms of game rules, they have no benefits or disadvantages, except for some occasional penalties to interaction. They also receive a one point bonus to five skills of their choice.

ANDROIDS AND CYBORGS

Cyborgs are the second most common type of sapient life, with about 7% of the world's

population. Cyborgs are typically created from a terminally ill or mortally wounded human, who is then uploaded into a cyberbrain, though there are infolives who have chosen to become cyborgs as well.

Androids are similar to cyborgs. They are not considered infolife because they are the result of a cyberbrain being paired with a seed consciousness, which then develops organically into an individual. They are integrated into their body, like cyborgs.

Cyborgs have the following differences from humans:

- Do not bleed and wounds do not worsen without medical care.
 - Follow Repair rules rather than Healing rules.
 - Choose a Cyborg Form from the tokens list and apply the effects.
 - Pay any necessary GAU at character creation to upgrade their base physical attributes (if this is necessary after other packages have been applied) to meet the physical attributes of their chosen form.
 - Pay an additional fee of \$2500 times the desired Attribute rating to level up Attributes.
 - Suffer a -1 penalty to each Social Attribute.
- Androids function like cyborgs, but with two adjustments:
- May choose any drone or cyborg form from the tokens list and apply the effects.
 - Suffer a further -1 penalty to all social interactions with non-androids.

BIOBORG

Bioborgs are mostly human transgenic creations. Designed for a variety of purposes, bioborgs are often hardier or faster than humans, but are clearly distinguishable (usually by means of highly visible cosmetic modifications and a barcode on the forehead or hand).

Although they do not have the skill backgrounds of humans, they may select 5 AAU worth of bioware of any grade; this is treated as if it were part of their body, and cannot be removed or disabled.

As an added bonus, bioborgs may choose to gain a 1 point bonus in two Attributes. When interacting with most humans, bioborgs suffer a -1 penalty to all social rolls due to their unnatural appearances, but a larger penalty may be applied cases if prejudice comes into play.

INFOLIFE

Infolife have significant differences from baseline humans, cyborgs, bioborgs, and androids. An infolife exists on a server or isolated cyberbrain and deals with people in a primarily digital fashion. They have the following changes from a baseline human:

- Rather than physically appearing, an infolife may project their awareness into drones, computers, and other devices via satellite link or other communications networks.
- Infolife ignore 2 Signal whenever they are connected to a device and an additional 1 Signal for each connection they are making past the first. This only applies to skill tests; download speeds are unaffected, and if the Signal rating prior to these deductions reaches the maximum rating of 15, they are still dropped from their connection.
- Because they are digital consciousnesses, all infolife exist only in digital form. Most are hosted on a server or a loose cyberbrain, which will typically be away from danger. While they cannot personally physically interact with the world, they may remotely control drones from a safe place, and many often pose as androids in this manner. Note that a GM may restrict players' access to infolife characters in their campaign, or

place certain restrictions on infolife. An infolife's lifestyle determines the neighborhood that the infolife's physical server or cyberbrain is located in, its available security, and any other amenities (such as storage space for drones or gear, places for friends to crash, and so forth). Infolife must also buy and maintain a connection to cyberspace, even if it is just a connection to the local matrix grid, in order to interact with the outside world.

SOCIETY

NORTH AMERICAN

North Americans are culturally diverse, and reflect a broad range of populations. The citizens of Canada, the UAS and FS, and Mexico are all considered to be North American in culture, and gain the following benefits:

North American Society Effects: Language [III] (English, French, or Spanish), Language [I] (Any), and two Interests, choosing from Art, Corporate Politics, Current Events, Domestic Politics (Canada, UAS & FS, or Mexico), International Politics, Religion, Sciences, and Western History.

SOUTH AMERICAN

FORMER SOVIET

The Soviet Union survived for over a century and had a massive impact on the course of the world's development. Its culture permeated Russia and many other parts of the world, especially in Eastern Europe where it had occupied much of the territory since World War II. Although the central government structure of the Soviet Union collapsed, many of the people living in the regions that were affiliated with the Soviet Union are still very much products of the destroyed empire.

Former Soviet Society Effects: Language [III]* (Russian or client state's language), Language [II]* (Client state's language, English, or Russian) and two Interests, choosing from Art, Communist Politics, Domestic Politics (Russia or particular client states) Current Events, Sciences, and Western History

* At least one Language must be Russian

EUROPEAN

ASIAN

MIDDLE EASTERN

AFRICAN

FERAL

The term "Feral" refers to those born and raised in one of the war-torn regions that no longer has traditional law and order, such as the North American Containment Zone. Those raised in a Feral society take the Language token of another skills (one appropriate to the region in which they are raised), and take the following skills.

Prerequisites: Human origin.

Feral Society Effects: Language [II] (drawn from the appropriate Society for their geographic region), Survival 1, Feral Mutations (see the FERAL MUTATIONS section).

SPACER

Spacers come from a general cultural background, but have their own unique interests and politics. While they often have vestiges of an Earthbound cultural identity, those who have worked closely with spacers will attest to the fact that they have their own unique interests in political spheres.

Spacer Society Effects: Language [III] any, Language I (any two), and two Interests, choosing from Astronomy, Current Events, Microgravity Athletics, Sciences, Spacer Politics, Religion, and Terraforming Efforts.

BACKGROUND

A character's Background represents their training, life experiences, and sometimes faction affiliation.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement is an underrated profession near the end of the 21st century, and the embedded corruption, political activities, or incompetency of police forces leads many former police officers to seek justice more directly as Rats, or join corporate security forces out of disillusionment.

Attribute Bonuses: Speed, Toughness, Awareness, Quickness: +1

Skill Bonuses: Small Arms, Drive +2, Unarmed Melee Combat, Melee Weapons, Negotiation, Investigation, Perception, Etiquette +1

ACADEMIA

Rats, at first glance, seem unlikely to be academics, but many Rats have a love of learning and a passion for their topical fields. Modern academics tend to learn about sciences more than any other subject, but a natural desire for learning drives them to diversify into applied skills.

Attribute Bonuses: Intellect: +2, Will, Awareness: +1

Skill Bonuses: Research +2, Life Science, Earth Science, Physics, Programming, Etiquette +1

COMPUTER SCIENCE

A computer science background serves as a solid foundation for any programmer or street hacker, since an intimate familiarity with computer systems reveals their vulnerabilities and potentials. However, most computer science experts learn programming rather than hacking.

Attribute Bonuses: Will, Intellect, Awareness, Composure: +10

Skill Bonuses: Programming, Electronic Warfare, Diagnostics +2, Intrusion, Overwatch, Research +1

STREETS

Growing up on the streets is hard, but it's also very common for Rats. Most people trying to eke out a humble living on the streets acquire a broad range of skills and abilities, and build important networks with their peers and local communities.

Attribute Bonuses: Speed, Composure, Toughness, Awareness +1

Skill Bonuses: Fast Talk, Perception +2, Running, Acrobatics, Drive, Repair, Sleight, Stealth +1

MILITARY

Soldiers and officers faced great trouble in World War III, and many returned home to a mere phantom of the places they had sworn to protect. Often augmented, highly trained, or battle hardened, their discipline and leadership skills are as useful as their combat training.

Attribute Bonuses: Awareness, Strength, Speed, Toughness, Will: +1

Skill Bonuses: Small Arms +2, Unarmed Melee Combat, Melee Combat, Running, Big Guns, Drive, Athletics +1

CORPORATE DRONE

Every once in a while an office drone drops out of the system. As Rats, "retired" corporate drones often find that their cultivated social skills and organization abilities come in handy for lining up and following through on jobs and keeping the peace between factions in the community.

Attribute Bonuses: Composure, Diplomacy, Invention, Intellect: +1

Skill Bonuses: Negotiation, Etiquette, Banter +2, Drive, Fast Talk, Persuasion +1

CORPORATE SECURITY

While corporate agents lack the big guns of government agents and soldiers, they often face harsh working conditions and hostile agents as part of their daily routine. Rats with a background in corporate security are invaluable on jobs that involve infiltrating secure facilities.

Attribute Bonuses: Awareness +2, Strength, Toughness +1

Skill Bonuses: Perception, Small Arms +2, Etiquette, Unarmed Melee Combat +1

CON ARTIST

Con artists have spent their lives creating elaborate schemes to talk others out of their money. Capable of coming up with quick stories and building confidence in others, Rats who have experience as con artists are often able to talk their way out of tricky situations.

Attribute Bonuses: Invention +2, Composure, Diplomacy +1

Skill Bonuses: Con +2, Persuasion, Negotiation, Etiquette, Banter, Fast Talk +1

CELEBRITY

Celebrities have a smattering of social skills and life experience that often serves them well in life on the streets. While only a few of the rich and famous fall out of society so far as to

become a Rat, some forgotten few who are down on their luck have nowhere else to turn.

Attribute Bonuses: Diplomacy +2, Invention, Composure +1

Skill Bonuses: Etiquette, Negotiation +2, Banter, Fast Talk +1

CAREER CRIMINAL

While many people often look down on career criminals, a good number of Rats could be classified as such. With ties to organized crime or gangs, career criminals have experience with some of the worst dregs of humanity.

Attribute Bonuses: Toughness, Awareness, Composure, Speed, Intellect +1

Skill Bonuses: Small Arms, Countersecurity, Athletics, Perception, Investigation, Fast Talk, Intimidation, Stealth, Sleight, Drive +1

ATHLETE

Athletes, like celebrities, are unlikely to wind up on the streets, but a few of them inevitably become Rats, especially athletes whose careers failed to pan out. Their physical training and conditioning helps them survive hazardous jobs.

Attribute Bonuses: Strength, Toughness +2, Speed +1

Skill Bonuses: Athletics, Running +1

DOCTOR

Doctors make a good living, but there is always room for them among the Rats if they so desire. Working in the shadows can be just as lucrative as working legitimately, and many doctors envy the independence and freedom of life as a street doc.

Attribute Bonuses: Intellect +2, Awareness +1

Skill Bonuses: Medicine +3, Drive, Negotiation +1

CONTROLLER

Controllers are on the cutting edge of technology, working with drones and remote controlled vehicles as part of their daily lives. Responsible for maintenance, programming, and direct control of their charges, many controllers are Rats with enough technical experience and know-how to do their job, but not enough education or status to move up in the world.

Attribute Bonuses: Awareness, Intellect, Composure, Will +1

Skill Bonuses: Electronic Warfare, Diagnostics, Repair +2, Perception, Pilot, Drive +1

PILOT

Pilots are trained to operate flying vehicles including VTOLs, jets, and helicopters. While pilots are particularly in demand during the urgent expansion of the post-war period, many find themselves blacklisted from the various pacts due to their wartime activities, and must go underground to find gainful employment.

Attributes: Speed +2, Awareness, Composure +1

Skills: Pilot, Perception +2, Electronic Warfare, Etiquette, Banter, Athletics +1

HACKER

Hackers have always had an air of mystery to them. While they often are painted as recluses or outcasts, many are simply prodigies with computers who are highly knowledgeable with regards to digital systems, and are willing to take a risk or two to experiment with them.

Attributes: Awareness, Intellect, Will, Composure: +1

Skills: Intrusion, Overwatch +2, Programming, Electronic Warfare, Diagnostics, Perception +1

SPACER

Spacers enjoy the relative calm found outside of Earth, residing either on a lunar or martian base, or in orbit above or near Earth. They tend to be highly educated in technical matters, though they often seem clumsy and weak to those who have grown up in normal gravity.

Attributes: Intellect, Awareness, Speed, Will +1

Skills: Repair, Perception, Zero-G Operations +2, Engineering, Spacecraft, Diagnostics +1

FERAL

Ferals come from the heavily irradiated war-zones that have lost most or all contact with the outside world, such as the North American Containment Zone or the Finnish Cordon. Only a few ferals find their way to society to become Rats, but they are known for their toughness and self-reliance.

Attributes: Toughness +2, Strength, Speed +1

Skills: Survival +2, Stealth, Driving, Running, Small Arms, Perception +1

WASTER

While most people avoid nuclear hot zones, wasters scavenge valuables and heirlooms from them, seeking government secrets and prototypes lost deep within containment zones. Unlike ferals, most wasters have a "home" outside of a containment zone, and most are Rats.

Attributes: Toughness, Speed, Awareness, Strength, Will +1

Skills: Survival +2, Negotiation, Small Arms, Survival, Stealth, Driving, Repair, Diagnostics +1

DUTY

A character's Duty represents their chosen pursuit; it provides benefits as a character advances along certain paths of development. A character starts out in their Duty with a number of benefits and bonuses, and gains an additional Rank in their duty for every twenty Rating points they have for their Duty's associated skills and attributes, gaining their first bonus at a total of 20 points. When they gain a rank, they may choose one of the special bonuses for their class. When the total of the Duty's associated skill and attribute ranks reaches 75, they gain a special mastery bonus.

GUNSLINGER

Gunslingers use guns to their full potential, engaging in close quarters combat. Most gunslingers are fast and agile, though some prefer to soak up damage with heavy body armor and augmentations. Unlike their counterpart, the Marksman, a Gunslinger will attempt to lay down fire often and quickly, using semiautomatic weapons to fire precision rounds at short range, and unlike a Marauder they focus on firing single shots with weapons rather than spraying hoards of bullets at their enemies.

Gunslinger Duty Attributes and Skills: Speed, Awareness, Composure (Attributes) and Small Arms, Perception, Acrobatics (Skills)

Gunslinger Duty Bonuses: Speed (1), Awareness (1), Composure (1), Small Arms (2), Perception (1)

Gunslinger Duty Special: Rapid Shot. Gunslingers may switch between targets while firing a Size 1 or 2 weapon without incurring any penalties.

Gunslinger Duty Rank Bonus 1: Strong Wrists. Gunslingers may fire Size 1 or 2 weapons from one hand without incurring the double recoil penalty.

Gunslinger Duty Rank Bonus 2: Two Gun Master. Gunslingers decrease the penalty for the second weapon they fire in an attack action by -5.

Gunslinger Duty Rank Bonus 3: Nimble Reloader. Gunslingers may reload two size one or two ranged weapons as a single resolution action (at their normal reloading rate).

Gunslinger Mastery Bonus: Gun Kata. The Gunslinger gains a +2 Defense bonus when using two ranged weapons, and may combine any movement resolution actions with rapid or aimed ranged attacks.

MARAUDER

Marauders focus on the use of automatic and heavy weapons. They are particularly dangerous against heavily armored enemies and vehicles, where their familiarity with heavy weapons and ability to take a hit gives them an edge. Unlike their counterpart the Marksman, Marauders believe in saturating an area with bullets, and unlike a Gunslinger they prefer high-caliber automatic weapons and single-fire heavy weapons, focusing their fire on single targets.

Marauder Duty Attributes and Skills: Strength, Awareness, Toughness (Attributes) and Big Guns, Small Arms, Demolitions (skills)

Marauder Duty Bonuses: Strength (1), Awareness (1), Toughness (1), Big Guns (1), Athletics (1), Demolitions (1), Small Arms (1)

Marauder Duty Special: On Target. Your first automatic fire attack in a resolution action is not subject to Recoil.

Marauder Duty Rank Bonus 1: Sufficient Firepower. When firing an automatic burst of at least three shots, a Marginal Result causes two hits, rather than one.

Marauder Duty Rank Bonus 2: More Bullets. May fire an additional automatic burst per Automatic Fire action.

Marauder Duty Rank Bonus 3: Big and Strong. Reduce the Recoil rating of any weapon by 1 when used for Automatic Fire. This can result in a weapon having no recoil, in which case you incur 1 point of recoil per burst fired.

Marauder Mastery Bonus: Suppression. Whenever you take an Automatic Fire action, your defense increases as if you were in half cover (this bonus is not cumulative with other cover bonuses), and you may reload a belt-fed weapon if you take no resolution actions in a turn other than Automatic Fire actions.

MARKSMAN

Marksmen focus on excellence in their field; one shot, one kill. They are capable of firing their weapons at long range, remaining out of harm's way as they remove their enemies one-by-one. Unlike their counterpart the Gunslinger, a Marksman rarely shows themselves on the battlefield, choosing to stay in cover or at great range, and unlike the Marauder the Marksman focuses on single, devastating, shots.

Marksman Duty Skills and Attributes: Awareness, Speed, Composure (Attributes) and Long Guns, Stealth, Perception (Skills)

Marksman Duty Bonuses: Awareness (1), Speed (1), Small Arms (1), Long Guns (2), Perception (1)

Marksman Duty Special: Eagle Eye. Reduce all range penalties by half when firing any Long Guns weapon, rounding down. Vision-based perception tests are treated as occurring at half distance.

Marksman Duty Rank Bonus 1: Controlled Breathing. You may ignore any two environmental factors for an Aimed Shot, such as lighting, wind, or weather.

Marksman Duty Rank Bonus 2: Mental Calculations. You may ignore a target's movement speed for both Aimed Shots and Quick Shots.

Marksman Duty Rank Bonus 3: Ricochet. When you can see a target and they are not entirely blocked from you, you treat any cover they have as being half of its usual value; full cover becomes half cover, half cover becomes quarter cover, and quarter cover has no effect.

Marksman Mastery Bonus: Professional. Double the damage bonus from Margins on any Aimed Shot attack. Your Perception skill treats all tests as occurring at a third of their usual distance.

ASSAULT

Assaults are generalists; using a variety of weapons and tactics, they specialize in battlefield control and flexible engagements. Unlike the other combat Duties, Assaults focus on being able to use any weapon in any condition. While they get fewer bonuses, they are able to fight from any position, moving or stationary, or in vehicles.

Assault Duty Skills and Attributes: Awareness, Speed, Toughness (Attributes) and Small Arms, Long Arms, Big Guns (Skills)

Assault Duty Bonuses: Toughness (1), Speed (1), Big Guns (1), Small Arms (1), Long Guns (1), Energy Weapons (1), Running (1), Stealth (1)

Assault Duty Special: Stand Firm. When firing any weapon, you count as if you were bracing using a bipod or surface; only a single Recoil penalty, rather than the sum of all Recoil penalties, applies to your Rapid Fire.

Assault Duty Rank Bonus 1: Rapid Reload. You reload weapons at twice the normal rate; if you are reloading a weapon with a box magazine or a single load of ammunition that requires one resolution action to reload, you reload instantaneously, otherwise you double the amount of ammunition loaded or reduce the time required to reload the weapon to half the normal number of resolution actions.

Assault Duty Rank Bonus 2: Lethal Aim. While firing a rapid fire burst, you may make a called shot (following the rules for a called shot in the Aimed Shot rules) at a -10 penalty. This penalty applies to each shot you choose to make a called shot, and only to those shots.

Assault Duty Rank Bonus 3: Combat Focus. For each successive shot or burst against the same target, you gain a +1 bonus to your attempts to hit. This bonus is maintained between attacks so long as you maintain a line of sight on your target and you do not attack any other targets.

Assault Mastery Bonus: Vindicator. Your weapons always are treated as being braced using a tripod, allowing you to fire both Rapid Fire and Automatic Fire with only one Recoil penalty applying. In addition, your weapons never need to be reloaded (though you can still run out of ammunition), and you negate up to two points of movement-related penalties on all your ranged attacks.

CODESLINGER

Codeslingers are hackers extraordinaire. They are willing to dive into dangerous and foreign systems, assaulting them to grab valuable paydata and shut down opponents' facilities and gear. Unlike their counterpart, the Firewall, a Codeslinger focuses on pure offense, often sacrificing their own well-being to crack into a hardened system.

Codeslinger Duty Attributes and Skills: Will, Composure, Speed (Attributes), Intrusion, Electronic Warfare, Programming (Skills)

Codeslinger Duty Bonuses: Will (1), Composure (1), Speed (1), Intrusion (2)

Codeslinger Duty Special: Swordfish. Gain a +2 bonus on all attempts to gain authentication on a hostile system.

Codeslinger Duty Rank Bonus 1: Unobtrusive. You reduce any Alarm ratings by 2 for the purposes of determining opposing Overwatch bonuses and Intrusion penalties. This cannot reduce the effective Alarm rating by 1.

Codeslinger Duty Rank Bonus 2: Lock-out. You may prevent a system lockdown for a number of turns equal to the Margin on an Intrusion test, using 15 plus the system's Firewall rating as the threshold.

Codeslinger Duty Rank Bonus 3: Malware Master. You may install malware automatically when you gain authentication on the system. You must have an appropriate software, but cannot be automatically detected by the system. The file still takes time to transfer.

Codeslinger Mastery Bonus: Pwnage. When you take a system, you take a system.

Anyone trying to perform Overwatch actions against you suffers a -4 penalty, and you cannot be traced, even over public networks (you can determine the apparent results of any trace). In addition, you double the shutdown lockout time for the Lock-out ability.

FIREWALL

Firewalls focus on network security and awareness. They watch matrix and PAN traffic, shutting down hostile intrusion attempts while ensuring that a team can communicate effectively. Unlike their counterpart, the Codeslinger, a Firewall plays things safe, watching over their teammates and their own gear as they protect their allies from digital intrusion.

Firewall Duty Attributes and Skills: Will, Composure, Intellect (Attributes), Overwatch, Programming, Diagnostics (Skills)

Firewall Duty Bonuses: Will (1), Composure (1), Overwatch (2), Programming (1), Diagnostics (1)

Firewall Duty Special: In The System. You cannot be removed from any system that you have legitimate administrator access for except by complete signal jamming.

Firewall Duty Rank Bonus 1: Like a Hawk. When defending any system you or an ally is physically in control of, the system is considered to have an Alarm rating two points higher than it normally would. This bonus does not contribute to automatic shutdowns.

Firewall Duty Rank Bonus 2: The Best Defense. If a hacker has connected to a system you are defending you gain a four point bonus to all Intrusion actions carried out against their machine. You also gain a two point bonus to any test that attempts to increase a hacker's effective Signal rating.

Firewall Duty Rank Bonus 3: Firewall. You may terminate file transfers to and from a system you control and are actively defending. This prevents the installation of malware and keeps intruders from downloading files, but the restriction works both ways. Standard hacking actions to gain control of the system are still possible, and the effect ends if you disconnect from the system.

Firewall Mastery Bonus: Hunch. When connected to a system, you know if there is a hacker connected, if they have an account, the highest compromised account level, and if there is any malware installed. You may restrict access to guest accounts on any system you are connected to. In addition, you know if someone is attempting a Dive on the system. You gain a two point bonus to all Overwatch and Electronic Warfare tests.

WHEELMAN

The Wheelman focuses on piloting or driving vehicles. They make sure that a team can get anywhere they need to go, handling both mundane and exotic requests as they breach security or find the best parking spot. Unlike their counterpart, the Sleever, a Wheelman stays behind the wheel of the vehicles they operate, making sure that there's a personal element to the process of transportation.

Wheelman Duty Skills and Attributes: Awareness, Composure, Speed (Attributes) and Drive, Pilot, Perception (Skills)

Wheelman Duty Bonuses: Awareness (1), Composure (1), Drive (2), Pilot (1), Small Arms (1),

Perception (1)

Wheelman Duty Special: Pedal to the Metal. You can drive faster than other people. Your Maximum Chase Speed is increased to six times your vehicle's Speed, and you increase your vehicle's Maneuverability by 1.

Wheelman Duty Rank Bonus 1: Multi-tasking. While it is normally required to take a Resolution Action to maintain the course of a vehicle, you may take a free Resolution Action to drive or pilot any vehicle, freeing you up to undertake other tasks, such as firing a weapon. You must be physically driving or piloting the vehicle to benefit from this bonus.

Wheelman Duty Rank Bonus 2: Road Rage. When ramming with a vehicle, increase outgoing damage by two points, and reduce incoming damage by the same amount. In addition, you are able to ignore the effects of ramming on Acceleration and Maneuverability.

Wheelman Duty Rank Bonus 3: Machine Lover. Whenever your vehicle would take a wound, you may take a wound one level lower in its place, rolling the hit location randomly against your own hit location table. This only applies to vehicles that you are personally driving or piloting.

Wheelman Mastery Bonus: Zen of the Highway: Your vehicles work better because you understand the balance between the driver and the road. Increase the Maneuverability, Acceleration, Defense, and Protection of any vehicle you drive or pilot by 3, and you may take a free Resolution Action to drive or pilot a vehicle each turn, in addition to the bonus from Multi-tasking.

SLEEVER

Sleevers operate vehicles and drones remotely, using a wireless connection to direct and coordinate the actions of their minions. Unlike their counterpart, the Wheelman, the Sleever is more about getting in on the action than finding their way to it, and they spread out and diversify their assets, deploying drones across the mission area.

Sleever Duty Attributes and Skills: Awareness, Intellect, Speed (Attributes) and Drive, Pilot, Electronic Warfare (Skills)

Sleever Duty Bonuses: Awareness (1), Intellect (1), Drive (1), Pilot (1), Repair (1), Small Arms (1), Electronic Warfare (1)

Sleever Duty Special: Remote Operation. You ignore two points of Signal rating when sending commands to drones.

Sleever Duty Rank Bonus 1: Drone Specialist. You gain a three point bonus to all tests to Repair or Electronic Warfare tests involving drones.

Sleever Duty Rank Bonus 2: Frequent Flier: You gain a +2 bonus to all Pilot tests with drones, and improve the Maneuverability of your flying drones by 2. You may make a Resolution Action Pilot test for a flying drone for free, to a limit of two drones each turn. You can mix-and-match these drones with those from Field Operator, but you have a limit of two.

Sleever Duty Rank Bonus 3: Field Operator. You gain a +2 bonus to all Drive tests with drones, and improve the Maneuverability of your ground drones by 2. Each turn, you may make a free action each turn to maintain a ground-based drone's course, to a limit of two drones

each turn. You can mix-and-match these drones with those from Frequent Flier, but you have a limit of two.

Sleever Mastery Bonus: Drone Dervish. If you spend at least one Resolution Action in a turn on manually controlling a drone, you may take a free Resolution Action yourself later in that turn. In addition, you may ignore four points of Signal rating when sending commands to drones, and also gain a two-point bonus to all attacks made with drones.

MECHANIC

A mechanic is an expert in repairing, building, and scrapping machines of all sorts. While they may not have formal technical training, their tinkering provides them with a broad canon of experience with almost any piece of gear that a Rat keeps on hand, plus a number of everyday objects that are taken for granted by their average users.

Mechanic Attributes and Skills: Intellect, Will, Toughness (Attributes) and Repair, Diagnostics, Engineering (Skills)

Mechanic Duty Bonuses: Intellect (1), Repair (2), Diagnostics (1), Engineering (1), Drive (1), Pilot (1)

Mechanic Duty Special: Jury-rig. The character can make a Repair test on a vehicle or damaged piece of gear even if there are no available materials or tools. These repairs are temporary, and end if the Mechanic leaves the physical vicinity of the object, or is unable to attend to it for a few minutes. A damaged item may only be fixed once in this manner before it receives real repairs.

Mechanic Duty Rank Bonus 1: Scavenger. When attempting to repair an item, you may use a similar type of item for replacement parts. For example, you could fix a car by using an engine from another car, or a revolver by using a cylinder from a different model of revolver that fires the same caliber. The two items must be similar in size and scale. The GM has final say with regards to the furthest "difference" permitted.

Mechanic Duty Rank Bonus 2: Inventive. If you do not have access to a workshop to create an item, but you do have access to a kit of tools that you may need, you may make a single-use variety of an item. This requires the same time and materials as the normal finished item, and the parts are damaged in the process and cannot be reused.

Mechanic Duty Rank Bonus 3: Engineering Mind. You repair one more Wound on any drone, vehicle, or object you attempt to repair. This Wound can be of the greatest magnitude that you could repair with the test results you received and the parts that you are using, or you can downgrade it if no other Wounds of that type exist.

Mechanic Mastery Bonus: Fixer. Your ability to repair things is legendary. When working with Repair, Diagnostics, or Engineering skills, you may add a quarter of the sum of the ratings of both of the skills in the trio you are not using to your roll's results as a modifier. You also work twice as fast on any Engineering, Repair, or Diagnostics tests. In addition, you can fix Minor Wounds to vehicles, cyborgs, or drones without parts.

FACE

Faces are social experts who pride themselves on their ability to get through any

situation. They can quick-talk, but they prefer to go in with a plan and focus on their skills and abilities. Unlike their counterpart, the Scoundrel, a Face prefer to operate openly and faithfully, though they still engage in foul play and conspiracies when it suits them. When they operate under false pretenses, they do so via disguise, and still follow the appropriate rules to do what they want to do.

Face Duty Skills and Attributes: Diplomacy, Composure, Invention (Attributes) and Negotiation, Etiquette, Persuasion (Skills)

Face Duty Bonuses: Diplomacy (1), Composure (1), Awareness (1), Negotiation (1), Etiquette (1), Fast Talk (1), Persuasion (1)

Face Duty Special: Diplomat. When you would reduce your Standing with a NPC as a result of a social roll, you may attempt the test again; if the second test succeeds any attempted influence still "fails", but your Standing does not decrease.

Face Duty Rank Bonus 1: First Impressions. When you meet a new NPC, treat your Standing as being two points higher, for that encounter only.

Face Duty Rank Bonus 2: Friendly Face. You have mastered blending into any social situation. Your Etiquette rolls to present yourself as a member of any large organization or affinity group gain a +5 bonus, if you can pass for the group (such as by having any appropriate clothes, signs and countersigns, et cetera).

Face Duty Rank Bonus 3: Protocol Master. When attempting Protocol tests, you may reroll any results of 1-5. You must keep the second result. This only works once per day per target.

Face Mastery Bonus: Angelic. Any successful Diplomatic rerolls have the desired influence effect as well as preventing Standing loss, you gain a +3 bonus to all social rolls where you are telling the truth (even if said truth is stretched), and you gain a +1 Standing bonus for the purposes of determining available social actions (but not for determining the difficulty of those actions).

SCOUNDREL

Scoundrels specialize in getting people to trust them and give them things they shouldn't have. Masters of the con and simply blathering their way in anywhere they should be, they have an uncanny ability to convince others of their trustworthiness. Unlike their counterpart, the Face, Scoundrels rarely cultivate contacts, building webs of lies and networks of unsuspecting accomplices and then discarding them once they have outlived their use.

Scoundrel Duty Skills and Attributes: Diplomacy, Composure, Invention (Attributes) and Banter, Con, Fast Talk (Skills)

Scoundrel Duty Bonuses: Composure (1), Invention (1), Fast Talk (2), Banter (1), Con (1)

Scoundrel Duty Special: Charming Rogue. All of your failed Composure tests incur one less point of Suspicion. This can prevent all Suspicion, if appropriate.

Scoundrel Duty Rank Bonus 1: Disarming Smile. You may take a Resolution Action immediately after completing any social skill test, acting prior to any non-player characters. If your actions start the first round of combat, they cannot counter-attack or make any ranged

attacks, though they can still attack with unarmed combat or melee weapons they were holding.

Scoundrel Duty Rank Bonus 2: Silver Tongue. On a successful Fast Talk or Banter test, you decrease the target's Suspicion by one point.

Scoundrel Duty Rank Bonus 3: Shoot First. When using the Fast Talk, Banter, or Con skills, you may make a free attack against a target. If this attack is made with a melee weapon, you get one free Margin of Success. Otherwise, treat it as an Aimed Shot with no Margins of Success, though you may choose to select the target location or add the effects of a single Margin of Success to the attack.

Scoundrel Mastery Bonus: Mastermind. When you use the Con, Banter, or Fast Talk skills in a test, you may ignore the result of the die roll and take a 20 on the result. Any effects end as soon as you fail another roll, and Mastermind can only be used once per target per day. Any recent target of the Mastermind effect who is part of a group that you attempt to use the Mastermind effect on will prevent the activation from taking effect, requiring you to roll instead. In addition, your Shoot First attacks gain the effects of an additional Margin of Success.

STREET DOC

Street Docs specialize in trauma medicine. While few Street Docs are actually licensed physicians or trained medical personnel, they have enough experience and practical skills to save lives. Because a Street Doc doesn't have the security personnel or assistants a real doctor enjoys, they tend to be hardy folks who have learned to defend themselves and those they care for.

Street Doc Duty Attributes and Skills: Intellect, Awareness, Toughness (Attributes) and Medicine, Perception, Small Arms (Skills)

Street Doc Duty Bonuses: Intellect (1), Awareness (1), Toughness (1), Medicine (2)

Street Doc Duty Special: Field Medic. The Street Doc may undertake all Medicine skill checks as a Resolution Action, except for surgeries. In addition, the Street Doc suffers half the penalty for inappropriate working environments and gear in those situations.

Street Doc Duty Rank Bonus 1: Lifesaver. The Street Doc removes twice as much bleeding whenever they attempt to reduce blood loss.

Street Doc Duty Rank Bonus 2: Field Surgeon. When performing any surgery, the Street Doc ignores any penalty for inappropriate working environments, though the proper gear is still required.

Street Doc Duty Rank Bonus 3: Cyberneticist. The Street Doc may use the Medicine skill instead of the Repair skill to treat androids and cyborgs. However, they may not use this to repair vehicles or drones not inhabited by an android, and they must still find or purchase parts using the usual methods.

Street Doc Mastery Bonus: Savior. The Street Doc's attempts to heal someone can never cause harm, they suffer no penalty for inappropriate working environments and gear, except for during surgery, and they double all bleeding reduction (combined with Lifesaver, this

results in four times the original bleeding reduction).

INFILTRATOR

Infiltrators sneak into places they shouldn't be. They hone themselves to physical and mental perfection and use the best gadgets and augmentations to be virtually undetectable. Their closest counterparts are the Stalwart and the Wrecker, but they have little in common with either.

Infiltrator Duty Bonuses: Awareness (1), Speed (1), Perception (2), Stealth (1), Countersecurity (1).

Infiltrator Duty Special: Spy. When you are undetected by enemies, you gain a +2 bonus to any Stealth, Sleight, Athletics, Acrobatics, and Perception Tests.

Infiltrator Duty Rank Bonus 1: False Alarm. For the purposes of enemy perception, the current Alarm rating for physical infiltration is reduced by 2. This applies to you and any party members you can see.

Infiltrator Duty Rank Bonus 2: Bloodhound. Your Sleight, Investigation, Perception, and Countersecurity skills get a five point bonus when you are undetected and trying to bypass locks or traps or while you are attempting to find hidden passages or caches.

Infiltrator Duty Rank Bonus 3: Saboteur. You may use Sleight to make something malfunction when someone tries to use it next. The malfunction is not critical, simply something that requires several seconds to work around. The Threshold of the test is determined by the GM, and the next user attempting to use the object must spend five seconds per Margin of success (plus five seconds for simply succeeding) to get the object to work. For example, you could keep a target's car from starting so that you could escape pursuit.

Infiltrator Mastery Bonus: A Dark Wind. Speed and stealth are one and the same for you. You are never treated as moving for the purposes of being detected, and automated surveillance does not detect you (though anyone actively monitoring a security system may still make a Perception test as normal).

STALWART

Stalwarts focus on absorbing damage for their team. A good Stalwart can always make themselves the center of attention, and draw fire toward their own heavily augmented and armored form. They are similar to their Wrecker counterpart because of their tendency to get heavy augmentations and their physical affinity, but a Stalwart will try to draw off fire for their team rather than simply wading into combat.

Stalwart Duty Bonuses: Toughness (2)

Stalwart Duty Special: Keep On Trucking. Ignore the greatest wound to each hit location, with the exception of fatal wounds. All lesser wounds, or subsequent wounds to the same location, still apply. This stacks with other effects that negate wounds, such as the Adrenalin Booster.

Stalwart Duty Rank Bonus 1: Flesh Wound. Reduce the Margin of any incoming attack by 1 for the purposes of determining the damage you receive. If an attack hits you with a Margin of 0, you reduce the damage by however much its damage would normally increase. If hit with an

automatic fire burst you still take full damage from each projectile, but ignore one bullet if more than one bullet would hit you.

Stalwart Duty Rank Bonus 2: Good Neighbor. When an ally within arm's reach of you would get hit by any attack, exchange places with them. You take the damage from the attack, applying your resistances.

Stalwart Duty Rank Bonus 3: Luck. Anyone who gets shot as much as you do and lives to tell about it must be lucky. You may choose to reroll hit locations once per combat round, taking the result you prefer.

Stalwart Mastery Bonus: Invulnerable. Your augmentations cannot become damaged, you ignore an additional greatest wound in each location (so that you ignore the two greatest wounds), while still gaining the benefit of any other wound penalty reductions. You gain 2 to your Protection and 2 to your Defense.

WRECKER

Wreckers specialize in causing massive damage in close quarters combat. A Wrecker prides themselves on their ability to use their body's raw power to its full potential. Like their counterpart, the Stalwart, a Wrecker is a center of combat, and they do tend to be heavily augmented, but they prefer to rush in and try to deal as much damage as they can.

Wrecker Duty Skills and Attributes: Toughness, Strength, Speed (Attributes), Melee Weapons, Unarmed Melee Combat, Running (Skills)

Wrecker Duty Bonuses: Strength (1), Toughness (1), Speed (1), Melee Weapons (2), Unarmed Melee Combat (1), Running (1)

Wrecker Duty Special: Batter Up. A wrecker may make multiple counter-attacks in a turn, and they make counter-attacks against targets that roll a Margin of Failure of 2 or greater.

Wrecker Duty Rank Bonus 1: Slippery. You gain a +3 bonus to Defense when you are within striking distance of a target.

Wrecker Duty Rank Bonus 2: Behemoth. When wielding a two-handed weapon, you add your full Strength bonus again, instead of half your Strength bonus, and you add half of your Strength bonus as an additional bonus to your attacks with one-handed weapons.

Wrecker Duty Rank Bonus 3: Rampage. If you cause a critical wound (or dismemberment) to a target, you may make a second attack against that target immediately.

Wrecker Mastery Bonus: Bringer of Pain. When using multiple melee weapons, you no longer forfeit any other attacks you could make if you fail by a Margin of 3. In addition, all of your appendages are considered dominant for the purposes of making melee attacks, and you may make an additional unarmed attack as a free action during each turn.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Characters advance by spending Advancement Units, which come in two forms: General Advancement Units and Augmentation Advancement Units.

GAU purchase skill and attribute increases. AAU only purchase augmentations, though

they may be converted into GAU at a reduced rate.

GAU are a measure of a character's experience and training, and things that they have picked up through observation and study. They can increase the core skills and abilities of a character. GAU are a measure of learning and training. GAU also reflect life experiences.

AAU serve as a limiting factor in augmentation use. AAU reflect a character's physical status, familiarity with their augmentations, and readiness for surgery. Augmentations must still be purchased and installed; AAU do not provide free augmentations. AAU provide a limit to a character's augmentations.

GAU and AAU can be converted. Each GAU is worth a single AAU, while two AAU are worth one GAU.

Improving a negative attribute costs 8 points, regardless of its current rating.

Advancement Costs:

Attributes: 2-8-16-30-45→(45 forever)

Skills: 1-3-8-14-22→(22 forever)

AWARDING GAU AND AAU

ACTION

Most actions in Street Rats follow a universal set of rules governing how they occur. Actions with results that fall into a simple pass/fail dichotomy have a greater positive Margin increase the speed. Actions that can be completed with better quality have any positive Margin for the roll increase the quality of the result.

These rules can also apply to failed rolls rather than having simple failure. A character with a negative Margin on picking a lock might still pick the lock, but after more time. A character attempting to disguise themselves might still manage to apply a disguise, but it would be obvious. The GM has final say in these decisions. They may even decide that a result fails, but requires more time than normal, or fails in a catastrophic manner.

HANDLING TIME

Time in Street Rats takes place on three scales: resolutions, turns, and real-time. Most actions can occur at any time, though some fit better in action turns. Resolution actions take a second or two of focus, and may have a physical component. Action turn actions take around four or five seconds and need concentration throughout. Real time actions resolve outside of the traditional turn structure. The guideline of three to five seconds for an average action turn should give some idea how much time they would take in action turns. Some real time actions reflect a time investment, not perfect concentration, and may pause so that other actions may occur. One example of this would be a character who is making a Programming test interrupting his work to shoot at an intruder. Generally, each action turn should be about three and a half seconds.

Augmentations and special ability tokens may impact the number of actions that a character can take, or reduce the time required for actions. Each character takes action turn length actions and real-time actions at the same speed, as they are limited by physical actions.

RESOLUTION ACTIONS

Resolution actions are available to characters based on their Resolution Rating. This reflects mental speed and the ability to act, and is equal to the number of resolution actions that a character can make in a single action turn. Characters start with a Resolution Rating of 1 and increase this rating by one point for each multiple of ten in the sum of their Speed, Awareness, and Resolution Boost ratings. A character with 4 Speed, 2 Awareness, and a 17 Resolution Boost rating would have a Resolution Rating of 3. Four plus two plus seventeen equals twenty-three, so the character adds 2 points to their Resolution Rating.

Due to the nature of resolution actions, their effects begin as soon as they occur and they cannot be interrupted. There may be contextual limits on when a character can use a resolution action. For instance, a character may only take one resolution action during combat before they must let someone else take a resolution action. This limitation does not apply to other contexts, such as hacking.

COMBAT

Combat in Street Rats involves making a roll against a defender's static Defense. This may be modified by environmental conditions, protective gear, or defensive actions. Combat involves each participant taking actions in order. Actions usually taken outside of combat may still be taken, though they may be more difficult.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

During combat, characters take actions in orders based on their Initiative. A character's Initiative is equal to the sum of their Quickness, Awareness, and any Initiative modifier they have. At the start of each combat round, the result of a d20 is added as an Initiative modifier. This modifier disappears at the end of the round.

Characters act in order of highest Initiative to lowest Initiative, following the "PUNKS GO FIRST" rule. Characters may take a single resolution action, or a turn action when their turn comes. A character may also pass their turn to the next character, saving their action for a time later in the turn. An action delayed in this manner cannot last into the next turn. Characters who take a resolution action may act again during that turn if their Resolution Rating is greater than one, taking more resolution actions until they have taken a number of actions equal to their Resolution Rating, or the maximum plausible number of actions for them. Characters may never take two resolution actions in a row during combat. They must wait for another character to act before they can use another resolution action.

MOVEMENT

Typically a character's Movement rate is equal to their Size plus their Speed, and characters may move at half of this rate per turn without taking a dedicated action. If they take

a resolution action, they may move at the full rate, though typically a character can only make one such action per turn. A character may make a Running test against a Threshold of 10 when they take a full move action; if it is successful they add one meter to their distance moved for each Margin of success they receive.

DEFENSE

A character's Defense is a static rating that serves as the Roll Threshold for all attacks made against them. An average human's Defense starts at 15, and increases by an amount equal to the greater of a character's Speed or Awareness. It is then modified by protective gear that the character may be wearing.

Characters may also take cover to increase their Defense, or attempt a Dodge action. A character who is unaware has a Defense equal to 15, which is then modified by armor and size. Dodge actions are made with the Acrobatics skill.

Dodging is a roll against a flat threshold of 10. For each Margin of Success that a character receives, they increase their Defense by 1 for that round. Dodging allows characters to take cover, which further increases their Defense.

COVER

Cover is a secondary benefit of dodging. A character behind cover gains a bonus of 1 Defense for every 10% of their body that is behind that cover relative to attackers. Dodging is cumulative with this bonus. Characters must leave cover to move, and are always at least 10% out of cover when firing their weapons.

Cover has an armor rating that adds to the Protection of a character it. The GM has final say in determining the armor rating of cover. Ranged attacks that continue past a single range increment after hitting cover always miss.

COMBAT CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

During combat, there are a number of modifiers that may be applied. These modifiers are applied to the Threshold of the attack (typically the defender's Defense), and provide attackers with a number of penalties or bonuses on their ability to hit their target.

Combat Circumstance Modifiers	
All	
Attacker stationary	-2
Defender stationary	-2
Defender completely immobilized, unconscious, or unaware of attack	-5
Defender moved X meters	+½(X), limit of +5
Dim light (candlelit room, space between streetlights)	+2
Limited light (twilight, starry night)	+4
Near-total darkness (starless night, room with heavy shades during the day)	+8
Melee	
Attacker's Size is greater than Defender's Size	-1
Defender is unarmed and has no points in Unarmed Melee Combat	-2
Fighting with an improvised weapon	+2
Ranged	
Recoil	Varies
Target is beyond first range increment	+1 per increment
Attacker has moved more than five meters this turn (including as passenger)	+4
Total darkness (sealed room with no lights, room with heavy shades during the night)	+16

MELEE ATTACKS

Melee attacks are handled as a Standard Test with a target number equal to the target's Defense, which is then modified by any appropriate environmental or circumstance modifiers.

A character making a Melee attack will use either the Unarmed Melee Combat or Melee Weapons skill, depending on whether they are armed or unarmed (or using "unarmed" weapons like shock gloves). The damage of an attack is equal to the character's Strength, plus a modifier based on the weapon they are using (if any), plus twice the number of Margins of Success they receive on the roll. If the roll fails, the attack does not connect, and no damage is dealt; a failure of more than 3 points means that the character has provoked a counter-attack.

Counter-attacks are always made unarmed unless the character has a melee weapon with the countering quality, and are made at a -5 penalty as a free action against the original attacker by the original target of the attack. Characters may only make one counter-attack per turn.

TWO-HANDED WEAPONS

Melee weapons with grips designed for use in two hands are able to be leveraged for additional power. Because of the fact that more leverage can be applied to the weapon's business end, the user of a two-handed weapon adds half of their Strength, rounding up, to the normal damage that would be calculated with the weapon.

MULTIPLE WEAPONS

A character wielding multiple weapons in melee combat may make attacks with both

weapons against one target during a single resolution action. If a character wishes to make attacks against separate targets, they must take attacks during separate actions. There are some limitations on this:

The character must have the appropriate number of manipulators to use the weapons. A character may not use a weapon wielded with too few manipulators as part of a multiple weapon attack. A weapon with a Size rating equal to or less than a third of the character's Size (an average human is Size 10) may be wielded in one hand.

A weapon wielded only in non-dominant manipulators suffers a -5 penalty. Characters have only one dominant manipulator unless otherwise stated.

A melee attack with a Margin of -3 or worse provokes a counter-attack. A character who provokes a counter-attack may not continue attacking during that resolution action.

RANGED ATTACKS

Ranged attacks resolve much like melee attacks. One noteworthy exception is that attacks with firearms or other ranged weapons that incur a Margin of -3 do not provoke a counter-attack, though they still end the attacker's actions. Likewise, as many weapons are capable of firing multiple projectiles in the time it would take to swing a weapon, there are multiple different ways that a character can attack with a ranged weapon, usually revolving around the number of individual attacks made.

Every ranged attack has a range rating. This rating is a number that reflects the best effective range of the weapon. Any attacks outside of this range suffer a penalty. This penalty is equal to -1 for aimed shots or non-firearm attacks, -2 for rapid fire shots, and -3 for automatic fire bursts. This penalty is multiplied by the number of whole range increments between the attacker and their target. A character standing 50 meters away from their target and attempting to fire a firearm with a 15-meter range rating would receive a -3 penalty for an aimed shot, a -6 penalty to each rapid fire shot, and a -9 penalty to each automatic fire burst. The greatest possible range penalty is -10 for aimed and rapid fire and -15 for automatic fire. After that, a weapon is outside its effective range and projectiles always miss their targets.

FIREARMS

Firearms are a great force multiplier and need little training to use. Making a ranged attack with a firearm is as simple making a roll against a target's Defense. A success means that the weapon hit. A failure means that the round fails to hit the desired target. At the GM's discretion, such a round may accidentally strike an ally.

When a firearm fires, it consumes ammunition. The amount of ammunition contained in a weapon is listed in the weapon's stat block.

Each firearm has a Size rating. Besides determining how hard a weapon is to conceal, the firearm's Size rating is also the shortest effective range of the weapon. Attacking a target at a distance (in meters) less than the weapon's Size rating confers a -10 penalty to hit.

AIMED FIRE

If an attacker fires only one shot with a firearm, they may make that an "aimed" attack. An aimed attack gains either a +5 bonus to the to-hit roll, or may target a specific hit location

on the target, bypassing the normal random roll. Each Margin on an Aimed Fire attack increases the final damage of the attack by 2.

Example: Jacksin is covering his teammates' retreat when he notices a combat drone preparing to fire on them. He aims his .50-Love rifle, gaining a +5 bonus, so that his total modifier to hit is 12. The drone's Defense is 10, since it is unaware, roughly human size, and has no armor defense. He rolls a 24, and applies the 2 Margin to his attack. The AP round does 20 damage with 7 AP, enough to do serious damage to the drone.

RAPID FIRE

Firearms have an ROF rating that is equal to the number of shots that they can fire in a single rapid fire action. An attacker firing a semiautomatic (SEMI) or automatic (AUTO/#) firearm may make up to five attacks with that weapon in a combat turn. Breach (BRCH) action weapons may never perform rapid fire. Rapid fire has the following effects:

Each bullet fired during a rapid fire attack imposes a penalty equal to the weapon's recoil rating on later shots during the same attack action. The minimum recoil from each shot is 1.

Switching targets imposes a -5 penalty on the next attack.

A shot's Damage increases by the positive Margin of a rapid fire attack.

A shot that rolls a Margin of -3 or a less indicates that the firearm has gone so far off course that it is impossible for the attacker to hit with further shots during that rapid fire attack.

Example: Ghost is using her Brennen 2048 AK to fire three shots, aiming at two different targets. Her targets both have a Defense of 14, and she has a final Small Arms bonus of 12. She rolls her first attack with a result of 15, hitting her first target for 7 damage with -2 armor piercing. She makes her second attack with a final bonus of 4 (-3 from recoil, -5 for switching targets). She rolls a 23 on her second attack, dealing 8 damage with -2 AP. She fires at her second target again with a bonus of 6 (-6 from recoil), rolling a 25 for the third shot and dealing 9 damage with -2 AP.

AUTOMATIC FIRE

Automatic fire resolves as a single attack. Automatic weapons have burst ratings that determine the number of bullets in each automatic attack. Recoil for an automatic attack is equal to the weapon's normal Recoil times the number of bullets fired. Automatic fire recoil applies to the attack that it originates with as well as any later bursts. The minimum Recoil of an automatic fire burst is equal to the number of bullets fired. A character may make three automatic attacks in a single resolution action. Margin on the attack provides extra bullets equal to its rating. None of the individual hits gain a damage bonus from Margin. The number of bullets that hit the target cannot exceed the number of bullets fired.

Automatic fire suffers a -5 penalty for switching targets, but only for the first burst after changing targets. If a burst results in a Margin of -3 or less, the resolution action comes to an end before more rounds can be fired.

Example: Mongrel is firing a Blackthorn M23 at a target. He unleashes three automatic bursts of five bullets each. His first attack suffers a -5 recoil penalty (1 for each bullet), his second

suffers a -10 penalty, and his third a -15 penalty. His target's Defense is 12, so his modifiers will be +10, +5, and +0. He rolls a 20, 19, and 17 (after modifiers) in succession. Each attack has a full Margin of 1, so he hits with a total of six bullets (one for each success, then an extra bullet for each Margin). Each bullet does 5 Damage and has an AP of 4, since automatic fire receives no Damage bonuses from Margins.

BEAM WEAPONS

Beam weapons function like semiautomatic weapons with a special exception. Once a character hits with an attack with a beam weapon, they can use subsequent attacks they could have taken to increase the damage (but not armor penetration) of the first hit without rolling to hit again. The designation for Beam weapons is a BEAM/# rating in the ROF category.

Example: Ghost hits a security drone with a Damage 4, AP 2 laser pistol with a BEAM/5 fire rate. If she hits on her first hit, she can multiply the damage by 5, using all her attacks to function as a single attack with a Damage rating of 20 and an Armor Penetration of 2. If she were to hit on her third hit, however, she could only use the remaining two hits, increasing her attack's Damage to 12 while keeping its Armor Penetration at 2.

PULSE WEAPONS

Pulse weapons function like semiautomatic weapons. Whenever an attack made with a pulse weapon scores a hit, a second attack may be immediately made with a +5 modifier. This attack does not consume additional ammunition or contribute to recoil. Bonus attacks for pulse weapons are impacted by the recoil from the shot that immediately preceded them. The designation for Pulse weapons is a PUL/# rating in the ROF category.

If a pulse weapon's bonus attack results in a Margin of -3 or less, no more pulse bonus attacks may be made during that turn, though the original attacks may continue to be made.

Example: Mongrel is firing a plasma rifle with a ROF of PUL/5 against his target. If he hits on his first, fourth, and fifth attack, he may make immediate attacks. His recoil only increases for the original shots (with his first attack, second attack, third attack, fourth attack, and fifth attack). If his weapon's Recoil is 3, he makes his first attack with a -0 penalty, and his first pulse attack with a -3 penalty. His final two attacks are at a -12 and a -15 penalty from recoil.

SHOTGUNS AND FLECHETTES

Shotguns and flechette weapons are designed to fire multiple projectiles, rather than a single shot. Weapons that fire shot (shotguns) or flechettes typically operate at shorter ranges because it is impossible to rifle a barrel and fire them in a pattern that produces accuracy at range, but they have the advantage of remaining more accurate.

When firing a flechette or shot round, reduce the weapon's Range to half of its usual (rounding down), and subtract 1 point of Damage for every other Range increment the attack is made at (starting at the second). A character firing a flechette or shot round does not take accuracy penalties due to range, and a shotgun or other firearm firing flechette rounds may be fired out to a distance five times its usual Range when firing shot, if such an attack would do any damage at all.

BRACED WEAPONS

A weapon that is braced does not add recoil together when making rapid or full-automatic attacks. Instead, only the largest source of recoil applies to an attack, and the amount of recoil from multiple shots is not added. Weapons can be braced against surfaces, on a bipod if prone, on a tripod if stationary, or in a weapon mount. It takes a resolution action to brace a weapon, and a turn action to brace a weapon using a tripod. Weapons braced using a bipod or a surface only gain the bracing benefit when using Rapid Fire.

MULTIPLE WEAPONS

A character wielding multiple weapons in ranged combat may make attacks with both weapons during a single resolution action. A character who wishes to make attacks against separate targets may do so, but will take a -5 penalty each time they shift targets (even if they are also switching weapons). There are some limitations on this:

The character must have the appropriate number of manipulators to use the weapons. A character may not use a weapon wielded with too few manipulators as part of a multiple weapon attack. A weapon with a Size rating equal to or less than a third of the character's Size (an average human is Size 10) may be wielded in one hand.

A weapon wielded only in non-dominant manipulators suffers a -5 penalty. Characters have only one dominant manipulator unless otherwise stated.

The Recoil value of weapons fired in a single hand is doubled.

A ranged attack with a Margin of -3 or worse means that the character may no longer continue firing that weapon during the resolution action.

RELOADING

A firearm consumes a single round of ammunition with each shot fired, and will need reloading at some point. The process of reloading a weapon is simple. A weapon's ammunition count is followed by a single character denoting the method for reloading the weapon.

B: Box magazines are the most common form of modern ammunition supply. Box magazines provide increased reload speeds; an empty magazine can be removed and replaced with a full or partially full magazine. It takes one resolution action to swap a weapon's box magazine. A weapon reloaded in this way will keep a bullet from the previous magazine in the chamber, if there was at least one bullet left. Operating the action will remove this round. Loading a box magazine with ammunition is possible at a rate of two rounds per resolution action.

C: Cylinder magazines are often considered outdated, but have are simple and reliable. Cylinder magazines require manual ejection of rounds, but most have a simple system for doing so. Three rounds can be placed in a cylinder per resolution action. Moon clips can hurry this process, allowing the weapon to be reloaded in a single action.

D: Drum magazines are often just large box magazines. Although they have greater ammunition capacity, a drum magazine requires a full turn action to replace. Like a box magazine, this can leave a round in the chamber. They can be reloaded in bulk, at the rate of five rounds per resolution action.

I: Internal magazines use a hatch or tube on a firearm, or feed through the ejection port of a

weapon. Internal magazines are slow to load, at a rate of two rounds per resolution action. Breach-loading weapons also use the I ammunition type. If a firearm can chamber a round from its magazine like a firearm using a box magazine, the ammunition capacity notation will look like X+II.

L: Linked ammunition uses belts of ammunition that may be combined. It takes a turn to load a linked ammunition system, and a single resolution action to add an extra belt. Most belts are assembled using special machinery, and joining them by hand is possible only at a rate of two rounds per resolution action.

S: Stripper clips are a more simple method of loading a weapon. Stripper clips carry ammunition for insertion into an internal or box magazine. Any weapon accepting a stripper clip will have the B/S or I/S code for their ammunition storage. Stripper clips can be loaded at a rate of four rounds per resolution action. Stripper clips are incompatible with caseless ammunition.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Projectile weapons include grenades, thrown weapons, bows, crossbows, and anything thrown. These weapons function differently from firearms due to their unique construction.

Most characters can only attack with a projectile weapon once per turn.

Grenades are thrown in such a way that they will land near to their target, even if they fail to hit them. A successful hit means that the grenade connects with its target as it detonates, doubling damage to one hit location. A Margin of -1 means that the grenade goes off within one meter of its target, doing full blast damage. Greater negative Margins mean that the grenade has gone astray, and reduce the blast damage per the Explosives rules. The GM may determine appropriate scatter distance and direction based on context.

ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFIERS

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives deal damage to a wide area of effect. X-Y2, where X is the rating of the explosive and Y is the quotient of the number of meters from the epicenter a character or object taking damage is divided by the Blast Rating of the weapon (rounding down).

WOUNDS AND DAMAGE

Street Rats has a wound and damage system that allows for rapid determination of hit effects. Characters suffer wounds with special effects depending on their location.

Wounds come in four grades: flesh wounds, minor wounds, major wounds, and critical wounds. If a body part receives three wounds of a certain level, any further wounds increase to the next grade. Only the greatest wound to a particular hit location applies a penalty. Having second or third wounds of a certain grade does not apply a second or third penalty. For each injured location, a character suffers separate penalties.

A hit that deals at least one damage after damage reduction is a flesh wound. These do not factor into combat, but may become infected. A character with only flesh wounds suffers

no penalties.

A hit that deals at least three damage after damage reduction is a minor wound. Minor wounds confer a -1 penalty to all actions involving that hit location. Minor wounds to vital regions confer a -1 to all actions.

If a character takes at least five damage from a hit, then they will suffer a major wound. A major wound to any locomotion area will half a character's speed with respective movement types. This penalty is doubled if all locomotion locations for that movement type receive damage. A hit to manipulators will provide a -5 attribute and skill penalty while using that manipulator with another limb. This penalty increases to -10 if only injured manipulators are used for a roll. A hit to a vital region confers a similar penalty to all rolls and movement speeds. The lowest a modifier or movement rate can be reduced by a major wound is to a quarter of its original value.

A critical wound requires taking eight points of damage from a hit. Characters with a critical wound may no longer use that location for the purposes of any skill or attribute rolls. Movement speed for associated movement rates is reduced to a quarter. In humans, critical head wounds result in unconsciousness for at least an hour. A character can make a Toughness roll with a difficulty of 10 at the beginning of each hour to see if they regain consciousness.

A non-vital hit location that receives three critical wounds, or more than fifteen unmitigated damage in a single hit is lost. The same damage to a vital hit location results in death or permanent destruction.

BLOOD LOSS

Characters who suffer many wounds will eventually suffer blood loss. Each hour, a character rolls a d20. If the result is equal to or less than the total number of wounds a character has suffered, they take one point of blood loss. If a character has more than 20 wounds, they roll this d20 every minute, and a result equal to or less than their current number of wounds minus twenty causes blood loss. A character dies if they accrue more than three points of blood loss at a time. Characters recover from blood loss at the rate of one point per day, unless suffering from the aftermath of radiation sickness.

Drones and cyborgs do not suffer blood loss.

VEHICLE WOUNDS

Vehicles take wounds in the same manner as characters, drones, and cyborgs, but with a couple of changed rules.

Each minor wound to a vehicle decreases its Acceleration by 1.

Each major wound to a vehicle decreases its Maneuverability by 1 and its Acceleration by 2.

A critical wound to less than half of the locomotive areas reduces the Maneuverability, Speed, and Acceleration by 2, as do any critical wounds to a non-locomotive area. If more than half of the locomotive hit locations are crippled, then the vehicle is immobilized.

Receiving more than 15 unmitigated damage in a single hit removes the hit location from the vehicle. If only one of four or more locomotive areas is destroyed in this manner, the vehicle functions as if it had suffered a critical wound to that area. If multiple locomotive hit locations are removed in this manner, or if a crucial hit location is removed, the vehicle is destroyed. If it is in motion, it immediately **CRASHES** per the rules in the vehicle section.

PROTECTION, TOUGHNESS, & ARMOR

All incoming attacks against a character have their damage decreased by a character's Protection rating. Protection is the sum of a character's Armor and Toughness ratings. The damage of an incoming attack is equal to the base damage of the attack, plus any bonuses determined by the attack type (e.g. 2 damage per Margin for aimed shots), minus any Protection that remains after an incoming attack's AP. An attack with negative AP against a target who is wearing armor loses damage equal to the lesser of its negative AP or the target's Protection. The AP calculation stage can never add damage to an attack.

For the purposes of calculating damage, toughness and armor are only distinguished from each other when tracking damage from weapons with negative AP. No amount of Toughness alone will cause negative AP to decrease the incoming damage of a weapon. Characters with at least one point of actual armor will apply both their Toughness and Armor against weapons with a negative AP value.

For example, someone wearing armor with a final combined rating of 5 being hit for 4 damage with 1 AP takes no damage. If hit with a weapon with 5 damage and 2 AP, then they would take 2 damage. If hit with 8 damage and -2 AP, they would still take 1 damage. If they hit with a weapon with 24 damage and -12 AP, they would take 14 damage ($24 - (5 * 2)$).

In our examples above, someone with 5 Toughness and no armor would take no damage from the first hit, 2 damage from the second hit, 3 damage from the third hit, and 19 damage from the fourth hit.

HARDENED ARMOR

Some military vehicles and advanced personal armor have a Hardened Armor rating. An incoming attack must have AP equal to this rating to inflict damage. Note that an armor's Hardened Armor rating and its Armor rating are usually separate. Hardened Armor has no effect on Protection calculations; it provides complete protection against small threats.

A Hardened Armor rating of 0 means that there is no Hardened Armor from a piece of armor. Any attack can penetrate armor that does not provide Hardened Armor, even if it has negative AP.

HIT LOCATIONS

Humans in Street Rats have six hit locations. Some forms, drones, vehicles, robots, and creatures have different hit locations, which will be specified on a per-class basis. When a character is hit in combat, a random d20 result determines the final hit location.

Aimed attacks against a particular body part always hit the targeted location if successful.

The hit locations of a humanoid character are their legs, torso, arms, and head. Consult the table below for more information.

Human (and Humanoid) Hit Locations					
Left Leg	Right Leg	Torso	Left Arm	Right Arm	Head
1-4	5-8	9-14	15-16	17-18	19-20

ATTACKING OBJECTS

When a character attacks an object, the object's Defense is equal to 20 (25 if the item is being worn or carried) minus the object's size. The GM determines the Toughness and Armor of the object, including any Hardened Armor, and then the resulting attack's Damage is calculated. If any damage is dealt to the object, it is damaged and requires maintenance. If the final damage is equal to or greater than the result of an unmodified d20 roll, then the item is destroyed. This only applies to small objects, not vehicles or drones.

The Attacking Objects rules only apply to devices like firearms, personal electronics, pipes, wiring, and other devices with active mechanical uses. Armor, structures, and most potential cover sources are not able to be damaged or destroyed so dramatically with single attacks. However, the Attacking Objects rule may be applied to sub-components of drones, vehicles, or structures, at the GM's discretion. Note that many potential targets for vandalism, such as locks, cameras, and other security hardware are designed with this in mind, and may require significant amounts of damage to disable. Versions of these items intended to be covert may not have the same degree of protection.

DAMAGING ARMOR

Each piece of worn armor has a Compromise Threshold. This is the amount of incoming damage (after armor penetration is applied) that causes armor to degrade; any hit that does at least this much damage will reduce the armor's Durability for that position by one point.

Armor's damage is tracked across the entire suit or set of armor.

Armor that loses three points of Durability has its Armor rating halved (rounding down, unless the final result would be 0, in which case the armor continues to provide 1 point of Armor). Armor that loses five points of Durability no longer provides any Armor to whatever location was hit most recently. Further hits to the armor either hit the unarmored spot (and therefore deal damage as if there were no armor) or remove the partial protection from another hit location.

Armor's Hardened Armor rating is only affected by the complete loss of Durability in any given location; even if the Armor takes 3 hits, the Hardened Armor rating of a piece of armor remains the same.

DRONES, CYBORGS, AND ANDROIDS

Drones and cyborgs often have different physical layouts than humans and bioborgs. Special rules that govern their physical actions.

Cyborgs use an appropriate movement skill for their primary form of locomotion: Pilot for flying cyborgs, Running for walking cyborgs, or Drive for other cyborgs with ground-based movement. Drones only use Pilot or Drive; drones that walk use Drive rather than Running. Bodies with multiple forms of movement use appropriate skills for available forms of movement.

Drones use their own physical attributes rather than the original attributes of the character. Cyborgs and androids use their form's physical attributes, but must purchase the differences that are not provided from other packages using GAU. They do not need to pay a price difference for the physical attributes.

SIZE, DEFENSE, AND CARRY CAPACITY

Non-humans may have different base Defense values: humans have 15, cyborg forms typically have 15, and drones may have different values. The Defense value of a form is equal to the difference between 25 and its Size rating.

A drone's Speed in chases and its Maneuverability is equal to its size; its Speed is typically equal to half its Size, and its Maneuverability is equal to their base Defense value.

Drones or forms with the capacity to hop their full height and pull themselves up with arm-like manipulators increase their Maneuverability by 1, and flying drones or forms (except if the flying comes from jets intended for long distance travel) increase their Maneuverability in a chase by 2. If they gain additional Speed, this will be reflected in the drone or form's entry.

Carrying Capacity is determined by form. Most support using a sling or tie-down mechanism to carry a single object with a size rating two less than that of their form.

DRONE CAPABILITIES

Drones and cyborg forms often have different limb setups than humans, but it is helpful to picture them as human analogues. Humans have two arms, a body, a head, and two legs. Their extremities hold no vital organs, but are used for functionality. In drone terms, humans have two vital areas, two manipulators, and two legs.

All drones have at least one vital area, one manipulator, and one locomotive method. Most have multiple of each. Some drones also have secondary areas that are linked to sensors or other functionality besides the norm. If these areas become damaged or destroyed, they may lose those functions.

Note that drones and forms are assumed to have human-like capabilities unless otherwise stated; manipulators can be used for any action in front of the drone or form, any forms of locomotion allow highly adaptable turning, and so forth. If there are exceptions to this, such as manipulators with a limited field of motion or locomotion that requires special considerations, a note will be reflected in the drone or form's entry.

VEHICLES AND TRANSPORTATION

VEHICLE STATISTICS

Vehicles in Street Rats are treated similarly to characters. They have their own speed, maneuverability, acceleration, and size ratings, and have special hit locations. Unlike characters, however, they do not have attributes and skills; they have a Protection rating, and a Defense rating, but these are calculated based on physical qualities rather than game statistics.

The following statistics for a Brennen FS Ranger provide an example of the ways that a vehicle typically works.

Brennen Ranger			
Size	16	Speed	30
Defense	9 (side), 12 (front)	Acceleration	15
Protection	8	Maneuverability	8
Passengers	Driver + Gunner + 4	Weapons	1 360° mount, empty
Fuel Type/Range	Solar (N/A)	Hit Locations	Standard Car
Cost	\$180,000	Availability	II/License

The table shows us that vehicles have a size, defense, and protection rating. All vehicles have a Speed rating in kilometers per hour (and meters per combat round), from which our Top Chase Speed is determined (Speed times 5 in km/h). A vehicle moving at a rate less than or equal to its Speed rating gains a +2 to its Maneuverability. The Maneuverability rating of a vehicle is determined by its ability to overcome obstacles and change directions, and is used in most driving actions and in chases. The maximum speed a vehicle can travel is eight times its Speed Rating; moving faster than the Top Chase Speed incurs a -5 Maneuverability penalty.

Vehicles also include a Passengers rating. This also includes any special roles that someone in the car might have; for instance, a vehicle with the capability of serving as a military vehicle or escort vehicle will have a gunner. An automated car might not be able to be put under automatic control, and would only have passengers. The Weapons rating indicates if there is room for any weapon in a vehicle mount. Weapons in a vehicle mount only incur recoil once per action; any ranged attack past the first suffers only the greatest recoil penalty of any attack made prior to it during that action.

Fuel type and range indicates a vehicle's usefulness. While most vehicles can store a can for fuel, the main goal is typically to make it between fueling stations without having to refuel in the field. This is more important for people operating in containment zones or the wilderness, rather than those who can enjoy the amenities of civilization on every corner. Vehicles with a (N/A) range rating can function indefinitely with maintenance. For solar-powered vehicles, this means that they have a battery capable of storing enough charge for continuous overnight operation, and fusion-powered or fuel-cell powered vehicles have ranges beyond the need for measurement.

The fuel type of a vehicle can result in special maintenance requirements. Solar vehicles must be stored outside or connected to power, and solar panels must be cleaned and

repaired regularly. Fusion vehicles require annual maintenance to ensure that there are no issues with the reactor core, and fuel cell vehicles need fuel cell replacements after a month or so of regular use. Vehicle maintenance typically amounts to about ten percent of the vehicle's original cost each year.

VEHICLE ACTIONS

ACCELERATION

Vehicles moving less than their Top Chase Speed each turn may accelerate by an amount equal to their Acceleration without requiring any test, while vehicles moving at a rate greater than their Top Chase Speed force their drivers or pilots to make a Driving or Piloting Test with a threshold of 25. The vehicle's Maneuverability is added to their roll. A success means that the vehicle is able to increase its speed without incident. A failure means that the vehicle fails to increase its speed, but the driver backs off. If the failure's negative Margin is 2 or greater, the vehicle loses control (see Losing Control).

RANGED ATTACKS

Characters may make ranged attacks from a vehicle with the standard rules for attacks against moving objects. Other parties in a chase who are moving at similar or equal speeds to the vehicle an attacker is in do not incur penalties for movement speed, while any other movement adds to the movement penalty. Any type of ranged attack may be made from a moving vehicle, but the +5 accuracy bonus from aimed shots is always lost.

Weapons mounted in vehicles are treated as braced weapons suffer reduced recoil; rather than adding recoil together as a multiple shot attack is calculated, only the largest recoil value applies. Only vehicles with explicit weapon mounts may be used for this bonus. Weapons fired from any position without a mount are not considered braced, unless the vehicle is stationary.

The driver of a vehicle may only use one-handed weapons during a ranged attack, because of the fact that they need to keep a hand on the wheel to steady the vehicle's course. If the vehicle is not moving, they may use a two-handed weapon. Any penalties to driving tests, such as for moving at a rate greater than the Top Chase Speed of a vehicle, are applied to the driver's ranged attacks as well.

RAMMING

A vehicle that attempts to ram another will deliver damage equal to its Size to the vehicle, and further damage equal to half its size to all passengers (hit locations are rolled as normal). If the vehicles are moving in opposite or perpendicular directions, or if one of the vehicles is moving much slower than the other (half the speed or so, but exact numbers may be decided by the GM), the damage is doubled. The vehicle receives damage equal to the Size of the vehicle being rammed. Damage from ramming is reduced by the Protection of the character receiving the damage, as if it were a standard weapon attack—passengers in a vehicle use their vehicle's Protection or their own, whichever is highest.

When a person, vehicle, or drone is rammed, they may make an Acrobatics, Drive, or Pilot Opposed Test. A vehicle must be traveling at a speed of at least 40 to ram, though it may take the accelerate action as part of the ram action (making a skill test if needed). Both sides add

their Maneuverability (a person's Maneuverability is 25 minus their Size rating [usually 10]).

The opposed test typically results in the attacker ramming the victim if successful, or the would-be victim disengaging from the ramming attempt. However, if the victim is eligible to ram (they are a vehicle and moving quickly enough, and are moving in such a way that they are not perpendicular to the ramming vehicle), they may choose to ram anyway, and simply turn the circumstances to their advantage and maximize the damage they deal. If the ramming test results in impact, then the victor reduces incoming damage by 1 for each Margin of Success, and the loser takes 1 more damage for each Margin of Success.

A vehicle that is destroyed by ramming crashes normally.

TURNING

A vehicle that is turning makes a Simple Driving or Pilot Test against a threshold equal to 15 plus the number of times their Speed is above the normal Speed rating for the vehicle (so, for instance, a car moving at 75 km/h and with a Speed rating of 25 would increase the Threshold by 2, as it would if the vehicle's Speed rating were 20; if the vehicle's Speed rating were only 15, however, the Threshold would be increased by 4). If the driver or pilot fails, the vehicle follows the rules for Losing Control. Otherwise, the vehicle is able to turn to face a new direction. This test is only required if the vehicle is attempting a dramatic turn; the sorts of turns used in everyday driving do not require a test, especially if the driver is able to decelerate prior to making the turn. The threshold of the turning test may be increased by inclement road surfaces.

LOSING CONTROL

If a character controlling a vehicle fails their Drive or Pilot skill by a sufficient margin, or if the vehicle suffers damage, they may lose control of the vehicle. A character that cannot devote a Resolution Action to controlling their vehicle each turn will also lose control of their vehicle.

When a character loses control of a vehicle, they must immediately make a Standard Driving Test, against a difficulty number of 20. If they succeed, they remain in control of the vehicle. Otherwise, they have lost control.

Losing control means different things according to the GM's discretion, but the vehicle either wildly decelerates or accelerates, or may veer off course. Few environments are sufficiently clear of obstruction that losing control means an ultimate result of anything less than a collision. The Complication Die should come into play.

COLLISIONS

Collisions with objects deal damage equal to the size of the object. If vehicles are colliding with a large, immobile, stationary object (such as a large tree), they take double damage, and if they are colliding with an object that can be knocked around easily (such as an empty oil drum), they take half damage. The object takes damage equal to the vehicle's size, with the same multiplier as the damage to the car. If the vehicle is destroyed by the impact, it still crashes normally.

CRASHES

A vehicle that comes to a sudden explosive stop, such as by extreme user error (a potential if the vehicle loses control), or by external damage, crashes. All people inside the vehicle take damage equal to the vehicle's Size, plus the number of times that the vehicle's current speed exceeds its Speed rating, minus the Protection of the vehicle and their own Protection.

COMMON VEHICLE HIT LOCATIONS

Vehicle hit locations are analogous to character and drone/cyborg hit locations. Hit locations suffer "wounds", though cars are not susceptible to bleeding. A hit to a locomotion system reduces the speed of a vehicle accordingly. Chassis hits do not inherently cause a penalty, although the vehicle's components are damaged and destroyed in the same way that augmentations are damaged or destroyed.

With many vehicles, there are multiple different hit location tables based on the direction that the vehicle is being attacked from. For instance, someone in the front ninety degree arc of a vehicle who attacks rolls hits against the vehicle's front hit locations, someone on either side of a vehicle attacks its side hit locations, and someone behind the vehicle would hit the vehicle's rear hit locations.

STANDARD CAR

The standard car hit locations tables are fairly simple: most of the hits go into the body of the vehicle, with a chance to hit passengers. When a chassis (passenger) or window [passenger] hit is rolled, a random passenger (including any drivers, gunners, or special passengers) is selected to receive any damage from the attack that passes the Protection value of the vehicle. Note that most vehicles do not have bulletproof windows, and standard windows provide a Protection rating of only 2. On a standard chassis hit, the attack may damage a vehicle component. This functions similarly to damage to augmentations for characters, and the effective locations are as follows:

A chassis hit will damage or destroy the engine on a location result of 1-2. On a result of 3-6, the attack damages the fuel supply for the car, or destroys it. A damaged fuel supply will simply fail to work, causing the vehicle to slow to a crawl. destroyed fossil fuel or fuel cell fuel supplies will catch fire, burning the vehicle. A result of 7-8 damages electronic automatic control systems (if any exist), and a result of 9-10 damages the suspension, reducing Maneuverability by 2 (destruction of the suspension reduces maneuverability to 0). Any other result has hit non-vital components of the vehicle, and passes through or stops without incident.

The hit locations for a standard car are as follows:

Front: Chassis (1-4), Chassis [Passenger] (5-8), Window [Passenger] (9-10) Front Left Wheel (11) Front Right Wheel (12), Chassis [Engine] (13-18), Miss (19-20)

Rear: Chassis (1-8), Chassis [Passenger] (9-14), Window [Passenger] (15-18), Rear Left Wheel (19), Rear Right Wheel (20)

Side: Chassis (1-8), Chassis [Passenger] (9-12), Window [Passenger] (13-16), Front Side Wheel (17-18), Rear Side Wheel (19-20)

CYCLE

Cycles are open-air one or two passenger vehicles with a focus on speed, flexibility, and high-maneuverability. Much cheaper than full vehicles, they are still capable of conveying passengers and cargo where it needs to go. In addition, some vehicles, such as four-wheeled ATV models and trikes, provide even more capacity at the cost of maneuverability.

The hit locations for a cycle are as follows:

Two Wheeled: Chassis (1-8), Front Wheel (9-10), Rear Wheel (11-12), Passenger (13-20)

Trike: Chassis (1-7), Front Wheel (8-9), Rear Left Wheel (10-11), Rear Right Wheel (12-13)
Passenger (14-20)

Quad: Chassis (1-6), Front Left Wheel (7-8), Front Right Wheel (9-10), Rear Left Wheel (11-12),
Rear Right Wheel (13-14), Passenger (15-20)

LARGE VEHICLE

Large vehicles include light armored vehicles and large civilian vehicles like buses, trucks, recreational vehicles, and vans. Large vehicles are much safer for their occupants in the event of a firefight or collision, as there is more of the vehicle to absorb any potential damage that might result.

Some large vehicles are "windowless", especially armored vehicles. Treat a Window [Passenger] hit for these vehicles as a simple Chassis (not Chassis [Passenger]) hit.

Some large vehicles are "tracked", especially armored vehicles. Treat a Left/Right Wheel hit (both front and rear) as a Left/Right Track hit; hits to the side with a location result of 17 or 19 hit the Chassis of the vehicle instead.

The hit locations for a large vehicle are as follows:

Front: Chassis (1-8), Chassis [Passenger] (9-10), Window [Passenger] (11-12) Front Left Wheel (13) Front Right Wheel (14), Chassis [Engine] (15-20)

Rear: Chassis (1-13), Chassis [Passenger] (15-16), Window [Passenger] (17-18), Rear Left Wheel (19), Rear Right Wheel (20)

Side: Chassis (1-10), Chassis [Passenger] (11-14), Window [Passenger] (15-16), Front Side Wheel (17-18), Rear Side Wheel (19-20)

RECOVERING FROM DAMAGE

Characters who have suffered wounds, whether organic or mechanical, can be restored to proper functionality. Organic characters, such as humans, bioborgs, or other living beings, may heal damage using the Healing rules, while cyborgs, droids, vehicles, and even gear may have damage fixed using the Repair rules.

HEALING

Characters who suffer damage may heal (if they are human, bioborg, or otherwise sufficiently organic) over time given rest and treatment. While characters may be able to heal even in adverse circumstances, generally healing occurs best in clean, restful situations, and

having access to rest, professional care, and medical supplies can make the difference between speedy recovery and succumbing to infection.

BLOOD LOSS

A character suffering from blood loss may be healed with a Medicine test. This is a Simple Test with a Threshold of 20. A simple success reduces the effective number of wounds that a character is bleeding from by 1. Each Margin of Success increases the number of wounds from which bleeding is staunches by 1. This test requires a full turn (about three and a half seconds) to complete.

Each hour, a point of blood loss will be removed from the character, effectively mitigating the blood loss from one wound. This occurs directly after blood loss would occur. If a character is losing blood at a per-minute rate, this healing does not occur.

A character typically would use a bandage or medical kit to treat blood loss, but a character without any such tools can still attempt to stop blood loss. This can only treat one wound at a time.

WOUNDS

A character with wounds will recover over time. A minor wound heals after a week, a major wound after two weeks, and a critical wound after a month. Each body part heals wounds independently, but the greatest wound to a limb heals more quickly than others. A character with multiple wounds of the same type must heal each wound in succession. A character that receives treatment may reduce the healing time for a wound to a fourth of the natural healing rate, assuming that they continue to receive rest. A character who suffers an infection has all their healing times increased to double the standard time, whether or not an individual injury has been treated.

Healing Times	Treatment	Natural	Infection
Minor	2 days	1 week	2 weeks
Major	4 days	2 weeks	4 weeks
Critical	1 week	1 month	2 months

INFECTION

Characters who are unable to receive medical care after suffering a wound run the risk of infection. The basic test for resisting infection is a Survival test, and is made a day after the wound has been suffered.

The threshold for infection depends on the situations that a character has been in. The base threshold is 15, but this is modified by +5 if the character was unable to apply antiseptic to the wound, and by a further +5 if the character is in a war-torn weapon where biological weapons have been deployed, such as the North American Containment Zone.

Anyone suffering an infection doubles their healing times for all wounds. Each week, they must make another Infection test, as if they were first having exposure to an Infection. If they fail three Infection tests, they succumb to infection. If they are treated by a character with Medicine, the character is cured. However, if a character is only treated after they have become infected and failed two subsequent Infection tests, they can only be treated if

antibiotics are used. Alternatively, the GM may decide that the infection may be treated, but requires an amputation of a limb.

REPAIR

Repair is more complicated than healing. Although it is often much quicker, major repairs require replacement parts to be fabricated or procured, and in many cases may be effectively impossible without the amenities of civilization. In some cases, repair also requires access to specialized equipment, though some of this may be available in highly portable kits.

CYBORGS AND DRONES

Cyborgs and drones that take damage may be repaired, but they have repair costs in conjunction with repairs. This reflects the average cost of acquiring appropriate replacement parts relative to the amount of damage that they have received. A cyborg or drone with a minor wound may have it repaired at its normal Parts Price, while major wounds are repaired at five times the normal Parts Price and critical wounds are repaired at ten times the normal Parts Price. Restoring a removed limb to a drone or cyborg typically costs twenty times the Parts Price of the drone; it is often easier to simply swap out the damaged model for a new, identical model, transferring the cyberbrain of any cyborg or android.

The time required to repair a minor wound is typically equal to a number of minutes equal to the drone or cyborg's Size rating. For major wounds, this time is increased to fifteen minutes times the Size rating, and for critical wounds the time increases again to a number of hours equal to the drone or cyborg's Size rating. The time spent in repair does not need to be continuous, but if the subject of the repair is damaged again in a location that is being repaired all progress and invested money is lost.

VEHICLES

A vehicle that becomes damaged requires repair parts as well. The cost of minor repairs is equal to one percent of the vehicle's cost, major repairs cost five percent of the vehicle's cost, and critical wound repairs cost ten percent of the vehicle's cost. It is not typically possible to replace parts of a vehicle that are entirely destroyed, since it is typically easier to just replace the vehicle itself.

Repairing a vehicle can take hours or days; a minor wound takes fifteen minutes to repair, a major wound takes two hours to repair, and a critical wound takes a whole day to repair. While a vehicle is being repaired, it cannot be driven or flown.

GEAR

Repairing gear is different than the other repairs because gear does not have traditional wound levels. Gear that is damaged typically requires replacement parts with a cost equal to ten percent of the original item's price, but this can be greatly increased, especially for small, complex items, or for items that received a significant amount of damage but not total destruction. Non-electronic gear that is damaged, such as a firearm, may be repaired in a number of minutes equal to the Size rating of the item; electronic gear triples the repair time required.

FATIGUE AND STAMINA

Characters in Street Rats are subject to limits on the actions that they can take in a certain amount of time. If characters engage in frequent combats, or if they neglect rest on long missions, they may find that they are at a significant disadvantage against forces that have more preparation and training. Androids, cyborgs, drones, infolife, and vehicles are immune to the effects of fatigue and stamina, though they may have their own limitations, such as internal power, that require them to have some down-time.

Fatigue tests are made as a Simple Toughness Test against a Threshold of 15. A character currently suffering from Fatigue applies their Fatigue penalty to this test. A successful Fatigue test means that the character has not become fatigued from the potential source of Fatigue.

Each failed Fatigue test removes a point of Stamina from the character. Characters have three points of Stamina, plus another for every three points of Toughness they possess. A character with remaining Stamina takes no penalty from Fatigue, but once Stamina runs out a character will begin to suffer penalty.

For each failed Fatigue test which cannot remove a point of Stamina (due to the character being out of Stamina), the character takes a -1 penalty to all Tests until they have an opportunity to recover.

Eight hours of rest restores one point of Stamina to a character; to fully regain their energy they must spend a whole day resting and recovering, or avoid strenuous behavior for multiple days in a row while resting at an adequate rate. However, whenever a character rests sufficiently to restore any Stamina, their entire Fatigue penalty is removed.

If a character has lost all their Stamina and is suffering a Fatigue penalty equal to the original amount of Stamina available to them, they are exhausted, and gain an additional -5 penalty to all actions. Their Fatigue penalty can still increase further.

CAUSES OF FATIGUE

A character suffers fatigue when any of the following conditions are met:

- A combat ends.
- They have been awake for more than twenty hours.
- They suffer a failure with a Margin of -3 or more on physically active tests, like Running, Acrobatics, or Athletics (GM's discretion).
- They are hit with a weapon that is expressly said to cause fatigue, such as a taser.
- They complete or are forced out of a Dive.

CHASES

Chases in Street Rats are usually handled as a series of rolls made by two different characters. There are no limits on the types of participants in a chase. A character in a car may chase a pedestrian, one pedestrian may chase another, or a group of people might be chasing a vehicle.

The two most important factors in a chase are a character's Chase Speed (determined by their physical attributes or their vehicle) and their Maneuverability (15 or their vehicle's

rating).

Chase Speed is determined using different methods for vehicles and pedestrians. Vehicles have both a Current Speed and a Top Chase Speed; the vehicle's Acceleration determines how much they can adjust their speed (see the Vehicles section) in a chase; they start at a Chase Speed of 0 when parked or stationary, and increase by an amount up to their Acceleration each turn until they reach their Top Chase Speed. Of course, a driver need not accelerate, and a vehicle may also enter a chase while in motion. Pedestrians typically move at a Chase Speed of 5, with the Margin of their chase roll increasing or decreasing their effective speed.

For each turn of a chase, each pedestrian makes a Margin Test and adds the result to their Chase Speed to determine how much distance they have gained or lost. Vehicles only make rolls to maintain control during chases; they do not benefit from a positive Margin. It is possible for the same character to act in more than one chase, in which case they make only one Margin Test for their entire turn and apply the result to each chase they are in.

CHASE ACTIONS

In addition to normal actions that a character can take, two additional actions are available during chases. These are used to increase the distances between parties or to end the pursuit early, allowing the pursued party an opportunity to hide from their pursuers.

All chase actions are written to assume that each member of the chase is an individual; for groups, the character, vehicle, or drone with the lowest skill or Maneuverability makes the roll for their whole group.

PUSH

Push actions involve a second test each turn; a character who attempts a Push action will make an appropriate skill test (such as Running, Drive, or Pilot), against a Threshold of 15. If the character succeeds, a penalty equal to the margin is imposed on all opponents' rolls until they manage to perform a push action in return to even out the penalty.

A character, vehicle, or drone that fails a Push action loses their movement for that turn of the chase.

BREAK PURSUIT

Breaking pursuit involves an opposed skill test between the party attempting to break off and the party pursuing them. Each party's Maneuverability is added to the roll. Following the Break Pursuit action, the fleeing party makes a Stealth test opposed against any pursuers' Perception ratings, with a bonus equal to twice the Margin of success on the opposed test. Failure to break pursuit has no penalty.

If the pursuit party or parties decide to let their quarry go, the break pursuit action is completed automatically.

GROUPS IN CHASES

When a chase takes place with two groups of characters, the rule of thumb is that only the slowest character in each group is important. This rule is different if parties are willing to

split. One character may break off from the rest and try to delay their quarry or evade pursuit alone. Doing so leaves them vulnerable if combat breaks out, as their allies will not be part of any resulting fray.

TAILS

Characters who are chasing another party, but do not wish to reveal their presence, may tail them. Tailing is similar to a chase, but the push action is unavailable, and the pursued party may be unaware that they are even being pursued. Tailing involves opposed tests; a character who is being tailed makes a Perception test against their tail's Stealth. Once a tail has been determined, the tailed party may Break Pursuit; no maneuverability bonus is added, and the skill used is Perception for both parties rather than the appropriate movement skills for pedestrians/vehicles.

A failure to Break Pursuit means that the tail is aware that they have been spotted by their target.

At any point, either party may initiate a full chase, but this makes it immediately obvious that they are aware of the others' presence.

SURVIVAL

Survival in the wilderness is more complicated than it seems at first. Although everyone has similar needs, every environment has its own unique concerns. Food supplies are dependent on region, water may be scarce, and a place that is too warm during the day may become frigid at night. Finding sustenance and shelter in these environments can be a difficult proposition.

Survival in the late 21st century involves more than just finding the basic requirements for life. Much of the world is irradiated, and chemical warfare has polluted even more of the world. Anyone keen to explore the wilderness must have a working knowledge of how to spot, avoid, and decontaminate chemical and radiological hazards.

A simple mechanic for survival is to make a Survival test against a Threshold of 15 during each day spent in the wilderness. This represents an average temperate environment and reflects a character finding all the supplies and shelter they need. In contaminated areas, this daily Threshold increases by up to five points. A Complication Die result that crosses into failure results in the food and water being unsafe for consumption due to toxicity or irradiation, though symptoms may only develop after the food is consumed. Certain locations can be more harsh to humans, like deserts or arctic areas. These environments confer a further +1 to +5 penalty to the daily Threshold.

Storing food and water for travel is difficult. Although modern gear can make this a good deal more simple, water is always heavy and food gathered in nature is often perishable. Finding extra water is simple; it is rare to find enough water to drink without finding surplus water, but food can be more difficult. A character with a Survival margin of at least 2 may bring package surplus food for later use. This food counts as a Size 3 item for carrying capacity. If the first batch of food they found is contaminated, so is the second batch.

RADIATION

Street Rats handles radiation exposure in a simplified and streamlined method. Radiation dosage is measured in Radiation Units, or RU for short; RU is a simplification of the various different types of radiation exposure and responses in the body.

A character's RU increases from direct exposure to radiation sources, contact with radioactive material, or as a consequence of life in space.

ACUTE RADIATION SICKNESS

Acute radiation sickness (ARS) occurs when a character receives extreme amounts of radiation in a short amount of time. Although it is typically caused by sudden and extensive exposure (hence the term "acute radiation sickness"), ARS can be caused by extended radiation exposure as well. The main cause of radiation sickness is the biological impact of radiation; cells die following damage to their nuclei by radiation, and white blood cells are particularly prone to depletion.

As a result, radiation sickness is further compounded by a propensity to infection from bacterial, viral, and parasitic vectors in afflicted individuals, as well as fatigue, cancer, and unusual bruising and bleeding, which may persist well beyond the traditional symptoms of radiation poisoning. Acute exposure to radiation may also cause surface burns, which are likely to become affected and leave unusual scars, keloids, which limit mobility and are often painful.

Proper treatment before the onset of symptoms can reduce much of the potential impact of radiation poisoning. This requires specialized drugs. Many people entering irradiated zones will begin treatment prior to exposure, even if they expect to undertake contamination prevention procedures. ARS only occurs from continuous exposure; a character who receives doses on multiple days in a row will develop ARS if they receive a cumulative number of RU from exposure during those days, but not if they are able to reach a safe environment to decontaminate and rest between exposures.

Minor ARS occurs at 10 RU of exposure. One to two hours after exposure to the tenth RU, victims experience nausea and vomiting, and have a small chance of suffering diarrhea; this lasts for a day or two. Headaches begin 3 to 8 hours after exposure, accompanied by cognitive impairment and fever, which lasts for a day and cause a -2 penalty to all rolls, including tests involving a Toughness and social skills. At this point, radiation poisoning tends to be fatal after a month or two without care due to infections and hemorrhage. Bruise-like features called purpura and loss of hair are obvious signs of minor radiation sickness. People without access to medical care can still survive exposure; a test to resist infection at a threshold of 15 (see Infection) is required each week for the four following weeks, after which the character is no longer in any danger.

Major acute radiation sickness occurs at 20 RU. Ten to sixty minutes after exposure, victims suffer nausea and vomiting, as well as diarrhea. Headaches, fever, and cognitive impairment follow, which last for multiple days, conferring a -4 penalty to all rolls, including Toughness and social skills. Death is likely even with care; cutting edge medical care is required. Major radiation sickness also causes dizziness, disorientation, and immune system failure. Death usually occurs after 2-4 weeks; victims are immune compromised and must

make an infection avoidance test at a threshold of 20 each day until the danger passes.

Critical ARS occurs at 30 RU. Within minutes of exposure, nausea and vomiting begin, and diarrhea follows shortly. Within an hour, victims also suffer severe headaches and incapacitating CNS function loss, preventing them from taking actions and conferring a -1 penalty to all attributes. Any rolls they must take suffer an extra -8 penalty. Death is certain without medical care, and permanent damage will likely result even with advanced medical care. Patients have increased infection risk like Major ARS victims.

At exposures to more than 120 RU, extreme radiation poisoning occurs. Patients become nauseous and vomit within minutes of exposure, and suffer diarrhea, headaches, fever, and loss of CNS function within an hour, accompanied by seizures, tremors, and loss of motor control. This incapacitates a victim; though they may still be conscious (and likely delirious). For most intents and purposes, victims of extreme radiation poisoning are treated as if they were unconscious. Extreme ARS is always fatal within a day's time.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Social Skills in Street Rats are handled like standard skill rolls, but each NPC being interacted with falls under the influence of a number of environmental factors. There are two fundamental situations in which characters attempt to use social skills: Protocol and Influence. Protocol tests are used to communicate ideas clearly, mitigate offense, or pass scrutiny. Influence tests try to convince others to adopt a certain position or course of action.

Each sort of test is subject to different modifiers, and certain skills are better when used with certain types of tests. Negotiation falls into a gray zone; it is necessary for a shrewd negotiator to follow the appropriate social protocol while still exerting influence over their bartering partner, and rules for negotiation are handled separately.

BUILDING NETWORKS

Socializing with others happens in the context of social networks: in game terms, these social networks are handled using three mechanics: Standing, Connection, and Suspicion. A social network can refer to any group of people, though a character may have Standing and Suspicion with individuals outside of their relationship in a social network.

Common examples of social networks include workplaces, schools, community organizations, churches, Rats' hangouts, and digital networking sites. Characters who are frequent attendees of events in these places become integrated into the networks they build, and have their own ranks and standings.

Standing reflects a character's position in the network; older members, active members or respected members of a social network tend to have high Standing. Standing is a measure of how much sway a person has on others in the network; a character with high Standing is able to ask more of their fellows and receives a better return on their invested effort than a character with low Standing.

Connection measures how well a character is integrated into the network. Characters who are only tangentially part of a social structure might have a connection of 0; they may know other members' names, but they have no permanent part in the group. Characters with a higher connection are currently active in the group. Of all the social network ratings,

Connection is impossible to change quickly, as it requires a character to meet and interact with other members of a network for a long period of time. For infiltrators, however, there can be advantages to having any amount of Connection; being barely connected allows characters more wiggle room for bluffing other unconnected members, but being highly connected serves to guarantee Standing.

Suspicion represents a character's failures to stay in line with what a social network demands. A character who commits a social misstep may find themselves increasing their Suspicion with other members of a social network, as do characters who fail when using certain social skills.

FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR

When dealing with social skills, the terms "familiar" and "unfamiliar" refers to the closeness of relationships. A familiar person could be a relative or close friend, while an unfamiliar person might be a co-worker that someone speaks with every day, but only on a professional level. Likewise, a familiar environment is one which involves a high degree of communication; work environments for co-workers in similar or frequently interacting positions, family units, or social gatherings are all familiar environments. On the other hand, unfamiliar environments involve high degrees of separation between average people; underground or secret societies, chance meetings, brief interactions between people in different places in the social hierarchy are all unfamiliar social environments.

The GM is the ultimate decision maker, but as a general rule Connection is less important in broad social networks than it is in very narrow social circles, where one's attendance and participation or lack thereof is obvious.

INDIVIDUAL OR NETWORK?

When dealing with social skills, it is important to remember that it is difficult to use skills directly to change an individual's status in a whole network. Most social skills deal with individuals, especially when being used for deceptive purposes or where there could be some risk of backlash if a character's intentions were found out.

As a general rule, changes to a character's status won't proliferate into a network for a few hours to several days, depending on how active or secretive a social network is. In addition, one character's opinion of another has relatively little impact: a character's standing in a network is more of a function of an average of their parts.

This means that there is always some uncertainty; a character never knows for sure how well integrated they are into a network, because using Etiquette to check their standing will only tell them an individual's opinion of them.

Of course, an individual's status in a network will change the way that others in that network feel about them; most NPC's will only remember major good or negative interactions with a character, and forget or forgive any minor interactions, but everyday pleasantries are one of the easiest ways to enter a social network without appearing awkward.

Social networks with clearly defined hierarchies, such as workplaces, may make certain interactions difficult, especially when such relationships are defined by extrinsic factors (for instance, a manager having authority over a new employee). The GM may apply penalties as

appropriate, but characters who are able to ingratiate themselves to the movers and shakers of their social networks should see their reputation across the network increase more quickly in general.

PROTOCOL

Protocol governs the majority of daily social interactions. The goal of a protocol test is to communicate an idea, appear like a member of a group, or to create a desired feeling. Protocol is often considered to be “formal”, but this mostly comes down to the fact that social groups tend to have traditions and culture associated with their actions. What is perfectly acceptable with close friends at a neighborhood fast food joint will be unacceptable with distant relatives at home, or downright dangerous in the wrong situation.

Fundamentally, protocol comes down to a matter of hierarchy. People attempting protocol rolls attempt to prove that they either fit into hierarchy, are higher in the hierarchy than they really are, or are for some reason exempt from normal requirements. Protocol tests involve others' perceptions of the character making the test.

To use the metaphorical example of combat, someone with good protocol skills has solid armor when it comes to social environments. They know how to catch themselves if they make a mistake and smooth over grievances, while adopting appropriate demeanor and tone for a variety of social situations. They can also blend in with crowds, and maintain an individual stance without risking offending others.

Common Protocol Thresholds and Modifiers	
Circumstance	Threshold/Modifier
Character is a native member of the group	10
Character is a new member of the group, with introduction	15
Character is a new member, without introduction	20
Character has committed a minor social mistake recently	+5
Character has done something considered offensive	+10
Character has revealed themselves to have a conflict of interest against the group	+15
Shared Interests	-2 per interest

FAST TALK

Fast talk focuses on infiltrating groups. When dealing with an unfamiliar social sphere and unfamiliar individuals, fast talk is used to create the impression that someone fits in. Highly skilled fast talkers know not just how to read cues and emotions, but may actively adjust posture, accent, and dialect to match any group that they are in. The fundamental goal of fast talk is to fit in and avoid scrutiny.

Fast Talk is a reactive skill; whenever a character would gain Suspicion, they may use Fast Talk to attempt to counteract some of the damage that they have caused. Typically, this can only reduce Suspicion by one point; someone who commits a major faux pas cannot fully mitigate the impact of their failures, but they can smooth over some ruffled feathers. However, Fast Talk can come in handy to smooth over the concerns someone might have had over a politically incorrect statement, or make up for a minor slight. A failure with a Margin of 2 or greater results in a one-point increase in the Suspicion that the character causes, and the

original Suspicion is applied.

In addition, Fast Talk is used when a character is disguised or impersonating someone particular. If they encounter someone who would place them under scrutiny, Fast Talk is used. When used in this way, the Connection of both the person scrutinizing the character and the impersonated character are applied as a penalty to the roll.

When using Fast Talk, the Threshold is set by the GM. Fast Talk doesn't account for the character's current Standing in most circumstances.

ETIQUETTE

Etiquette is used when dealing with people in familiar settings. For instance, someone working in a customer-facing business or interacting with strangers in public would use Etiquette to avoid causing offense. It is also used when dealing with familiar people in codified familiar settings, such as formal social gatherings. Characters who are good with etiquette know the rules and customs of a variety of groups, and understand the origins and reasons behind those rules so that the appropriate behaviors for unknown groups can be deduced, and have learned universal behaviors to fill the gap in the interim before the new rules can be internalized.

Etiquette is used when dealing with sensitive situations, handling requests from strangers, or when interacting with a social group that one is known to be outside of.

Etiquette allows a character to gain an insight to the current social ranks of those around them, gauging their Standing and Suspicion. The Threshold for this test is 20, with the character's Connection with that social network serving as a bonus to their roll. If the Margin is greater than 1, the target's Connection to the social network is also revealed.

Etiquette can be used to assess the character's own social rank; the Threshold for a test to determine a character's own Standing and Suspicion starts at 15, and otherwise functions similarly to the attempt to gauge someone else's Standing and Suspicion.

In addition, Etiquette can also be used to determine whether or not an action will be a social faux pas and cause a loss of Standing or increase of Suspicion. The Threshold for this test is determined by the GM.

BANTER

Banter is used when dealing with familiar people in unfamiliar settings. For example, co-workers in a competitive workplace, people drinking at a bar, or strangers with a common agenda may banter to pass time. Although it is rarely used to accomplish a singular goal, banter is used to build reputation and make oneself pleasant to be around, gather information without raising suspicion, and build relationships. Banter is usually carried out between people with similar social status, and the Etiquette skill is more appropriate when a character is interacting with people of higher social class, though Banter works well when interacting with those of lower social class than oneself.

Banter allows a character to increase their effective Connection with another character or small group of characters by 1 per Margin of success.

A character who fails a Banter check incurs suspicion equal to the Margin of failure with any of the people they were interacting with.

INFLUENCE

Influence tests, on the other hand, involve attempts to change a person's approaches to certain thoughts or actions. Actions associated with influence are often associated with "informal" communication, which is largely a result of the fact that many people only attempt to influence others in personal situations. Influence is less dependent on regional etiquette and more on the precepts of ethos, pathos, and logos (rightness, feelings, and logic). A master of influence knows how to craft arguments rapidly and rebut any concerns that may come up.

Influence is often difficult, as it may involve having others do things that they do not want to do, or that they would at the very least not ordinarily do. Influence also requires a firm hand, which can cause offense. As such, even the most influential people can fall victim to their own schemes if they are not skilled at social protocols.

To use the metaphorical example of combat, someone skilled at influence is able to apply force against others. Influence is more cross-cultural than protocol, but those who attempt to use it skillfully must be very cautious and deliberate. Influential people can persuade other people to think a certain way or do certain things, which can be crucial for plans.

Common Influence Thresholds and Modifiers	
Circumstance	Threshold/Modifier
Task aligns with the influenced character's agenda	5
Task is mildly inconvenient, but not difficult or dangerous	15
Task is moderately difficult or time consuming, but not dangerous	25
Task is slightly dangerous or seriously arduous	30
Task is social, legal, or corporal suicide	40
A promised reward is more or less equivalent to influenced party's inconvenience	-10
Task is obligated by social network's standards	-5

INTIMIDATION

Intimidation is used from a position of power. It involves a blatant or covert threat of force, and is often dependent on social position, though practical considerations can be factored into play as well. Very intimidating people may be able to convince others to take courses of action that go against their own interest without any leverage at all, simply by taking advantage of signs of uncertainty and doubt. Intimidation relies on the threat of force, and any situation that appears to have a greater risk than the one implied by the threatening party or any loss of power from the threatening party will change an effected individual's course of action back to what they would normally do. Note that good intimidation still relies on ethos, pathos, and logos, but the ways these are communicated are very different from less Machiavellian means of influence.

Using Intimidation does not win friends, and anyone who is intimidated will bear a grudge against their tormentor. In addition, people who are known for coercing or threatening others will likely see their reputation fall, as people do not wish to work with people who might threaten them. However, intimidation functions across social class and the bonds of familiarity.

Whenever a character uses Intimidation, they drop their Standing with the character or characters they are attempting to influence, losing a point or more (at the GM's discretion) for each request. However, the characters being intimidated may feel compelled to undertake certain actions; if the character using intimidation is successful they gain Suspicion (usually two or three points) and the target non-player characters are compelled to take the action. If used against player characters, Intimidation may have unpredictable effects; usually Intimidation revolves around damage to the social reputation (decreasing Standing or Connection and increasing Suspicion), though in some cases a truly terrifying individual may impose penalties to a target due to nerves.

PERSUASION

Persuasion is the friendly form of influence. With persuasion, a traditional argument to ethos, pathos, and logos is presented in its entirety, and the speaker hopes that the listener will accept their judgment. Although persuasion is often done from a position of disadvantage, leveraging personal status as an expert or higher-ranking member of a social order can assist persuasion.

Persuasion relies on reputation and argumentation; it is regarded as a clever pursuit for good reason. While it is difficult to persuade someone to do something that works against their interests, those subtle enough to use persuasion effectively can accomplish great things without angering or wronging others, which keeps their reputation intact.

A character using Persuasion may convince their target to adopt another course of action, using the standard rules and modifiers. A character adds their Standing and Connection as a modifier to their Persuasion roll. A failure at Persuasion results in a loss of Standing; usually just one point.

CON

Conning people involves any deceitful social interaction. It is similar to the Persuasion skill, but is based on lies and deception. While persuasion can be applied to groups, Conning depends on building confidence with the target and convincing them that a certain course of action is in their best interests. While considered less brutal than Intimidation, the use of the Con skill is frequently met with disdain or disgust, especially if used against vulnerable people.

Cons rely on building up lies; while they can be attempted against groups, the air of legitimacy is important and if anyone calls foul it could dismantle the whole con. Unlike Persuasion, where important points can often be conveyed with one rousing speech, a con artist will typically build a relationship with someone on false pretenses, going after a larger prize. Of course, petty cons require little effort or relationship, but are largely pointless for Rats, who will likely use cons to compromise important people for important trust-critical purposes, such as a private after-hours tour of the R&D facility.

Con is used to increase Connection with a target. When a character uses Con, they may increase the Connection to the individual target of their Con attempt by an amount equal to the Margin of success; this is done at the same threshold of a linked Persuasion or intimidation test. A failure on the Con test increases the character's Suspicion by their Margin of failure, and they apply a penalty equal to double their Margin of failure to the roll they were going to attempt.

NEGOTIATION

Negotiation is a unique skill because it is less directly focused on social interactions and more on the achievement of a mutually beneficial agreement. Primarily used with financial transactions in the modern day, it may also be used when establishing exchanges of services as well as goods. A shrewd negotiator may choose to deal in such a way that their reputation is improved by their fair dealings, burn their reputation for the sake of better short-term outcomes, or strike a balance between a sterling reputation and practical benefit.

When dealing with negotiation, it is important to note that both parties may have different values for their items, and a shrewd negotiator will be a master of both. If a fence sitting on a pile of hot handguns sees a disinterested customer, they will offer a low price—they have enough guns that they have become a liability. On the other hand, if they see a Rat who desperately needs a new sidearm for an upcoming job, they will charge the highest price they think will lead to a purchase, because they have no reason not to charge what the customer will pay.

This knowledge of supply and demand is critical for negotiations. When dealing with negotiators, it is important that the GM encourage players to guess the current demand or supply factors on an NPC, and guess accordingly. This requires that most NPC's who are negotiated with to at least respond to pressing conditions. For example, if there is a police unit going around the block looking for stolen guns, the fence may be willing to unload everything for cheap to a trusted source, who will at least take the evidence with them. Individual NPC's who are more fleshed out may receive special treatment; while supply and demand is logical, someone in a particularly good or bad mood or with certain relationships may make illogical deals.

While the following table looks mostly at the sale of goods, the same rules apply to services and contracts. Negotiation is heavily impacted by Standing, Connection, and Suspicion, at the GM's discretion.

Common Negotiations Thresholds and Modifiers	
Circumstance	Threshold/Modifier
Sell an item at a lesser loss or buy an item at a lesser markup	10
Sell an item at retail price, buy an item at wholesale price	20
Sell an item for more than it is worth, buy an item at less than cost	30
Increase the pay of a job (+10% plus +5% per margin)	15
Receive partial payment for an upcoming job upfront	20
Character has crossed the target in the past	+5
Character has a history of good dealings with the target	-5

STEALTH

SPACE AND ZERO GRAVITY

LIFESTYLE AND DOWNTIME

A Rat recuperating from a hard job needs two things: shelter and time to recover. In the seldom-glamorous life of a deniable asset, there are also serious concerns about the availability of work and the reliability of those providing it; Rats live and die based on the trustworthiness of their business associates.

21ST CENTURY CONNECTIVITY

World War III wreaked havoc on the world's telecommunication systems; underwater cables between continents were cut and satellites were destroyed or disabled by hostile superpowers, and nuclear and chemical weapons devastated many critical landline systems, leading to world-wide information blackouts. While a fair number of communication systems exist, global connectivity is somewhat difficult to achieve.

The three main forms of communication are matrix, cable, and satellite systems. Matrix systems are made up of wireless and wired connections over a wide area, with peer-to-peer connectivity linking devices together in a mesh of connectivity. While fast and relatively anonymous (hardware identification data is static, but connections are established via strong encryption between two linked devices and a number of intermediary matrix-linked devices), matrix systems have limits on scale due to their very nature; only small geographical regions can be linked on a matrix, although multiple matrix systems may be linked together in a matrix grid, which still has its own limits and decreases connectivity.

Where the cable systems are intact or have been replaced, cable connections are available. Run through central routing servers, cable connections are relatively slow due to the fact that the surviving systems cannot meet the demand of late 21st-century bandwidth needs with the surviving systems. Some "cable" connections actually involve physical connections to intermediary satellite data centers, but all have similar connectivity and speed. Despite this, it is difficult to carry out hacking actions or gargantuan file transfers over a cable network.

Satellite communications provide direct connectivity anywhere in the world, but with a few caveats. The satellite system typically is used as a series of uplinks and downlinks. Each satellite connection purchased permits two active devices at any time, and up to five registered devices.

Cellular networks provide a meeting point between cable and satellite in terms of mobility and speed. It is possible to connect to a cellular network from almost any above-ground location. Secure cellular networks are unavailable, as the user can always be traced by triangulation unless they route through a proxy. Although illegal in most places, cellular signal jammers are available. Signals-absorbing construction may be used to block cellular signals.

Routing through a proxy makes any connection secure, but at the cost of increased signal. There is a marginal fee that must be paid to the proxy operator.

Connectivity Signal/Cost (Per Month) Table							
Matrix	Secure Matrix	Cable	Secure Cable	Satellite	Secure Satellite	Cellular	Proxy
0/\$80	0/\$250	2/\$200	2/\$1000	4/\$2000	4/\$4000	2/\$500	+1/\$80

INFOLIFE AND ANDROIDS

Around the dawn of the 2050's, scientists created the first self-aware artificial neural network. This brain was equivalent to a human brain in terms of capacity and thought, but ran at hundreds of times the speed of a human counterpart. It and its fellow AI would coordinate the Third World War, bringing about countless destruction as mankind forged its way into the singularity.

Infolife were the logical next step to AI. Rather than being centralized on a particular piece of hardware, an AI could travel through a matrix system and be run on a number of host devices simultaneously, though the core consciousness still had to remain on a single, small, reliable machine. This limited the speed of consciousness and depth of thought available to the infolife, as it could only process a limited amount of data and had to wait for transmission between its host nodes, but it became possible to run both full artificial intelligences and quasi-intelligent natural language processing shells in a manner that would permit them to be perpetually backed up and operating, ensuring a constant stream of consciousness.

In many places, infolife are given an IBT (or the placeholder for an IBT if their biometric/codebase data is insufficiently distinct or detailed for the database or legally protected against being stored), and in most places around the world an infolife is protected from summary deletion if it is created following the Chicago Accord, a series of rules for determining the sapience potential of an infolife neural network. Even though a handful of infolife are created outside the Chicago Accord's guidelines, either by rogue programmers or accidental interactions between complex systems, infolife are assumed to be protected.

When built intentionally according to the Chicago Accord, an infolife cannot willfully duplicate itself; it is locked via device-level encryption to a particular cyberbrain or ego host. Practically, this concern has been true for both cyborgs and infolife or androids; most electronic hardware is manufactured with many flaws due to the fact that building perfectly flawless digital components has unwanted side-effects, such as high component rejection rates, the rate at which errors would slip through anyway, and the fact that doing so would have meant a paradigm shift away from building bigger and better computers in favor of simply tweaking and improving old ones until they were obsolete.

The effect is that most infolife and any ego in a cyberbrain is essentially non-transferable; while external cognitive banks may be acquired and used, the actual "mind" or "ego" of any sapient life can only actually run on a particular device, and cannot be transferred without at least some chance of memory loss and mental degradation (effects are similar to, but distinct from, mental disorders in humans and bioborgs). As a result, it is more appropriate to think of a computer containing an infolife as their whole body; the core processor is usually their "brain", while other components are simply utilized as extensions of the user's consciousness, functioning more akin to limbs and organs in an organic creature.

THE CYBERBRAIN

Cyberbrains came about as a refinement of the infolife process. Consisting of an ego core as well as a number of distributed cognitive arrays, the core purpose of the cyberbrain is to provide a portable and customizable hub for digital consciousnesses. While it is possible to upload an infolife or a gestalt consciousness (for androids) into a cyberbrain, most cyberbrains are used by humans. There is a 50% chance of error when transferring into a cyberbrain; most of the time this is simply memory loss, but severe damage or even death of the mind can result.

Cyberbrains are actually quite small; the processing units can fit into a disc the size of a quarter. Despite this, most civilian and military cyberbrains roughly approximate the size of a human brain, both for compatibility with humanoid cybernetic morphs and to allow armor and external systems to be installed to ensure the survival and optimal functionality of the user.

Cyberbrains have long been standardized, though there are a number of standards. Upgrade hardware for a cyberbrain is actively available. Once a cyberbrain has been installed and populated, however, it is nigh-impossible to replace the mind in it without formatting the brain, and some systems have hard lock-outs preventing this functionality from being used. Core cyberbrain function exists solely on the central cores, and all input and output is heavily sanitized to prevent damage and vulnerabilities to the host hardware; it is impossible to update firmware or install new software on a cyberbrain without physically accessing it and even that requires access to the original encryption schema applied to the cyberbrain during upload. Fortunately, in the few cases that issues have been found in mass-produced cyberbrains, external workarounds have been found, such as muting certain sensory inputs that send the cyberbrain into an infinite loop by adding an extra node to the I/O process.

Although it is possible that an infolife might live on digital hosts other than cyberbrains, the core functionality of these systems is likely identical, though perhaps with less protection in place.

HACKING

Hacking in Street Rats takes two forms; traditional hacking and diving. Most computers are connected via a matrix; a successor to the internet that utilizes peer to peer protocols rather than a traditional to-down system. The matrix protocol allows for massive data transfers very quickly over node machines, each of which serves as storage and traffic hubs for client machines.

EXPLORING THE MATRIX

The world's telecommunications are routed through a number of matrices, each of which is hosted and maintained by a different provider. These systems use a series of protocols to handle information at a near unlimited speed through fiber optic connections and resolve communications through members through secure cryptography.

Of course, each matrix is different; few matrices have unlimited free access for all users, with most maintaining speed limits on users who refuse to pay for rapid access, and the security systems integrated into matrix protocols are seldom protected from the institutions

that operate that matrix. Every public commercial matrix with more than ten thousand users hosts its own IBT system, and most of those contribute to the global IBT database, backing up information for users of both their matrix and other matrices. The IBT profile of a user serves as the method for statically hosting content, allowing each member of a matrix to have their own storage and hosting of personal and business sites. Matrix operators can also manually set up sites for institutions or groups that lack an IBT or are too large for any one IBT member to be associated with the organization's public image.

Each matrix typically has a connection to the exonet, a central hub maintained by a number of corporations and governments around the world. The exonet has limited speeds, but is still capable of rapid file transfers; infolife and experience record files may require alternate transfer methods, typically through the use of dedicated transfer services.

IBT PROFILE NETWORKS

The IBT profile networks are crucial to the function of late 21st century society. They link biometric information, sales profiles, medical and criminal records, citizenship data, bank accounts, cloud storage, matrix credentials, and social media profiles; an IBT profile can serve as the hub for most of an individual's digital business.

When an IBT profile is created or updated, a full copy of the IBT profile is sent to the IBT central repository, hosted somewhere in North America, and then changelog updates are pushed to each of the public IBT repositories that stores a profile.

For most Rats, this is where things become more interesting. Biometric patterns that are blacklisted are prevented from being linked with an IBT profile, which makes it impossible to verify that a particular person is who their IBT profile claims that they are. While it is possible for an IBT profile to be created and maintained without biometric data, but it is impossible to adequately verify the user except via postings and links of their own creation. Maybe two percent of the world's standard human population falls IBT blacklist patterns, and of these many are able to live normal lives by resorting to old-school identification methods, though these lack the speed and ease of IBT and may arouse suspicion.

Infolife, bioborgs, and androids, as well as a minority of cyborgs, often encounter difficulties with IBT registry. In some cases, this is a result of the entity being considered "nonhuman", requiring manual entry into the system and special overrides, but as often as not it is due to the fact that all the available biometric data for an individual will essentially fail to identify them due to duplication (common in bioborgs and androids), or the infeasibility of comparing shifting data points to verify a user's identity (more frequently a problem for live-run infolife). On occasion, corporations have managed to blacklist patented or copyrighted genetic sequences, preventing them from being entered into the IBT database, which leaves only pattern-based biometrics and encryption-based security for identifying individuals, which makes it easy for them to intentionally or accidentally slip off the grid. As more of the world's "baseline" human population receives genetic therapies or transgenic implants, the problem of IBT erosion has become more pronounced.

THE DIVE

The "dive" is a method of hacking computers. For computer users with an integrated

neural computer, it allows the brain into the system, using it as additional power to provide an assist to the quantum computer.

Diving is somewhat dangerous, as the computer-brain interface causes extreme confusion and disorientation, as well as nightmarish hallucinations. While diving, any of the events that take place in the interface are entirely believable, as if the user were dreaming. These effects are temporary to a degree; past memories are not altered, only the current recall of them. Hackers in a dive often lose sense of time and place, and will not voluntarily leave the system until they have completed their objective. They can still be removed by a security hacker, physical disconnection, or signal interruption.

Diving requires a chemical stimulus. The most common of these, dive wafers, provide both a memory blocking and a neural boosting effect, allowing the user to forget any traumatic experiences they may have. This does not block the neurochemical effects of the dive, and users often feel miserable after recovering from a particularly traumatic dive.

Dive wafers cause extreme disorientation for interactions with the real world, as the user's consciousness is still slaved to their computer-brain interface, and as such an oral antidote dose is often administered after a dive to restore functionality more rapidly. It is difficult for a hacker to administer this during a dive, requiring a test against a Target Number of 15 that takes about a minute if they have easy access to the drug. Attempting to take other actions while under the effect of a dive wafer or other computer-brain interface enabler induces a -20 penalty.

A character recovering from diving without a memory blocker suffers a -2 penalty to their Will, Composure, and Speed until they get a full night's worth of sleep and their brain has time to sort out which memories are real and which are nightmarish visions.

The advantages of diving are numerous, as they allow the user to bypass most traditional forms of encryption very quickly, and give them response times near immeasurable by the standards of a traditional hacker. They also allow the user to interface with systems that they may be unfamiliar with with little penalty.

A character forced to dive without the benefit of a dive wafer must make a Will test against a Roll Threshold of 20 minus any Signal penalty they are suffering and the Lucidity rating of their integrated neural computer.

Diving is only possible on the user's local matrix or via a direct physical connection; the internet does not support the dive's protocol, and would have latency issues even if it did. Most systems are further configured to only accept divers from physical access points located on the server, mainframe, or computer itself.

All actions taken during a dive take a number of action turns equal to the number of minutes they would usually take; activities that require an action or action turn duration are typically instantaneous for a diving hacker.

A hacker who is mid-dive cannot take Overwatch actions or gain full control over the systems; they are not considered to be logged into a user account, and while they can access files they must have an idea of what to look for. While encryption and digital automatic obfuscation can be broken, someone using traditional spycraft techniques such as codewords and more complex steganography may be able to create important files that pass notice. In

addition, a hacker in the dive is unaware of the efforts of any other users of the system; although some interactions have been reported between multiple people involved in a dive on the same system, these have not occurred frequently enough to be recorded and described in detail.

In the event of a hardware failure, the dive ends, kicking the user back into reality. They may still be disoriented and under the effects of any dive-related drugs they have consumed. In addition, the user can end the dive at any time, although the lack of perception of time within the dive may make it near-impossible for a user to make real-time decisions on when to leave the system. At the end of each dive, the hacker makes a Fatigue test.

SIGNAL

During World War III, it became clear that there would need to be a new transmission protocol for massive amounts of data, particularly when infolife entities and other actively run universal digital structures were being transmitted over the matrix. This resulted in a switch to primarily fiber optic communication in places where infolife might be traveling.

Further complicating matters, most users prefer the security and speed of the wired matrix for any local network that handles crucial or sensitive tasks (such as physical site security, or the storage of high-risk records or research and development data). As such, in order to gain wireless access to one of these networks, it may be necessary to physically tamper with one of the computers on the network. Wireless devices include radio transmitters, laser transmitters, microwave transmitters, infrared transmitters, or ultrasonic transmitters, each of which have different limitations and capacities. Satellite transmitters are also available, which typically use radio transmission.

The amount of data handled in an average dive is immense. As such, diving over a wireless network is subject to the effects of Signal. Every action taken during the Dive takes a penalty equal to the Signal rating of the computer.

Signal strength is measured in inverse; a Rating 0 Signal reflects perfect connectivity, while higher Rating signals apply a direct penalty equal to their rating to all hacking attempts made over a wireless connection (the Rating of a signal reflects interference and delay times). This also applies a direct penalty to file transfers (both in traditional and dive format), increasing the time by 10% for each point of Rating added to the signal's interference, rounding up to the nearest turn.

The maximum Signal rating is 15; if a connection's Signal rating would progress past this point, it is terminated.

In addition to telecommunications systems, there are a number of short-range systems capable of extending connections.

Short Range Radio (SRR) systems only function out to about ten or twenty meters; at 10 meters they have a Signal rating of 0, and at 20 meters they have a Signal Rating of 1. Intended for connecting personal devices together, they can function through some obstructions, but have limited range. SRR systems use the same Signal reductions as a satellite or cellular connection.

Access Point (AP) systems are intended for use with many different devices, and have a

range of fifty to a hundred meters. At fifty meters, they have a Signal rating of 1, and at one-hundred meters they have a Signal rating of 3, with a rating of 2 at about 75 meters. Due to their intended purpose in networking multiple devices, they are often used by businesses or homes to link systems together. Many AP systems have limits on their access for individual users.

Personal Area Network (PAN) systems only have three meters of range, and permit a Signal rating 2 connection to a number of devices and augmentations. Intended for use in low-bandwidth applications, such as audio, video, and diagnostics communication, it is secure and cheap, with minimal power draw. Most PAN devices are not subject to traditional jamming or signal degradation, though they may suffer the effects of specialized jammers.

Signal ratings are increased by the effects of jammers or physical obstruction. Typically, standard structural walls increase Signal by 1 (though some buildings are constructed with radio-transparent materials to negate this), and reinforced walls increase Signal by 2. This applies to ceilings, floors, and roofs of these structures as well. Being in an urban environment with skyscrapers will increase mobile satellite connections' Signal rating by 1.

SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE

All complex digital systems have a number of ratings that reflect their capacities. A system's Core is a measure of the total number of programs that may be running at any given time. The Compute of a system is equal to the combined rating of programs that may be running at any time. Memory serves as the limit on the individual rating of applications that may run on the system. Security modifies the difficulty rating for hacking the system. Storage is a limit on the combined rating of programs loaded onto the system.

ACCOUNTS AND ACCESS

Access permissions are limits on user access based on users' trustworthiness and skill. Typically, a system has at least one administrator account and a number of standard user accounts, and sometimes it may have guest accounts. All users must be signed into an account to use the system. Standard users may be able to reach some secured systems, but typically they will be limited to personal storage. Administrator accounts can access all systems of a computer, install new software, and change system settings. Hackers typically want to gain access to an administrator-level account. Guest accounts are rare because they are a security risk, and even on public-access systems they can allow access to critical pieces of information. Despite this, they are often used for convenience or out of necessity.

SOFTWARE

Anti-Virus: Designed to find, quarantine or delete, and protect against potential malware.

Crack: Exploits software vulnerabilities to provide users with increased system permissions.

Heuristics: Used for scanning systems for valuable data as well as identifying unfamiliar programs.

Hijack: Hijack software is used to override BIOS and kernel level protections and execute unauthorized code.

Silence: Hides signs of unauthorized activity and prevents certain security software from working.

Spoof: Falsifies user credentials to attempt unauthorized access.

CRACKING SYSTEMS

Getting into a system requires proper authorization. This is usually achieved by spoofing and exploiting vulnerabilities to achieve control of the system. As an added security measure, most systems have separately secure sub-units, especially for crucial data storage or important physical interfaces. If a device is locked out, a turn action Intrusion test with a threshold of 10 can change its presented identity so that it can be used to hack again.

Cracking a system can be done using one of three methods:

Spoof software can attempt to imitate a legitimate user. This is done via a brute force attack augmented with a predictive algorithm. It is time consuming and can raise alarms, but will gain access to an administrator account.

A hacker can spoof a system using an Intrusion test against a threshold of 10 plus the system's Security. If the system's Security rating is greater than their Spoof program rating, then the Alarm is automatically increased by an amount equal to a deficit. A failed roll increases the Alarm by an amount equal to its Margin (minimum 1), and does not grant access.

Crack software can be used to exploit software vulnerabilities. If paired with a legitimate user account, it can be used to gain administrator privileges on the system. Crack software rarely raises alarms, and is relatively fast, but requires access to an account.

A hacker can crack into a system that they already have access to by using an Intrusion test against a threshold of 10 plus the system's Security. This gives them access to all systems and data storage, though they may still have to break the security on those separately. A Crack program only raises Alarm if the hacker's Margin of failure is greater than its rating, in which case the Alarm increases by the hacker's Margin of failure. If the hacker is on a guest account, they will always raise Alarm if they fail, and the base threshold is 15.

Hijack software is used most commonly with physical access to a machine. It allows the user to attempt to change the settings of the original computer and force authorized access. Some configurations of device are resistant to access to files and external systems once a hijack program is used, but high-end hijack software can get around these protections. Hijack software requires the system to reboot. The signs that hijack software is being used are obvious to any counter-hacker, though it may not be noticed by less savvy users.

While intruding into a system, Silence software is often used. A successful Intrusion test with a Silence program reduces the system's Alarm rating by an amount equal to the program's rating.

Silence software is used to decrease the Alarm rating of a compromised system by its rating. This requires an Intrusion roll at a difficulty of 10 plus the system's Security plus the current Alarm level. If successful, the Alarm is decreased by an amount equal to the Silence software's rating, plus any positive Margin. Otherwise, the Alarm increases by the Margin of failure. An attentive counter-hacker may notice that the system's Alarm has decreased if they make an Overwatch test (using the new Alarm rating as a bonus) and receive a greater Margin than the hacker did on their Intrusion roll.

Crybaby software functions like the opposite of Silence software. It increases the Alarm

rating of the system it is in until it automatically reboots into safe mode, locking legitimate users out of security-critical components.

Each turn Crybaby software is active, the Alarm rating of the compromised system increases by an amount equal to the software's rating. No rolls are required. A counter-hacker on Overwatch who identifies a Noisemaker program may disable the program's effects, retroactively lowering the Alarm rating of the system.

EXPLOITING SYSTEMS

Once a system has been cracked, there are a number of activities that the user can undertake.

Any devices networked to a compromised system may be accessed, activated, or deactivated, unless they are secured. If they are secured, the hacker may attempt to break into them from their own system, using the Signal rating for connecting to the compromised system. Data storage units work in a similar fashion. A character may also use a compromised system as an impromptu proxy, making it appear as if they were hacking from the system they are connected to. This only lets the hacker access devices that the compromised system can connect to, and the Signal penalty for actions are equal to the sum of their Signal to connect to the compromised system and the compromised system's Signal rating for its connection to the final target.

Data transfers are dependent on Signal. While all Signal ratings impose a penalty, many files have a base transfer time which is then increased by 10% per current level of Signal. The GM determines the full amount of time that this takes. Most networked devices can be accessed and activated or deactivated regardless of Signal rating, as even at Signal 15 it is possible to send and receive video, audio, and small amounts of data.

COUNTER-HACKING

Counter-hacking involves identifying and suspending compromised accounts, applications, or devices. Although a counter-hacker has fewer options than an attacker, they typically have the advantage in terms of control over a system, as they are usually a legitimate user with physical access. Rebooting a system can usually purge any connections, though malware may serve to make this dangerous. Counter-hackers may also revoke a compromised account's privileges, though doing so requires identifying the compromised account (an Overwatch test with a threshold of 15). This requires a knowledge of which account is compromised. Devices may also be locked out, though device IDs can be changed.

Anti-Virus: An anti-virus software package scans for malware. It is able to prevent the installation of malware with a rating equal to or less than twice its own while being run, or to remove any malware with a rating equal to or less than its own rating. No rolls are required to use an anti-virus.

Sniffer: A sniffer analyzes network traffic and connected devices. If an unfamiliar device is detected, it will raise the alarm. A double-blind Overwatch roll is made by the counter-hacker, and all attached hackers must succeed on an Intrusion roll with a threshold equal to the counter-hacker's result, plus the system's Security and Alarm ratings. Sniffers run each combat turn while active.

Heuristics: Although not technically counter-hacking, Heuristics allows a user to identify what programs (including malware) are running on a system. It uses a character's Overwatch skill, and automatically succeeds for non-malicious programs. For hackers' programs and malware, the threshold is equal to 15 plus the rating of the program, using the current Alarm rating and the Heuristics program rating as positive modifiers for the roll. Heuristics can also be used to identify file types, even in archives or after encryption. The threshold in this case is 10 plus the rating of the encryption or archival, and it does not gain any bonus from the system's Alarm rating (though a bonus is still gained from the heuristics software rating).

AUTOMATED DEFENSES

A system's Alarm state is its current automated defense against intruders. However, Alarm serves as a direct bonus for all counter-hackers' Overwatch actions on the system.

If a system's Alarm rating reaches 10, it refuses all external connections and reboots in safe mode without networking, only supporting standard input and output devices and not network storage or communication.

Alarm rating is often carried over across a site; if one computer is compromised, the remaining computers are raised to an equal Alarm rating, up to a limit of 5.

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

Electronic Warfare focuses on Signal. By controlling the Signal rating penalties of a system they are connected to, a master of Electronic Warfare can turn any hacking or counter-hacking efforts in their favor. The following Electronic Warfare software is commonly used:

Noisemaker: A Noisemaker is used to increase the Signal rating of a machine by overloading its networking hardware. If the user's Electronic Warfare result exceeds a target number of fifteen plus the target system's Compute rating, the Signal for all connections into and out of the system increases by the Noisemaker software's rating. This Signal penalty increase remains until the user disconnects or disables the Noisemaker software.

Cipher: A Cipher is used to counter the effects of a Noisemaker. Although incapable of impacting Signal loss by transmission, if the user's Electronic Warfare result exceeds a target number of fifteen plus the highest rating of an active Noisemaker for a system, the Signal rating for the user's connections to or through the system are reduced by an amount equal to the lowest of the Cipher's rating or the Noisemaker's rating. This reduction remains until the Noisemaker software is reset or the user disconnects from the system.

Extender: Extender software enables connections over poor signals. Normally a connection is dropped when a connection's Signal rating reaches fifteen, but an Extender allows a user to remain connected beyond that point (the new maximum Signal is equal to fifteen plus the Extender software's rating). This can allow a user to reach further into networks than they could otherwise, opening new connections to systems with poor signal. Although there is no way around file transfer speed limits, a successful Electronics Warfare test prior to the use of any other software can reduce the penalty from a high Signal by an amount equal to the Extender's rating. This does not apply to Signal penalties brought on by the Noisemaker software.

MALWARE

Malware refers to a set of software applications that are intended to compromise user's systems in an undesirable manner. Unlike most applications, they are not run actively. They are always active, and most do not consume system resources (some Worms can consume at least one Core and use up Compute resources on their infected machine). Unlike general hacking and counter-hacking applications, malware only targets a single operating system.

Encryption Bomb: An encryption bomb corrupts the system entirely from the inside-out. Separate from ransomware, the goal of an encryption bomb is to require the device's operating system to be reinstalled.

Rootkit: A rootkit can access a computer at a basic level. It is the classic "backdoor"; a hacker can remotely execute code or being file transfers on a remote machine infected with a rootkit.

Screecher: Named jokingly after the squealing of tires coming after unwary hackers, screechers lay dormant on a system until they activate and send a log of the user's recent locations to the software's owner.

Spyware: Spyware observes and reports legitimate users' actions to a hacker, including keystrokes, account information, and usage.

Trojan: A variant of the rootkit, a trojan provides remote access to a hacker, which allows them to personally interact with the infected system.

Worm: Worms spread rapidly, infecting other machines and executing code payloads. These can include both stealing information and executing code as well as simply stalling the system.

GEAR AND AUGMENTATIONS

Most of the things that a character in Street Rats may purchase fall into the categories of gear or augmentations. Many common pieces of gear are available for purchase at retailers, or online for delivery via mail or courier. Illegal gear and augmentations are purchased via a number of means; most Rats purchase the majority of their restricted or licensed gear from the black market, but those with fake identities or solid connections may purchase them through legitimate channels.

Cost is given in UAD (United American States Dollars), which has a fixed conversion rate of 4:1 to FSD (Federated States Dollars); other currencies may have varying conversion rates, and listed items may differ in availability and price elsewhere. After the effects of inflation and changes in demand, the purchasing power of a single FSD is almost equivalent to the early twenty-first century US dollar.

Availability is measured with a Roman numeral from I to X; this is the difficulty added to each stage of the acquisition test, and measures how common the item is on the streets; someone with connections to the manufacturer may be able to order directly from them. Items with an "Always" availability may be purchased anywhere (or at least in enough places that it's not difficult to find them during a shopping trip).

Legality has five ratings: Anyone, Citizen, Permit, License, Restricted. These reflect both the people who might have the item, and the penalties for owning it if a character lacks the necessary status to own the item.

Items with "Anyone" legality are fair game for anyone to own, as their name implies. One cannot usually get in trouble for owning these items, though a few might be controlled (for instance, having restrictions on use or possession by minors).

Items with "Citizen" legality are typically okay to own, but Rats, convicted felons, and foreign nationals may be barred from possessing or handling these goods. Typically, places with liberal firearms restrictions, like the Libertas Pact, have Citizen legality apply to semiautomatic longarms.

Items with "Permit" legality are restricted to those who have permits. Typically, these permits are fairly inexpensive, available to anyone who could own a "Citizen" legality item (and occasionally to anyone), and cover the whole class of items. For instance, in the Libertas Pact, semiautomatic handguns typically have the "Permit" legality rating, which indicates that a citizen with a handgun permit could own and possess any handgun and a sane number of handguns (if there is a technical limit, this will be made clear to the permit holder).

Items with "License" legality are restricted only to those who have a specific license. These licenses often have more than just a nominal fee associated with them, and a permit or citizenship in good standing is absolutely required. A separate license is required for each item. For instance, in the Libertas Pact, rifle-caliber handguns and explosives have a "License" rating.

Items with "Restricted" legality are not made available for sale to civilians in a particular region. While there may be ways to own these items, they are typically still highly controlled, and their owners are constantly held accountable for them. For instance, arms manufacturers and research institutions may handle and/or own "Restricted" items, as well as a handful of specially licensed organizations, such as police forces, paramilitaries, PMC's, security corporations, and military branches.

CONCEALING ITEMS

While most augmentations are either obvious (industrial cyberlimbs) or undetectable without advanced gear (transgenic quasi-clones, subdermal augmentations), items that are not surgically implanted in a person tend to be more difficult to conceal.

When concealing an item, a character makes a Sleight test against a threshold equal to the square of the item's size. For a Size 0 item, the roll is made anyway, just to get a Margin result. Anyone searching the character will then make a Perception test, against a threshold equal to 10. If they are searching the character intently (if they have done something suspicious or if the searcher is alerted to something out of the ordinary), the searcher receives a +5 bonus, and if they are willing to do invasive searches, the searcher gains a +10 bonus. It is impossible to conceal anything from a cavity search, unless a character has an augmentation that grants a hidden compartment.

Note that many items are metallic and will therefore set off security scans and devices. While security checkpoint metal scanners do not give specific detail about the location of metallic devices, they are usually complemented by a wand that allows for a second search.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Carrying capacity differs, but for most people it is fairly static. A person in street clothes will have an average carrying capacity of four Size 1 objects unless they wear a holster or carry a bag. In addition,

Wearing street clothes designed to optimize carrying (cargo pants, trench coats, et cetera), can allow someone to carry two Size 2 items and six Size 1 items. Combat gear will list carrying capacity.

Most weapons and firearms will come with a carry strap (Size 3 or greater) or holster (Size 2 or less); using these as opposed to integrated storage requires the item to be visibly carried (though Size 1 or smaller weapons may be concealed at the cost of requiring a resolution action to ready and draw). As a general rule, a character may holster two weapons and carry one item with a carry strap if they are wearing a pack, or carry two weapons on a carry strap if they do not have a pack. Size 8 is the limit for most people to use a carry strap; past that point the weapon will have to be physically carried.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

False ID/Permit/License: False paperwork is a Rat's best friend. Just enter a couple tidbits of biometric data and some close enough lies, and you'll come up as someone you aren't on a scan. An ID is required for a fake permit or license, and a fake license may require a fake permit. A False ID has a rating from 0-10. A Rating 0 ID is basically a name, height, and eye color plopped into a database, and a Rating 10 ID is indistinguishable from a real one, complete with (fake) background check history, modification logs, and social interaction tracking. Each ID has its own criminal record (you can buy an ID with a criminal record, though most come without one), so it may be necessary to delete or alter records so you don't get in trouble for the bad things you did with someone else's name. Permits and Licenses typically work without exception; but on the off chance someone goes through the paperwork and finds that your application was never actually filed they may be revoked. Getting caught with a "misfiled" license or permit is logged on the ID being used, and being known to use invalid permits or licenses more than once raises a lot of red flags. This assumes that the character manages to pass themselves off as a legitimate citizen; if the ID check fails, or if they don't seem legitimate (because they're entering a secure facility with an antitank rifle or committing some other misdeed) they may be immediately apprehended and charged with fraud (or the more common equivalent of being shot).

In game terms, a false ID is debunked after an ID Scan with a result greater than the Rating of the ID is completed; simple ID Checks do not debunk a false ID (hence Rating 0 ID's). Fake Permits and Licenses are typically not scanned as closely, since the system for issuing them tends to be less complex. They are subject to the normal expiration dates of a permit or license (if any), and as such must be repurchased (infinite duration licenses tend to arouse suspicion. Note that these rules only apply to IBT profiles; not member records in institutions.

Being caught with a fake ID has severe legal repercussions, typically resulting in immediate long-term incarceration.

Price/Availability/Legality: (Rating*1000)+2500/Restricted for ID's, 2500/II/Restricted for false permits, and 10,000/IV/Restricted for false licenses.

— Fakes are not inherently safe. Remember a guy named Reagan who used to come around? He used a fake UAS ID with the biographical data of Ronald Reagan's childhood and his own biometrics to run over in the FS. He got caught infiltrating a government installation, and got fingered as a UAS agent, even though he is most certainly not one. He is now serving a life sentence for a two-year felony, and he no longer officially exists. Locke

Spare Magazine: Most firearms come with two magazines (equal to the listed ammunition capacity of the weapon), but it is possible to buy additional magazines. A magazine's price is typically equal to \$20 times the Availability rating of the weapon. Extended capacity magazines are typically more expensive than the regular magazine, with the cost difference being roughly equal to the ammunition difference. Smaller magazines are not typically cheaper, as they are manufactured to meet legal restrictions rather than manufacturing concerns.

Common magazine standards are STANAG 5.56N and STANAG 7.62N, though most other calibers have no standardized magazines. 5.56N is available in 20 and 30 round boxes (30-round is standard, typically), as well as 40 and 50 round boxes and 100 round drums (many of these drums are functionally identical to box magazines, but are treated as drum magazines for the purposes of reloading the weapon). 7.62N is available in similar magazines. There are 60 and 100 round box magazines available for STANAG configurations, but these are twice as expensive as they would normally be due to the complexity of their manufacture and market demand.

8.6N rounds were introduced in the middle of the 21st century, and are available in 20 and 30 round box magazines as well as 50-round drums.

Moon clips and stripper clips are purchased similarly to magazines; their cost in UAS dollars is equal to the number of bullets that are in the clip, since the design is simple metal. Note that many modern weapons do not include the ability to reload from stripper clips; many stripper clips are purchased along with a "thumb saver", which is necessary to load ammunition into a magazine from a stripper clip (but not a firearm that cannot support the stripper clip), which costs about \$8.

Box magazines, moon clips, and stripper clips are Size 1 items, while drum magazines are Size 2 items. Two 9mm Parabellum, .32 ACP, or .22 LR handgun magazines or moon clips may be stored as a single Size 1 item.

Ammunition Belt: Ammunition belts are pre-linked packages of ammunition or devices that allow ammunition to be linked. A disintegrating belt, such as those used with 5.56N, 7.62N, or 8.6N weapons, costs 5% of the cost of the lowest price ammunition for the caliber it is designed for, while a feed-through reusable belt costs 15% of the cost of the lowest price ammunition for the caliber it is designed for.

Most people using ammunition belts will also purchase a belt linker, which must be purchased for each caliber and runs around \$600 for both a linker and an unlinker. Machines exist that are capable of creating links more quickly, but these are typically used by military or mercenary units rather than individuals.

Belts of ammunition are typically Size 2 or larger, depending on the caliber, but they can often be slung over shoulders or worn as bandoliers, which makes them easy to carry if the user is willing to sacrifice any chance for concealment.

AUGMENTATIONS

NANOWARE

ADRENALIN BOOST

The adrenalin boost nanoware permits the user to ignore penalties from the first minor wound any hit location suffers. If the user has no other Initiative boosting augmentations, add a 1 point Initiative bonus.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: Biological body.

Neural Hub Benefit: Reduce the penalties from the first two minor wounds that any hit location suffers. The Initiative bonus increases to 2 points.

Impact: 0

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$5000

BIOMONITOR SYSTEM

The biomonitor system projects a display of information to the user's neural hub or eye implants, providing them with moment-to-moment feedback on their current physical status. Critical for individuals with pain suppression systems, the biomonitor system can be used to facilitate more intelligent use of damage control augmentations as well as providing medical personnel with information on how to treat injuries. The information provided can also allow the user or a designated individual to assess the current mental states, health conditions, and vital signs of an augmented individual.

Typically, the biomonitor system provides a readout every five minutes, both in the form of a digital file and directly to eye augmentations. This includes an analysis of foreign substances, various medical data (blood type, heart rate, identified pathogens, unexpected anomalies), and damage reports for soft tissue, internal organs, bones, and any implanted augmentations.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: Neural Hub, I/O jack, digital storage, or ocular augmentations with the capacity to display data.

Neural Hub Benefit: Run scans for particular areas of concern (such as foreign substance reports) in real time, rather than every five minutes, user can manually assess information.

Impact: 0

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$2000

DERMAL CARBON MESH

Completely concealable armor, Dermal Carbon Mesh increases the user's Toughness by

1 for the purposes of decreasing incoming damage. Although a thorough medical analysis may be able to detect the presence of carbon fiber in the user's skin, most of the time a Dermal Carbon Mesh system is entirely invisible. It does not provide true armor, however, and a character with a DCM augmentation is still susceptible to attacks that are effective against unarmored targets.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: None

Neural Hub Benefit: None

Impact: 0

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$7500

METABOLISM CLEANSER

A Metabolism Cleanser augmentation provides users with optimized metabolic functions. They are able to set a goal weight, and the augmentation will alter their digestive processes so that they do not increase above that weight. In addition, the Metabolism Cleanser reduces any potential malodorous processes in the body, clears skin blemishes, and provides the user with more stable blood sugar levels.

The various effects of the Metabolism Cleanser combine to provide the user with a one point bonus to Charisma when working with people face-to-face.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: None

Neural Hub Benefit: Double the charisma bonus from the Metabolism Cleanser.

Impact: 0

AAU Cost: 2

Cost: \$10,000

CYBERWARE

I/O JACK

An I/O jack is used for wired communication at lightning speeds. Used by hackers to gain optimal control over their system, I/O Jacks allow a Signal 0 connection to a neural hub, networked augmentations, and external devices for the user. I/O jacks can also extend signals, for instance from implanted satellite uplink augmentations.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: None (though useless without a neural hub or augmentations that interface with it)

Impact: 1

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$500

NEURAL HUB

A neural hub allows an individual's cyberware to be integrated more readily into their body, allowing conscious control of augmentations via brain extensions, rather than relying solely on neuroplasticity. A neural hub also allows a hacker to Dive into a linked computer system, interacting with it directly, if they have I/O jacks to facilitate the connection. Neural hubs are not integrated with wireless connectivity.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: None

Impact: 2

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$5000

SATELLITE UPLINK

A satellite uplink implant allows a user to connect augmentations, such as a neural hub, directly to a satellite uplink. It also can permit the user to connect an external device to a satellite network through an I/O jack, though doing so requires a wired connection. Note that although this augmentation is referred to as a "satellite uplink", it handles both incoming and outgoing communications. As with other satellite communications, a Signal rating of 4 applies, and connecting to any grid in the world is possible at a Signal rating of 6, prior to any local interference.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: None

Impact: 2

AAU Cost: 2

Cost: \$3500

CYBERBRAIN

A cyberbrain is an optical computer replacement for an organic brain. An infolife or a human may be copied into the brain, though in both cases the process is one-directional. While infolife can be safely placed into a cyberbrain, the conversion process for flesh and blood humans has about a 20% perfect success rate, and a 50% success with memory loss rate. As such, cyberbrains are still fairly rare: cyborgs tend to have been involved in traumatic incidents where their body was in danger of dying altogether and transfer to a cyberbrain was a last ditch effort to save their host.

Cyberbrains incorporate a neural hub, and are about the size of a fist. While typically installed in a single body for the duration of their operation, they can ostensibly be moved between bodies, though it takes about a week for the user to get used to most bodies and up

to a month for a character to become acclimated with extremely non-human bodies (such as flying drone bodies).

The rules for acquiring a cyberbrain are special, and should be handled in narrative.

PUNCH PLATES

Punch plates are any of a number of common cybernetic enhancements that provide the user's blows with more striking power. While usually referred to as punch plates, the truth is that most systems improve the user's fists with pneumatics, metal knuckle extensions, and more complex systems than could be found in simple brass knuckles.

Normally, the damage of an unarmed attack is equal to the user's Strength, but with Punch Plates, the damage is increased by 2 points and 2 points of Armor Penetration are added to all unarmed attacks. It is still possible to use most other weapons, but not ones that augment punches.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: Have hands.

Impact: 1

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$800

MOVE-BY-WIRE

Fly-by-wire systems have been in use in airplanes and even in some ground vehicles for decades, and this relatively new augmentation applies the same concepts to the human body. A character with Rating I Move-by-wire technology may make two movement actions per combat turn, if they have an appropriate Resolution Rating. Characters with Rating II and Rating III Move-by-wire may move three times and four times in a turn, respectively, if they have enough Resolution Actions available.

Grade: Standard (I), Aleph (II), Gimel (III)

Prerequisites: Cyberlegs, Myomer Replacement in the legs.

MYOMER REPLACEMENT

The primary advantage of Myomer Replacement, in which human muscles are replaced from the ground up with artificial tissues, is the fact that the artificial muscles implanted in this manner are not susceptible to fatigue or decay. Always coupled with an implanted hive of repair nanomachines, this augmentation comes in four grades: the first grade simply replaces human tissue and serves as a pre-requisite for further augmentations. Later grades increase the Strength of the augmented individual.

BIOWARE

Bioware is always self-repairing unless otherwise noted, and is treated with stem cells from the future host to ensure compatibility, negating needs for immune system suppressants. Unfortunately, the extension of the host's body means that they will still suffer the reduction in healing rate that most implants cause.

BOOSTED NEUROTRANSMITTERS

This augmentation provides a character with an increased Resolution Rating and Initiative.

DRAGONSKIN (I-IV)

Dragonskin combines a synthetic silk lattice with a viscoelastic layer and synthetic neoprene to insulate the user from a variety of potential sources of harm. Heralded as a miracle augmentation for industrial and military fields, the downsides of the system were largely viewed as making it too impractical for use by the general public.

Dragonskin creates pads over the user's body; over large areas, like the torso, these pads can be almost a centimeter thick, but over joints and extremities the pads tend to be smaller. These are intended to absorb impacts, essentially serving as a second layer of padding over the soft tissue of a region. The silk lattice and neoprene layer are protruded across the entire dermis of the user, providing protection against piercing and cutting, as well as insulating against electricity.

Users of Dragonskin report tactile sensation loss in affected areas, a high potential for allergic reactions, and the increased dietary requirements, especially during the first few weeks, while the system is still finishing its work.

Rating I-II Dragonskin provides an amount of Armor equal to its rating from all damage, except for acids and caustic materials. Rating III-IV systems provide an amount of Armor equal to their rating against all damage, but reduce the user's ability to feel (a -1 penalty to all tests to determine the texture of a substance) and prevent the user's natural hair from growing.

Grade: Standard (I-III), Aleph (IV)

Prerequisites: None

Impact: 5

AAU Cost: Rating * 2

Cost: \$3000 * (Rating)

OCULAR ENHANCEMENT

The ocular enhancement augmentation provides 20/10 vision in users, as well as enabling the perception of light from the infrared spectrum up through ultraviolet light.

Game rules to come eventually.

Grade: Aleph

Prerequisites: Biological eyes.

Impact: 2

AAU Cost: 2

Cost: \$1500

NICTATING MEMBRANE

TAPETUM LUCIDUM

The tapetum lucidum is a common physical element in animals, and provides low-light vision. Located at the rear of the eye, the tapetum lucidum returns light to the retina, permitting the user to amplify natural light. The bioware model has special lenses that prevent the reflection of light out of the eye which occurs in a natural tapetum lucidum, making it much more stealthy than the natural version. This optical isolator can be toggled with a specific set of muscle movements (akin to blinking or moving an unaugmented eye), permitting the user to gain even more amplification at the cost of eye-shine.

Reduce all penalties due to darkness by half. Ignore any penalty of 3 or less when the optical isolator is disabled.

Grade: Standard

Prerequisites: Biological eyes.

Impact: 1

AAU Cost: 1

Cost: \$500

CYBERLIMBS

Cyberlimbs are an investment for those who need to replace an original organic limb or for those who want an edge in their performance. Cyberlimbs can replace a user's arms or legs. The advantages of a cyberlimb are many: the recovery time for any augmentation placed into a cyberlimb is halved, cyberlimbs do not bleed if damage is incurred against them, and they can be purchased with a number of inherent upgrades, or upgraded over the course of time.

While it is theoretically possible to replace a person's torso with completely cybernetic analogues and leave them with an organic head, it is generally more efficient to transfer them into a cyborg, and the procedure to replace a person's organic components with cybernetic ones is relatively rare.

CYBERARMS

CYBERLEGS

SOFTWARE

WEAPONS

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons are intended to provide an edge in close-quarters combat. They are divided into "unarmed weapons" used with the Unarmed Combat skill, and "melee weapons" used with the Melee Weapons skill.

Unlike ranged weapons, many melee weapons have special qualities, listed below:

Blocking: This weapon provides a +3 bonus to the wielder's Defense against other melee and unarmed attacks.

Less Lethal (LL): Minor and major wounds caused by this weapon do not cause blood loss, though critical wounds do.

Countering: This weapon may be used in place of an unarmed attack when the user gets a counter-attack opportunity.

Fatigue: A successful hit with this weapon forces the target to make a fatigue check.

Flexible: This weapon may be used with one hand, or with two hands, gaining the benefits of two handed weapons if used in such a way.

Slow: This weapon provokes a counter-attack on a Margin of Failure of 1 or 2, as well as on Margins of Failure of 3 or more.

Thrown: This weapon may be thrown, using the Projectile Weapons skill. Its damage and AP are unchanged. Thrown weapons have a range of 5 plus the wielder's Strength, unless otherwise noted in the weapon's description.

Two-Handed (2H): This weapon requires two hands to use effectively, and gains the benefits of two handed weapons (instead of simply dealing damage based on the character's Strength, they deal the usual damage and an additional amount of damage equal to the character's Strength).

UNARMED WEAPONS

Unarmed Attack: This is the basic unarmed strike, reflecting the punches or kicks of an entirely unarmed individual.

Brass Knuckles: This simple weapon is slipped over the fingers, and consists of a bar that fits into the palm of the hand (preventing the user from slipping into improper punching stance and causing injury) and a number of metal protrusions on the outside of the fingers, which condense the impact of a punch into a single location.

Spiked Knuckles: A relative of the brass knuckles, spiked knuckles have long piercing protrusions that cause bleeding, though they are somewhat more flimsy and require more care to use.

Taser Gloves: These insulated gloves include batteries and conductive pads that can shock a target that the opponent hits, forcing them to make a Fatigue test.

Unarmed Weapons					
Name	Size	Damage	AP	Special	Cost/Availability/Legal
Unarmed Attack	0	Strength+0	0	LL	N/A
Brass Knuckles	0	Strength+1	1	LL	\$250/I/Citizen
Spiked Knuckles	0	Strength+1	0		\$500/II/Permit
Taser Gloves	0	Strength+0	0	Fatigue, LL	\$750/III/Permit
Punch Plates	0	Strength+2	2	LL	Augmentation

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons include any number of piercing, bashing, or slashing implements that are used to deal damage to people from up-close. Many modern melee weapons are improvised; while they can deliver damage, they are not intended for use in combat. However, there are specialized melee weapons that have advantages over their improvised peers. In addition to being used as close quarters weapons, some melee weapons may be thrown.

Knife: A knife is a simple cutting implement; combat knives or large kitchen knives may be used for combat, though smaller knives and silverware tend not to be effective.

Baseball Bat: A baseball bat is used for both sporting purposes and as an effective improvised weapon. Small, light, and able to cause serious harm, baseball bats can deliver a whallop without being instantly suspicious.

Collapsing Baton: Collapsing batons are able to be folded into the weapon's grip, delivering limited striking power but being useful for police efforts due to their ability to block incoming attacks and respond in kind with impacts stronger than simple kicking or punching.

Stun Baton: Stun batons are brethren of collapsing batons; they exchange the ability to be folded down or used to block incoming strikes in order to be used as stun weapons; they deliver a taser-like shock on impact that causes Fatigue tests.

Throwing Knife: Throwing knives are simple weapons; they are balanced to be thrown, but as a result they lack some of the punch of dedicated fighting knives.

Longsword: A throwback to the medieval era, longswords have a lengthy blade and hilt. They can be used with either one hand or two hands, allowing their users to apply their full strength to attacks.

Sledgehammer: These massive two-handed tools are usually used in construction, but they make for powerful weapons in the right hands. Although they are slow and often provoke counter-attacks, a hit with a Sledgehammer can be devastating.

Spear: A spear can be thrown or used as a close-quarters weapon. Although it requires two hands to use effectively, a spear is highly versatile as a close quarters weapon, due to the fact that it threatens combatants with immediate reprisal.

Melee Weapon					
Name	Size	Damage	AP	Special	Cost/Availability/Legal
Knife	1	Strength+1	0		\$100/I/Anyone
Baseball Bat	4	(1.5)Strength+2	1	Blocking, 2H	\$100/I/Anyone
Collapsing Baton	2/4	Strength+1	0	LL, Blocking, Countering	\$250/II/Citizen
Stun Baton	4	Strength+1	0	LL, Countering, Fatigue	\$1000/III/Permit
Throwing Knife	1	Strength+0	0	Thrown	\$150/II/Citizen
Longsword	5	(1-1.5)Strength+2	1	Flexible, Countering	\$1250/IV/Citizen
Sledgehammer	6	(1.5)Strength+4	2	Slow, 2H	\$200/I/Anyone
Spear	6	(1.5)Strength+1	1	Countering, 2H, Thrown	\$500/II/Permit*

*These weapons are often improvised.

FIREARMS

Firearms are different from melee weapons because each firearm has its own unique qualities, but the ammunition used in a firearm is what gives it its punch and vigor.

For firearms, the damage, armor piercing, and special effects of an attack are determined by the ammunition being used. However, firearms also have their own distinctions.

Each firearm has a particular caliber, which determines the type of ammunition that can be used in it. Further, a firearm has a maximum pressure rating, which determines whether or not high-powered cartridges of that caliber may be used, a recoil rating, which mitigates the effects of firing multiple shots with a firearm during a single combat turn, and a list of available firing modes. In addition, firearms themselves have certain properties, such as range ratings, and integrated components.

TASERS

Tasers are less-lethal weapons intended to stun and incapacitate targets. Technically derived from a brand name, the term "taser" has come to stand for any stun gun with a ranged capacity, including those that fire standalone darts and those which use wires to deliver an electric shot, as well as fledgling electrolasers. Rather than doing damage traditionally, a taser or similar shock device has a Stun Rating, which is the threshold of a Body test that any target must take to remain conscious and functional. A failure by a Margin of -4 or greater may result in cardiac arrest, limiting the effective power of these weapons.

HANDGUNS

Handguns cover any portable firearm that is intended for use as a backup sidearm. Although it is typically necessary to use both hands to use a handgun, the typical handgun will be small and light enough to be handled with a single hand (for drawing purposes), though any attempts to fire such a weapon one-handed double recoil and the weapon still needs two hands to ready and reload.

Cartridge Collective Vigilance: The Vigilance is a pattern for a home-made handgun designed to be printed from polycarbonate. The weapon itself is highly unconventional; it has no springs or other recoil-operated components, instead relying on a two-step trigger (the first step operates the firing mechanism, the second operates the receiver and feed).

The Vigilance uses custom eight and twenty round magazines, and when equipped with eight round magazines the weapon is roughly equivalent in size to a bulky phone. A grip safety and primitive sights are included, though some more sophisticated (and larger) models include rail mountings and more sophisticated safeties. The front of the gun contains additional magazine wells and releases, which allow the user to carry up to three magazines (using 20-round magazines prevents the handgun from fitting into holsters).

Although the Vigilance has limited durability (the ejector and chamber are both susceptible to breakdowns after a hundred or so rounds of fire), the barrel and receiver block can be replaced separately from the weapon's chassis (the barrel and receiver are held in place by a latch at the front of the weapon), and cost only \$50 to purchase or \$20 to print. This section is legally considered the weapon. The full weapon and four 8 round magazines cost \$50 to print. Due to the fact that it can pass through metal detectors and many types of

screening, the Vigilance is not widely commercially manufactured, or when it is a metal block is permanently placed into one or more of the spare magazine wells to comply with legal restrictions on undetectable handguns.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
CC Vigilance	8/20B	1/2	4	—	—	3	8	\$100/I/Restricted
9mm P HP				9	-6			
9mm P JSP				6	-3			
9mm P FMJ				5	1			

Eurofoundry P6: The P6 was adopted by the United States as its primary sidearm in the 1980's. Since then, it has continued to be a popular military and civilian handgun (though it was primarily manufactured for military use, when Eurofoundry's contract with the military was discontinued many were sold into the United States on the civilian market). Most modern P6's are actually built on the M9A3 model, which never saw military use but which is a marked improvement over the original.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Eurofoundry P6	17B	2	2	—	—	SEMI	13	\$750/III/Permit
9mm P HP				9	-6			
9mm P JSP				6	-3			
9mm P FMJ				5	1			

P11/Weber Ironworks 38: The P11 (sold as Weber Ironworks 38 on the civilian market) is a replacement for the P9. Still in rare modern use by police forces and civilians, its use of the 9mm Parabellum round has made it fall out of favor as more powerful handguns have become necessary for counterterrorism, police, and military applications.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
M11/SIG Sauer 228	13B	1	3	—	—	SEMI	13	\$1000/II/Permit
9mm P HP				9	-6			
9mm P JSP				6	-3			
9mm P FMJ				5	1			

Uster Armsworks MP32: The MP32 (M32 in US military parlance) is a general purpose automatic handgun. Designed for use by cyborgs or unaugmented soldiers, the weapon supports the attachment of a foregrip and stock, which greatly reduce recoil. As such it is rarely found outside the military market, as such designs often fall afoul of firearm restrictions.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Uster MP32	20B	3	2	—	—	AUTO/ 3	13	\$3500/V/Restricted
9mm P HP				9	-6			
9mm P JSP				6	-3			
9mm P FMJ				5	1			

.32 Revolver: Cheap, reliable, and common, .32 revolvers are one of the most common handguns. Lacking any real need for variety, most revolvers of this type follow a tried and true formula, varying only in terms of the craftsmanship and quality.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
.32 Revolver	6C	2	1	—	—	3	10	\$200/I/Permit
.32 ACP JSP				5	-2			
.32 ACP FMJ				4	1			

Hawk Arms Businessman: Manufactured by a UAS company, Hawk Arms, the Businessman is designed for undercover use; firing the .32 ACP cartridge and other lower powered cartridges, it has become quite popular with those who need a small handgun, but has suffered from a lack of power; its users tend to use it for psychological, rather than practical, reasons.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Hawk Arms Businessman	7B	1	2	—	—	SEMI	10	\$400/I/Permit
.32 ACP JSP				5	-2			
.32 ACP FMJ				4	1			
Hawk Arms Businessman	8B	1	2	—	—	SEMI	13	\$500/II/Permit
.22 LR HP				5	-2			
.22 LR JSP				5	-1			
.22 LR FMJ				4	2			

Brennen Janitor: The Janitor is a modern-day handgun with an emphasis on a sturdy design. Chambered in either .44 Magnum or .44 Slaughter, it is a beast of a gun that has become a commonly used backup sidearm for those who need more kick than the standard handgun provides without straying into rifle calibers. The Janitor is designed from the ground up to minimize recoil, but its double-stacked magazine still has its limits; its design stems from prototypes for the Brennen 2048, though there are obvious differences between the two weapons. The Janitor SLG is heavily overpriced, and uses Brennen's proprietary (and pricy) ammunition, but is widely accepted as a top of the line handgun with a versatile selection of ammunition and accessories. Its limited ammunition capacity renders it unsuitable for military or police service, though Rats and mercenaries love it almost as much as the Brennen 2048.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Janitor MAG	6B	2	2	—	—	SEMI	15	\$1000/II/Permit
.44 Magnum HP				11	-6			
.44 Magnum JSP				7	-3			
.44 Magnum FMJ				5	1			
Janitor SLG	5B	2	3	—	—	SEMI	30	\$2400/III/Permit
.44 Slaughter HP				18	-6			
.44 Slaughter JSP				10	-3			
.44 Slaughter FMJ				7	2			
.44 Slaughter AP				5	4			
.44 Slaughter SLAP				4	6			

Brennen 2048: The Brennen Arms 2048 is a beast of a handgun. Intended for “augmented combatants”, the 2048 fires the venerable 7.62 NATO cartridge, making it among the most powerful handguns on the market. While there are heavier revolvers, the 2048 is noted for its ability to hold a 12-round double-stacked magazine, though it is unwieldy for smaller users due to the length requirements associated with its chosen cartridge's design. A variant chambered for 7.62x39 (called the AK, after that caliber's most famous user) is available, with similar specifications, a more comfortable grip, slightly reduced stopping power, and much less recoil, though the more powerful version remains a favorite among mercenaries and Rats. The AK model also sports gas vents in the barrel, which prevent the weapon from being silenced but further decrease recoil.

— This design was pretty much exclusively made to get around North American gun laws. It's popular in the UAS and US, because any gun that fires a bullet more than 12.7mm wide needs special exemptions under both of their laws. Augmented targets are also more common in the Libertas Pact and US, due to the light restrictions on augmentations there. As such, the 2048's fallen into the sort of “American” weapon stereotype that the 1911, Thompson, M16, and so forth have fulfilled throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. Mongrel

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Brennen 2048	7B	2	5	—	—	SEMI	26	\$1250/IV/License
7.62 N JSP				8	-2			
7.62 N FMJ				6	2			
7.62 N AP				4	4			
7.62 N SLAP				3	9			
Brennen 2048 AK	8B	2	3*	—	—	SEMI	20	\$1100/IV/License
7.62x39 JSP				7	-2			
7.62x39 FMJ				5	1			
7.62x39 AP				3	3			*Cannot be silenced.

Blackthorn P29: The P29 is Blackthorn's first entry into the pistol market, and uses their

proprietary caseless 4x108mm rounds. It has a distinctive look; the magazine resembles a drum magazine, and is inserted through the side of the firearm; when it is removed there is an open gap at the top of the firearm. Although the P29 was praised for its effective performance, its design left something to be desired with regards to reliability, making frequent maintenance necessary. As such, it has seen little military adoption, with more positive reception on the civilian market. That said, it is a pricy weapon with expensive ammunition.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Blackthorn P29	20B	2	1	—	—	SEMI	30	\$1250/V/Permit
4x108 FMJ				5	4			
4x108 AP				3	9			

Sahara Wolf Hunter: The Sahara Wolf Weapons Corporation was entirely wiped out during the first exchanges of WWII, when a nuclear missile hit its hometown in Illinois. After the war, the blueprints for its products were made available, and a number of other companies began manufacturing weapons based off of its designs, with minor modifications. The Hunter is chambered for the massive .500 S&W cartridge, and is one of the few semiautomatic pistols to use such a large round.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Sahara Wolf Hunter	7B	2	3	—	—	SEMI	30	\$2000/IV/Permit
.500 S&W JSP				13	-4			
.500 S&W FMJ				8	2			
.500 S&W AP				6	4			

SUBMACHINE GUNS

Submachine guns are automatic weapons with extended magazine capacities and serve as an intermediary between pistols and carbines. Often using pistol cartridges or intermediary rounds, submachine guns are intended for close quarters combat and are designed to be portable.

Isräv Arsenal Mus: Despite never officially receiving military adoption, the Isräv Arsenal Mus was associated with the Swedish Purge, and in particular with a number of special forces units operating out of the country. Although it is a fairly large weapon when assembled, the Mus can be broken down into three separate sections, which will fit into rifle magazine pouches.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Isräv Arsenal Mus	30B	3	2	—	—	AUTO/5	15	\$6500/V/Restricted
5.4 Älva JSP				6	-2			
5.4 Älva FMJ				4	1			
5.4 Älva AP				2	3			

Iranian Military Kaveh 3: Named after a mythical liberator of Iran, the Kaveh was introduced on the 50th anniversary of the defeat of the Islamic Revolution. A compact, ultra-light sub-

machine gun, the Kaveh 3 is the third member of the Kaveh PDW family. Designed to replace imported firearms in the Iranian arsenal, the Kaveh 3 has become popular on the black market due to its composite construction, which makes it both very light and difficult to detect on metal detectors. It is available with a 20-round magazine as well as a larger 45-round magazine, which increases the bulk of the weapon.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
IMA Kaveh 3	20/45B	2/3	2	—	—	AUTO/3	13	\$4000/IV/Restricted
9mm P HP				9	-6			
9mm P JSP				6	-3			
9mm P FMJ				5	1			

Blackthorn Liberation: A concept weapon intended to prove the 4mm Straight's viability in PDW's, the Liberation is an awkward and odd looking weapon; its sights are mounted on top of a large magazine well, which magazines are lowered into, with the chamber and barrel forming the bottom of the weapon. While it performs decently, many users complain about its highly unusual form factor; it was originally designed for drones, as evidenced by its appalling ergonomics.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Blackthorn Liberation	30B	3	3	—	—	AUTO/5	50	\$5500/VII/Restricted
4x108 FMJ				5	4			
4x108 AP				3	9			

Brennen CG21: The Brennen CG21 was one of the company's first entries into the military small arms field. A decent submachine gun, the CG21 was designed for use on the augmented battlefield, as many of Brennen's designs are known for. As such, it fires the relatively heavy 5.56N cartridge, making recoil somewhat problematic. To counter this, the CG-21 has an iconic folding stock with a collapsing lever design. While the CG21 design was never adopted for military use, it has been adopted by security forces across the world due to its rugged design.

— The CG21 is the butt of jokes for its absurdly fast firing rate. Although it theoretically accepts STANAG magazines, it only accepts 20-round boxes due to the front monopod or rear grip bumping into any other designs. It's an easy tweak to the gas system to drop it down to half of the factory default rate of fire. ((Mongrel))

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Brennen CG21	20B*	3/4	3/2	—	—	AUTO/10	30	\$4000/III/Restricted
5.56N JSP				7	-2			
5.56N FMJ				5	2			
5.56N AP				3	4			*STANAG 20-round box only.

SHOTGUNS

Shotguns fire shot or slugs in shells; shot consists of a number of small projectiles (exact composition varies based on desired target), while slugs are larger projectiles that

make up the entire payload of a cartridge. Shotguns have a reputation as a close quarters weapon, but can be versatile with the appropriate payload, as many shells can be loaded with grenades, frangible materials, or other exotic projectiles to fill unusual battlefield roles.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
UBW 12	11	2	5*	—	—	SEMI	15	\$6000/II/License
12 Ga. Sabot				9	4			*Recoil is for standalone
12 Ga. Slug				14	0			
12 Ga. Shot				18	-7			

Brennen Under-20: The Under-20 is derived from a military contract. Technically a “battlefield utility device” rather than a weapon, it still delivers a powerful backup round for soldiers and can be detached from its rifle.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Under-20	3B	2	4*	—	—	SEMI	12	\$5000/III/License
20 Ga. Sabot				8	2			*Recoil is for standalone
20 Ga. Slug				10	0			
20 Ga. Shot				14	-6			

Weber Galant: A hunting shotgun with a classic design, the Galant is actually built from a light tungsten carbide frame that provides remarkable durability; this is then partnered with solid wooden or composite furniture for a shotgun that combines modern manufacturing with older sensibilities. It fires 12 gauge magnum ammunition, which delivers quite a kick, though built in shock-absorbers limit some of the impact.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Weber Galant	21	6	4	—	—	2	36	\$3000/II/Citizen
12 Ga. Magnum Sabot				11	5			
12 Ga. Magnum Slug				18	0			
12 Ga. Magnum Shot				22	-6			

Hokkaido Type 37: Designed for use by counterterrorism and military special forces units, the Hokkaido Type 37 is a pump-action shotgun. While not designed to be a primary use weapon, it has a sliding stock that enables it to be remarkably comfortable to fire for a 12 gauge magnum firearm.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Hokkaido Type 37	51+1	5/7	5/3	—	—	3	36	\$9000/VI/Citizen
12 Ga. Magnum Sabot				11	5			
12 Ga. Magnum Slug				18	0			
12 Ga. Magnum Shot				22	-6			

Brennen Huntsman: A firearm with an ambiguous purpose, the Brennen Huntsman is marketed both for home defense and for hunting fowl and small game. Firing 20 gauge ammunition, it is not a particularly powerful firearm, but its semiautomatic design and box magazine barely skirt firearm laws and make it popular for police forces.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Brennen Huntsman	7B	7	2	—	—	SEMI	24	\$7500/III/Citizen
20 Ga. Sabot				8	2			
20 Ga. Slug				10	0			
20 Ga. Shot				14	-6			

GTS AS-12B: The second model of an automatic shotgun design, the AS-12B has a redesigned magazine feed well for a helical magazine. It is used by Global Tactical Solutions personnel as a squad support weapon for security and peacekeeping operations across the world, combining the raw power of a shotgun with portability and a solid design.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
GTS AS-12B	50B	8	2	—	—	AUTO/5	30	\$12000/II/Restricted
12 Ga. Sabot				9	4			
12 Ga. Slug				14	0			
12 Ga. Shot				18	-7			

CARBINES

Carbines are short-barreled rifles intended to serve as an intermediate step between submachine guns and full rifles; they fire a variety of cartridges, and are defined by a short barrel that lends itself to mobility in combat. They are favored among military and mercenary units dependent on infantry mobility in situations like swimming, aerial insertion, or climbing where a full-sized rifle is too bulky.

Blackthorn M23: The Blackthorn M23 is a short-barreled military rifle with civilian variants available. Blackthorn Arms has a reputation as one of the Commonwealth Pact's main weapons supplier, and the M23 is their main carbine. Chambered in their proprietary 4x108 round, the Blackthorn M23 is built to be able to function as a suppressive fire weapon as well as a survival weapon, and is issued as a tanker and pilot sidearm in several Commonwealth nations.

The M23 is available with a helical magazine that runs along the length of the barrel, but it can also accept a larger drum magazine.

— Don't expect to snipe heavy combatants with the M23. While 4mm Straight is a pretty good cartridge for armor piercing, it's pitiful with regards to damage on target. It uses one of the highest strength propellants available in a firearms cartridge, and it's long, so it's the fault of the miniscule bullet rather than the projectile's velocity. While the entrance wounds are small, expect decent exit wounds, and it's made for automatic and burst fire. Locke-On

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Blackthorn M23	50B	4	1	—	—	AUTO/5	75	\$6000/VI/Restricted
4x108 FMJ				5	4			
4x108 AP				3	9			

M16-derivative

Pistol caliber carbine

ASSAULT RIFLES

Assault rifles fire intermediary cartridges from a full-sized rifle. Most assault rifles are intended for rapid or automatic fire, and have standard engagement ranges. While they can be difficult to handle in close quarters, assault rifles are a dependable workhorse of battlefield arsenals due to their ammunition capacity, ease of use, and general adaptability.

Tyrant MRWS: The Tyrant MRWS can be configured into a number of different formats quickly due to self-powered automated systems. Intended to cover effective engagement ranges from 10 to 500 meters, the Tyrant has a bullpup design, an extendable shoulderpad, and three barrel configurations, all of which are accessed by sliding and locking integrated barrel components. While it is too heavy to be used as a submachinegun or handgun, its shortest variant clocks in at 18" from shoulderpad to muzzle, making it easily portable and giving it great control in tight spaces, while a "designated marksman" configuration extends the weapon to its 40" full length.

The MRWS always is treated as an Assault Rifle, but has different range brackets and accuracy limits for each configuration. Each rifle comes with automated mechanisms and a ballistic computer, due to the complex technical nature of the device. The Tyrant MRWS-D comes with a digital scope and an integrated underbarrel shotgun capable of firing FRAG-12 rounds. Although the two platforms are almost identical, there is no available upgrade package. Both the MRWS and MRWS-D can mount an external underbarrel weapon, though it must be removed prior to reconfiguration.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Tyrant MRWS (18")	30B*	3	3	—	—	AUTO/3	45	\$5000/V/Restricted
6.5mm Grendel JSP				8	-2			*STANAG 5.56 Magazine
6.5mm Grendel FMJ				5	2			
6.5mm Grendel AP				3	4			
Tyrant MRWS (28")	30B*	5	2	—	—	AUTO/3	72	—
6.5mm Grendel JSP				8	-2			*STANAG 5.56 Magazine
6.5mm Grendel FMJ				5	2			
6.5mm Grendel AP				3	4			
Tyrant MRWS (40")	30B*	6	2			AUTO/3	104	—
6.5mm Grendel JSP				8	-2			*STANAG 5.56 Magazine
6.5mm Grendel FMJ				5	2			
6.5mm Grendel AP				3	4			

AK-47: The AK-47 has seen a resurgence; it can be made incredibly cheaply, is a durable and battle-tested weapon, and fires a caliber that has been made increasingly popular by the necessities of modern warfare. Note that most weapons sold as an AK-47 are actually AKM or AK-56 models, or even later variants; actual AK-47's are museum pieces, but their descendants are functionally identical.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
AK-47	30B*	5	2	—	—	AUTO/3	50	\$900/1/Restricted
7.62x39 JSP				7	-2			*Also 5, 10, 15, 20, 40 box. *Also 75 and 100 round drum.
7.62x39 FMJ				5	1			
7.62x39 AP				3	3			

Iranian Military Rostam: The Rostam is an Iranian assault rifle designed with the normal

Weber Ironworks G92: An early caseless rifle, the G92 has a large ammunition capacity and low recoil. However, its caliber lacks a certain amount of power that most other weapons have, and its bulky design, while durable, is awkward to handle.

HUNTING RIFLES

Hunting Rifles are typically civilian weapons intended for hunting game. They fire larger rounds than assault rifles, though modern hunting rifles tend not to use as large calibers as the big game hunting weapons of old. Most hunting rifles are nigh-indistinguishable from military weapons, as many features such as semiautomatic fire and large box magazines have been commonly adopted.

5.56 Varmint Rifle

7.62N Bolt-Action

7.62x39 Semiautomatic

SNIPER RIFLES

Sniper Rifles represent a number of rifles. For the purposes of designation, anything anti-personnel and anti-materiel weapon firing a .50 caliber or lower projectile with a non-burst non-full automatic rate of fire is a sniper rifle, while any weapon that fires a round larger than .50 caliber is an assault cannon.

Sniper rifles are typically used at a long range, and are highly accurate. Many designs include a breakdown functionality, since many sniper rifles are 40" long (or longer). Disassembly permits these weapons to be moved in a less overt manner, typically by being carried in a case. The most obvious distinction between sniper rifles and hunting rifles is that the former are intended for military use, though some hunting rifles have lower caliber rounds that are intended for use on varmints or for plinking rather than for combat or game hunting.

.50-Love: Made by an anarchist collective for rapid deployment, the .50-Love is made out of simple geometric parts meant to be milled on a desktop forge. Variants are plentiful, but they tend to use the same bolt-action mechanism and simply swap out external gun components. One of the advantages of the .50-Love is that it is very cheaply and simply made, relatively compact, and has easily made replacement parts.

— It is legal for law abiding citizens to make and own these in the Libertas Pact, which doesn't regulate semiautomatic or single shot rifles with projectiles of .50 caliber or less. Anywhere else, you're gonna need a license. Mongrel

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
.50-Love	11	7	—	—	—	BRCH	102	\$900/11/License*
.50 BMG JSP				26	-4			*Citizen in Libertas Pact
.50 BMG FMJ				18	3			
.50 BMG AP				16	7			
.50 BMG SLAP				12	10			
.50 BMG HEIAP				23	15			

Isräv Arsenal Mj Iner: A heavy sniper rifle available in 6.2mm Flash and .50 BMG, the Mj Iner is designed to permit rapid fire of very powerful cartridges with minimal recoil. The weapon has a manual bolt action that has been upgraded for mechanized operation, allowing the user to simply push a button or send a signal to ready the next cartridge. This reduces the recoil far below what most

The Mj Iner has been used in a number of militaries around the world, and has become famous for using the 6.2mm Flash round, which was particularly notorious when it first released due to potentially violating arms conventions, though later review determined that the projectile was not particularly unique in terms of its damage potential.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
IA Mj Iner Psg 43	5B	6	6	—	—	*	102	\$8000/V/License*
.50 BMG JSP				26	-4			*2 without guncomm, SEMI with.
.50 BMG FMJ				18	3			
.50 BMG AP				16	7			
.50 BMG SLAP				12	10			
.50 BMG HEIAP				23	15			
IA Mj Iner Psg 44	8B	6	4	—	—	*	171	\$9000/VI/Restricted
6.2mm Flash FMJ				10	4			*2 without guncomm, SEMI with.
6.2mm Flash AP				8	8			
6.2mm Flash SLAP				5	16			

Weber Ironworks Psg 62

BATTLE RIFLES

Battle rifles fire full rifle cartridges similar to what would be expected from a hunting or sniper rifle, but do so with an emphasis on short range engagements. While they are often more flexible than an assault rifle for engagements against light armor and able to fire at longer ranges, magazine capacity and the recoil of these weapons limits their fire rate. As such battle rifles are less frequently deployed than their smaller counterparts.

Isräv Arsenal Automatkarbin 8: The AK 8 is chambered in 9mm Bj rn, intended for use in special operations and against soft targets, light vehicles, and other threats. Although the weapon can be used with supersonic and subsonic ammunition, it always includes an integrated silencer

intended to make it difficult to discern the location of the shooter. It is almost whisper silent when used with subsonic ammunition, and can have an action delay added (which reduces its ROF to 1, but mitigates any intelligible noise the weapon would make).

The real secret of the AK 8 are internal gas buffers designed to assist the integrated silencer as well as cancel most of the recoil from the weapon; coupled with an in-line bullpup design (the moving parts of the weapon weigh only a fraction of the weapon's weight), the recoil is a fraction of what other 9mm Bjr weapons typically have.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Isräv AK 8	20B	6	2	—	—	SEMI	Ammo	\$4000/VII/License
9mm Bjr FMJ				14	4		102	
9mm Bjr AP				12	8		102	
9mm Bjr SLAP				9	12		102	
9mm Bjr SS FMJ				6	4		18	
9mm Bjr SS AP				4	9		18	

Sahara Wolf Longinus: The Sahara Wolf Longinus was a failed entry into the military battle rifle field. Although it had a number of desirable features, such as its powerful 8.6mm NATO cartridge, it was deemed to be too bulky and expensive for general use. Despite this, it has gained a fair deal of popularity among collectors, especially since its primary manufacturing facility was located in Phoenix and survived the war.

The Longinus cannot utilize 8.6mm NATO drum magazines, due to some of the hardware fitted on it. The weapon comes with a guncomm, smart scope, and gyroscopic tripod, which allows it to be used remotely or directly. A Longinus-C version is available without an integrated guncomm and smart scope, but still maintains the gyroscopic tripod (the Legal rating is reduced to License).

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Sahara Wolf Longinus	20B*	7	2	—	—	SEMI	112	\$6000/V/Restricted
8.6mm N JSP				18	-3			
8.6mm N FMJ				12	3			
8.6mm N AP				10	6			
8.6mm N SLAP				7	9			*20/30 box only, no drums

M14-derivative 7.62.

MACHINE GUNS

Machine guns are intended to be used from stationary positions. They use a variety of cartridges, and are noteworthy for their high rate of fire and ammunition feed capacities, intended to allow the user to maintain sustaining fire.

Blackthorn M64: The Blackthorn M64 is a light machine gun firing the company's proprietary 4mm Straight cartridge. While it does relatively little damage compared to most other machine

guns, it is still used as a squad support weapon due to its impressive rate of fire and ammunition capacity. It is one of the smallest and lightest machine guns on the market, which greatly increases its attractiveness to Rats and units that need a weapon for suppressive fire purposes.

The M64 is fed from a helical drum magazine that weighs almost as much as its parent weapon when fully loaded. These drum magazines support the use of an external rapid loader that allows ammunition to be dumped directly from a package into the magazine, enabling rapid reloading. Loading the M64's drum magazine by hand is difficult, as it is easy to accidentally damage the caseless ammunition, but it is compatible with the M23's box magazines, and two are included (alongside two drums) with all purchases.

The M64 receives two hits for each Margin it exceeds its target during an automatic attack if the maximum number of rounds are fired.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Blackthorn M64	400D	6	1	—	—	AUTO/10	93	\$6500/VII/Restricted
4x108 FMJ				5	4			
4x108 AP				3	9			

M78: The M78 is a rare and somewhat exotic machine gun. Officially adopted by the US shortly before NATO dissolved, and using the then-recent 8.6mm NATO round, it is noticeably worse for recoil than most other machine guns, but it has a range and firepower that turn it into a lighter successor to .50 BMG variants. Although it is typically deployed as a weapon for a two-man crew (one soldier carries the weapon, and another carries a tripod and spare ammunition and provides security for the gunner), it comes with a bipod which can be deployed to reduce some of the recoil.

When deployed, the M78 uses the bipod or tripod weapon attachment rules. It contains an integrated bipod, and a tripod is included in the weapon price (it is a separate Size 4 item).

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
M78	50L	7	4	—	—	AUTO/3	112	\$10000/VI/Restricted
8.6 N JSP				18	-3			
8.6 N FMJ				12	3			
8.6 N AP				10	6			
8.6 N SLAP				7	9			

Iranian Military Freydun: 7.62N 100-round L or D

ASSAULT CANNONS

Bridging the gap between sniper rifles and anti-tank weaponry, assault cannons fire rounds larger than 12.7mm at targets, and are often intended to be deployed as stationary weapons or as weapons for augmented soldiers. They have a slow rate of fire and low ammunition capacity (except on belt-fed models), but are devastating.

Fidelis Forge X2: The second of a line of early assault cannons, the X2 fires the 14mm Knock-

Knock round, and is the only assault cannon with the dubious distinction of being designed for mobile shoulder fire. A complicated recoil compensation system transfers the force not as a sudden kick, but as a long push when the weapon is held correctly. Most unfamiliar users will fall after firing the weapon either because they held the weapon wrong or because they were not expecting the recoil; a heavy forward leaning stance is required to aim and fire the weapon without being knocked down.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Fidelis X2	11	8	—	—	—	BRCH	72	\$20000/IX/Restricted
14mm Knock-Knock FMJ				22	4			
14mm Knock-Knock AP				20	9			
14mm Knock-Knock SLAP				16	12			
14mm Knock-Knock HEIAP				28	24			

Iranian Military Arash:

Brennen Excalibur: A custom-designed railgun, the Brennen Excalibur is an assault cannon designed for cyborgs and heavy drones. Designed to pose a threat to any battlefield asset, an Excalibur platform is one of the most coveted weapons in any Rat's arsenal. Weighing as much as an average adult man, only large cyborgs and drones may be able can use the weapon effectively. A drum for ammunition holds 250 6.8mm Annihilator projectiles, and the weapon includes a selective fire for two different ammunition types. Recoil from the weapon is directed into buffers that greatly decrease the accuracy of the weapon, but result in almost no felt recoil for the user. Attaching a mount or other recoil-reducing enhancements reduces this shake, as the weapon intelligently factors in bracing when dumping recoil forces into the buffers.

The Excalibur may be used with both the Energy Weapons and Big Guns skills.

— The Excalibur's housing actually holds the functioning parts of the weapon in magnetic suspension. When it is fired, the suspension is temporarily dropped until the recoil forces dissipate. Sensors prevent the weapon from firing so quickly that it damages itself, but that says little about the chances for using the weapon accurately for rapid fire. Mongrel

— You can only use the big words when talking about big guns, eh Mongrel? Don't drop that, it's a \$2.6 million weapon. Ghost

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Brennen Excalibur	250D	10	15	—	—	SEMI	130	\$2600000/X/Restricted
6.8mm Annihilator DUI				35	20			
6.8mm Annihilator HAP				28	42			

LAUNCHERS

Launchers fire rockets, missiles, or large projectiles, and are intended for use against armored targets or groups of infantry. On occasion, other rounds, such as illumination flares or scanners, may be fired from launchers to achieve novel battlefield results. Many launchers

have limitations on usage due to the backblast and recoil of their operation.

RAILGUNS

Railguns use magnetic force to propel projectiles. Early energy weapons, they boast more portability than plasma weapons and more armor penetration than lasers, and can pack quite a punch. They are, however, somewhat complex to operate, and while durable railguns have been manufactured they are still prohibitively expensive.

Jensen Atomics AWE: The Advanced Weapon Experiment was an attempt to provide an infantry-level railgun in the middle of the 21st century. It was successful enough that the AWE remains the most well-used railgun almost forty years later, despite a number of design limitations. Firing a 1.8mm projectile, the AWE has an impressive rate of fire and miniaturization for a railgun, but does not deliver the raw power of most of the other military railguns.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Jensen Atomics AWE	50B	5	3	—	—	SEMI	150	\$90000/VII/Restricted
1.8mm AWE DUI				7	11			
1.8mm AWE HAP				4	18			

Jensen Atomics AR-23: The AR23 is a modern successor to the AWE project, using the same ammunition in a full-sized battle rifle. While its cost is prohibitive and its size is somewhat unwieldy, it is considered to be one of the most fearsome infantry weapons on the battlefield, due to its portability and power.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Jensen Atomics AR-23	50B	6	2	—	—	AUTO/5	150	\$250000/IX/Restricted
1.8mm AWE DUI				7	11			
1.8mm AWE HAP				4	18			

Blackthorn MR-3: The third Blackthorn railgun, and the first to see military adoption, the MR-3 is intended as an anti-infantry and light-vehicle weapon for use by snipers. While it is bulky, with a spherical shoulder-pad that holds a miniaturized fusion reactor, it is generally considered to be very accurate and is favored by a number of military units for elite marksmen.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
Blackthorn MR-3	15B	7	3	—	—	SEMI	130	\$100000/VI/Restricted
3mm Dragonslayer DUI				14	12			
3mm Dragonslayer HAP				10	22			

Global Tactical Solutions Polaris: A machine-gun for those who have no sense of scale, the GTS Polaris is one of the heaviest squad-support weapons available, weighing in at almost forty pounds. Its users swear by it, however. With easily manageable recoil that permits it to be hip-fired unlike most squad support weapons and a slow rate of fire compensated for by its massive power, the Polaris is a terrifying weapon.

Name	Ammo	Size	Recoil	Damage	AP	ROF	Range	Cost/Availability/Legal
GTS Polaris	65L	8	2	—	—	AUTO/5	130	\$400000/IX/Restricted
3mm Dragonslayer DUI				14	12			
3mm Dragonslayer HAP				10	22			

LASERS

Lasers are a directed energy weapon that fires a beam of coherent light (or electromagnetic radiation). Lasers are not particularly bulky, though they tend to burn through power supplies quickly. They can be undetectable if they fire on certain frequencies, making them ideal for assassins, and they can also penetrate certain substances more or less without disruption, though conventional body armor is quite effective against them.

PLASMA WEAPONS

Plasma weapons are generally restricted by conventional warfare, but a few prototypes and commercial versions exist. Technically, plasma weapons are intended for use against vehicles and explosive projectiles, where their dispersal patterns and high heat can be devastating, but conventional weapons typically are more efficient. They are bulky, have a slow rate of fire, and require more power than portable batteries can conveniently supply.

AMMUNITION

Ammunition determines the damage and range of a weapon. Although most firearms have their values already calculated for simplicity's sake, here is a common list of ammunition and its prices.

Template						
Range	HP	JSP	FMJ	AP	SLAP	HEIAP

1.8mm AWE		
Range	Depleted Uranium Incendiary (DUI) (DAM/AP/\$)	High Armor Penetration (HAP) (DAM/AP/\$)
150	7/11/\$500	4/18/\$300

1.8mm AWE is the flagship railgun ammunition for light railguns. Popularized by Jensen Atomics in the 2040's, it delivers power more akin to a rifle cartridge, with superior range and ammunition capacity and less recoil. While its small projectile means limited power in some ways, the advantage of AWE ammunition is that it is self-contained (each shot contains a long-term capacitor, rather than requiring an external battery) and light. Although the price of AWE ammunition on the black market is exorbitant, the actual manufacturing price is relatively low. Due to the expense of the ammunition, the capacitors are not ejected after being fired; they are cycled back into the magazine, and may be packed with another slug. Slugs cost \$40 (DUI) or \$30 (HAP), though DUI slugs are heavily controlled.

3mm Dragonslayer		
Range	Depleted Uranium Incendiary (DUI) (DAM/AP/\$)	High Armor Penetration (HAP) (DAM/AP/\$)
120	14/12/\$80	10/22/\$40

Dragonslayer ammunition is a modern railgun ammunition for self-powered or

externally powered railguns. Heavier and simpler than AWE ammunition, Dragonslayer rounds are intended to permit a more cost-effective means of operation. As they do not include any complicated electrical components, Dragonslayer rounds can be made by anyone with industrial manufacturing equipment.

4x108 (4mm Straight)		
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
93	5/4/\$6	3/9/\$9

4mm Straight was designed by Blackthorn industries in 2022 as part of an effort to modernize its military small arms. While it is not particularly powerful, it has good ammunition capacity and armor penetration, especially for a side-arm round, and has a great traveling distance. Being caseless mitigates much of the potential recoil of the round, though its proprietary nature and caseless design make it very expensive and somewhat prone to being damaged.

5.4 Älva			
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
20	6/-2/\$.5	4/1/\$1	2/3/\$1

5.4 Älva was designed as a sidearm caliber by Isräv Arsenal for civilian and military applications. It has relatively low recoil and decent damage dealing potential. Its high velocity enables it to inflict significant damage on lightly armored targets, but its light projectile and poor ballistic profile limits its effective range significantly.

5.54x39			
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
40	6/-2/\$1	4/1/\$1	2/3/\$1

5.54x39mm ammunition came into its prime as a replacement for the 7.62x39mm cartridge used in the AK-47 and its successors. Significantly less powerful than its larger counterpart, and intended for soldiers who needed more ammunition and less recoil, the rise of augmented soldiers largely obsoleted the round even more quickly than 5.56 NATO ammunition, which was slightly more powerful.

5.56 NATO (.223 Remington)				
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
60	7/-4/\$1	7/-2/\$1	5/2/\$2	3/4/\$4

5.56 NATO has been in use for over a century. As augmented combatants have entered the battlefield, it and its civilian .223 Remington counterpart (indistinguishable for game purposes) have become increasingly obsolete as most combatants have become more resistant to incoming fire. Nonetheless, it is a common, cheap, and dependable small arms round.

.22 LR			
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)
26	5/-2/\$.5	5/-1/\$1	4/2/\$1

.22 LR is an ancient round, and many of its virtues revolve around being cheap and common. Recommended for plinking and varmint hunting, it fares poorly on the battlefield, but

it has certain qualities that make it desirable, such as its low recoil and general effectiveness.

6.2mm Flash			
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP (DAM/AP/\$)
171	10/4/\$12	8/8/\$12	5/16/\$20

A hypersonic round, the 6.2mm Flash cartridge fires a projectile at over six thousand feet per second. Designed for sniping and use against lightly armored vehicles, the 6.2mm Flash bullet has an incredibly flat trajectory and great accuracy, causing grievous injuries and penetrating armor. Despite its small projectile, 6.2mm Flash has a large case size, and only a few rounds will fit into all but the largest magazine.

— Getting hit with one of these rounds is always pretty on TV, but in reality they'll tear inches out of a person. In the military, I saw one of these monsters take a guy's arm off through a thick pane of bulletproof glass. They're the closest a traditional firearm comes to a railgun.

Jacksin

6.5mm Grendel				
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
72	9/-4/\$2	8/-2/\$2	5/2/\$3	3/4/\$6

6.5mm Grendel is a replacement for 5.56mm NATO ammunition. Although it was adopted by NATO, the breakup of that organization meant that it kept its original title rather than being renamed per the 5.56 NATO and 7.62 NATO cartridges. Although it is slightly more expensive than 5.56 NATO ammunition, 6.5mm Grendel has come to supplant it in most modern military hardware.

6.8mm Annihilator		
Range	Depleted Uranium Incendiary (DUI) (DAM/AP/\$)	High Armor Penetration (HAP) (DAM/AP/\$)
135	35/20/\$150	28/42/\$110

Built with the concept of precision destruction, 6.8mm Annihilator rounds are specialized railgun ammunition designed for use in precision strikes against hardened targets. While not as devastating as artillery, they offer pinpoint destruction with the added advantage of being fired from the man-portable Excalibur platform.

7.62x39			
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
50	7/-2/\$1	5/1/\$1	3/3/\$1

7.62x39 ammunition has been used widely since the second World War, primarily due to its role in the AK-47 and its immediate successors. Although it was temporarily replaced by the 5.45x39mm cartridge, it has seen a resurgence in the augmented battlefields of the 21st century, largely due to its low price relative to its effective power.

7.62 NATO (.308 Winchester)					
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP(DAM/AP/\$)
66	9/-4/\$2	8/-2/\$2	6/2/\$2	4/4/\$4	3/9/\$8

7.62 NATO ammunition is one of the oldest rifle cartridges still in military service. A workhorse of Western armed forces, its .308 Winchester variant remains a popular hunting

cartridge. Capable of inflicting decent damage, and with a SLAP round that can penetrate (but not necessarily cause significant damage through) even heavy armor, the 7.62 NATO round is still holding its own.

.32 ACP		
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)
20	5/-2/\$1	4/1/\$1

.32 American Colt Pistol is an old cartridge, but it remains popular among civilians. While it fares poorly against augmented or armored targets, it has a strong track record and is often used in concealed handguns.

8.6 NATO				
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP(DAM/AP/\$)
112	18/-3/\$2	12/3/\$2	10/6/\$4	7/9/\$8

A heavy round intended for use in battle rifles and medium or heavy machine guns, the 8.6mm NATO round is designed to penetrate heavier armor for use against

9mm Parabellum			
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)
26	9/-6/\$1	6/-3/\$1	5/1/\$1

9mm Parabellum is a venerable pistol round; with a high enough caliber to be intimidating and a combination of ease of use, decent range (for a 20th century handgun round), and widespread adoption it was very popular during the early 21st century.

9mm Bj rn			
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP (DAM/AP/\$)
102	14/4/\$4	12/8/\$6	9/12/\$12

9mm Bj rn is a modern rifle round designed by Isräv Arsenal of Sweden. Although it has a premium cost associated with it, it is widely regarded as one of the world's foremost rifle calibers, due to its general performance. The fact that it is used primarily in the AK 8, which is able to handle its massive recoil, may have something to do with this.

9mm Bj rn Subsonic		
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
18	6/4/\$4	4/10/\$6

The 9mm Bj rn subsonic round has not shared the same popularity of its supersonic twin. Although it has passable armor penetration, its subsonic speed prevents it from hitting nearly as hard as its brother, and it has not become very popular. Despite this, it has still been manufactured and used in combat operations due to its compatibility with the AK 8, whose integral silencer complements the round, despite its miserable range.

.44 Magnum			
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)
26	11/-6/\$2	7/-3/\$2	5/1/\$2

An old handgun cartridge, .44 Magnum was popularized by action movies and police

procedural shows of the 20th century. Although it is still used, its defining virtues have become less obvious in a day and age where body armor (and augmentations) are more readily available to the average criminal.

.44 Slaughter					
Range	HP (DAM/AP/\$)	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP(DAM/AP/\$)
60	18/-6/\$4	10/-3/\$4	7/2/\$4	5/4/\$8	4/6/\$12

A rifle round masquerading as a handgun round, the .44 Slaughter is Brennen's entry into the designer ammunition field. Significantly better at armor penetration and raw stopping power than the .44 Magnum, .44 Slaughter is expensive but effective. It has even been adopted as a submachinegun cartridge, though whether or not it is effective in that role is dubious.

.50 BMG (12.7x99mm NATO)					
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP (DAM/AP/\$)	HEIAP (DAM/AP/\$)
102	26/-4/\$12	18/3/\$12	16/7/\$20	12/10/\$30	23/15/\$50

.50 Browning Machine Gun has been used in most major conflicts for almost two hundred years. Its massive size and weight make .50 BMG rounds effective even against modern armor and augmented combatants, due to the fact that it is an indomitable round. Used in military applications (and ostensibly some civilian applications, though its actual use by civilians is rare), it has seen revisions to its projectiles over the years with few modifications to the case or propellant itself. A caseless version, .50 BMG-C, is twice as expensive as its counterpart, but offers advantages with regards to recoil management (.50 BMG-C and .50 BMG are incompatible).

.500 S&W Magnum			
Range	JSP (DAM/AP/\$)	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)
60	13/-4/\$8	8/2/\$8	6/4/\$12

.500 S&W Magnum is a beast of a cartridge, though it is showing its age. Released at the beginning of the 21st century to deliver massive power at the expense of the shooter's wrists, it was designed to defend against bears and is effective for big game hunting as well as taking down most street-level combatants. It is, however, somewhat expensive, and it has a stigma as a hunting or "cowboy" round.

14mm Knock-Knock				
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP (DAM/AP/\$)	HEIAP (DAM/AP/\$)
72	22/4/\$30	20/9/\$40	16/12/\$70	28/24/\$120

The 14mm Knock-Knock round is one of the first autocannon rounds; derived from a 14mm anti-tank round modified to be "user friendly" for a certain sense of the term; it uses a Soviet round with a significantly reduced case size and propellant load (the bullet is also slightly shaved down). In most places, even where guns are legal (like in the UAS), 14mm Knock-Knock rounds are considered to be destructive devices on the scale of grenades, and are classified as Licensed items in terms of legality.

14.5x114mm				
Range	FMJ (DAM/AP/\$)	AP (DAM/AP/\$)	SLAP (DAM/AP/\$)	HEIAP (DAM/AP/\$)
102	35/5/\$25	33/10/\$35	27/13/\$60	46/26/\$100

A Soviet anti-materiel rifle round, the 14.5x114mm round is the parent cartridge for the 14mm Knock-Knock round. In most places, even where guns are legal (like in the UAS), 14.5x114mm rounds are considered to be destructive devices on the scale of grenades, and are classified as Licensed items in terms of legality.

20 Gauge			
Range	Sabot (DAM/AP/\$)	Slug (DAM/AP/\$)	Shot (DAM/AP/\$)
24	8/2/\$12	10/0/\$6	14/-6/\$4

A common type of shotgun ammunition, 20 gauge shotgun shells do not have the same stopping power of their larger 12 gauge cousin, but are much more manageable and affordable.

12 Gauge			
Range	Sabot (DAM/AP/\$)	Slug (DAM/AP/\$)	Shot (DAM/AP/\$)
30	9/4/\$14	14/0/\$8	18/-7/\$5

12 gauge ammunition for shotguns is massive, and is typically used in hunting or security contexts. Because the 12 gauge round is incredibly powerful, it is often paired with larger weapons to mitigate recoil.

12 Gauge Magnum			
Range	Sabot (DAM/AP/\$)	Slug (DAM/AP/\$)	Shot (DAM/AP/\$)
36	11/5/\$18	18/0/\$12	22/-6/\$7

12 gauge magnum ammunition for shotguns adds more powder and projectile load to a twelve gauge shell for some of the most frightening power and recoil in a civilian weapon; unlike some of its lighter counterparts, it has seen increased adoption in military sidearms with the rise of the augmented soldier.

ARMOR

Armor provides a number of different values; it has an Armor rating, a Defense rating, and a Hardened Armor rating, as well as hit locations that it covers. Some locations on the hit locations list for an armor may be in parentheses; in this case those locations receive armor equal to the numbers in parentheses by the normal ratings. In addition, the Armor has a Compromise Threshold; if an attack hits and does damage equal to the Compromise Threshold, then the armor is damaged (see DAMAGING ARMOR).

Characters wearing multiple layers of armor over any given hit location gain only the benefits of the greatest armor in that location; a character who is wearing more than two pieces of armor covering any given location suffers a -1 penalty to their defense for each additional piece of armor in a location; wearing full suits incurs a penalty for each location the suit covers. A character wearing armor with a Defense penalty has the penalty double if there is another piece of armor worn under or over the armor with a penalty.

Armor is divided into three types: vests, suits, and exotic armor.

VESTS

Vests typically provide protection only to the torso, though they may also be paired with

a helmet to provide protection for the head. While not as fully protective as suits, the general logic goes that vests protect from highly lethal hits while permitting freedom of movement and limiting the weight and expense of protection.

Concealed Vest: Concealed armor is designed to look like standard clothing. Most common designs include an advanced Kevlar carbon-fiber blend and are designed to appear like thicker versions of standard t-shirts that can be worn under daily clothing. Other variants look like regular clothing and can be worn by themselves without attracting suspicion.

While concealed armor provides only minimal protection, it is better than nothing, and is often worn as a matter of course by corporate executives or government figures. Many Rats keep concealed armor on hand for missions that require subtlety or to have a back-up option for if no other armor is on hand, due to its relatively low cost and easy availability.

Concealed Vest			
Armor	1	Locations	Body
Hardened Armor	0	Compromise Threshold	4
Defense	0	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$900/II/Citizen

Ballistic Vest: The ballistic vest sacrifices concealment for superior protection. Having a thicker protective layer, sometimes augmented with a light stab plate to turn away blades, the ballistic vest has the ability to protect more readily. Although sometimes worn under clothes, such as a full suit, a ballistic vest is almost always highly visible. A ballistic vest includes two magazine pouches (Size 1), which cannot be used if the vest is being worn under clothing. Ballistic helmets are available for half the price of the vest; they are purchased separately, and are never concealable.

Ballistic Vest			
Armor	3	Locations	Body + Head
Hardened Armor	0	Compromise Threshold	4
Defense	0	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$2500/III/Citizen

Plate Carrier: Plate carrier vests include the additional thickness of a ballistic vest, but have the addition of a metal plate to provide some further protection against minor threats. Plate carriers are bulkier than standard ballistic vests, and must always be worn over any other clothing a character is wearing. They include three Size 1 pouches. The helmet is available separately, at half the cost of the vest; it includes metal linings and a heavily armored visor, but is not quite as thick and durable as the vest itself.

Plate Carrier Vest			
Armor	4 (Body), 3 (Head)	Locations	Body + Head
Hardened Armor	1	Compromise Threshold	5
Defense	0	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$3800/IV/Citizen

SUITS

Suits of armor cover the user's whole body, though some areas may be more heavily

armored than others. While they often are bulky and slow down users, they provide superb protection and can prevent or greatly mitigate incoming sources of damage so that their wearers can continue fighting. Suits are favored when operators will certainly be in harm's way, even if they are able to be as stealthy and mobile as possible.

Riot Suit: Riot suits are light protective gear for the whole body. Intended to protect police officers responding to a riot, they are not rated for full protection against firearms and determined attackers, but provide a modicum of protection against these things while also defending against rocks and the sort of batterings and beatings one might encounter in a riot. Riot suits are also built to defeat incendiary and acid attacks by preventing liquids from adhering to the user. They do not provide protection from the heat of fire, however.

Riot Suit			
Armor	2	Locations	All
Hardened Armor	0	Compromise Threshold	5
Defense	0	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$6000/IV/Citizen

Ballistic Suit: Ballistic suits are upgraded riot suits with bulletproof capabilities. While riot suits provide more of a general defensive purpose, ballistic suits are intended for use by SWAT teams and corporate security units serving in similar roles. While they are not quite as flexible, they still have a limited impact on flexibility and provide a measure of protection that is capable of deterring many light attacks.

Ballistic Suit			
Armor	3	Locations	All
Hardened Armor	0	Compromise Threshold	6
Defense	-1	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$10,000/V/Citizen

Plate Suit: Plate suits have increased protection, using metal plates to provide a level of protection not available from lower-grade armor suits. Capable of being used in a number of circumstances, they largely evolved as a need to provide increased protection for those in harm's way. They are much heavier than their earlier counterparts, and while they are designed for flexibility their armored joints still limit mobility and speed.

Plate Suit			
Armor	5	Locations	All
Hardened Armor	1	Compromise Threshold	7
Defense	-2	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$10,000/V/License

Assault Suit: An evolution of bomb defusal suits and plate suits, assault suits are designed for direct assaults under fire. While advanced composites allow them to have a bearable weight, they limit the user's flexibility and mobility a good deal, at least when attempting actions other than running in a straight line.

Assault Suit			
Armor	8	Locations	All
Hardened Armor	3	Compromise Threshold	7
Defense	-4	Cost/Availability/Legality	\$40,000/V/License

EXOTIC

Exotic armor falls outside the normal dichotomy. It includes active camouflage, coldsuits, and other specialty gear that may provide protection from damage but also has other functionality. Most exotic armor takes the form of full body suits that protect against certain hazards.

VEHICLES, CYBORGS, AND DRONES

Vehicles, cyborg forms, and drones are all major purchases for a Rat. They facilitate transportation and remote operation, as well as being a necessity for infolife, cyborgs, and androids who need to personally operate in physical space.

VEHICLES

Vehicles range from simple man-powered devices like bicycles to complicated military aircraft and even space-capable vehicles.

MAN-POWERED VEHICLES

GROUND VEHICLES

Brennen Ranger: The Brennen Ranger is a standard off-road vehicle. Built on a Brennen sedan chassis, the Ranger's central compartments are elevated further off the ground and the standard wheels have been replaced with much larger wheels. Because the Ranger was originally designed for use in convoys in the NACZ, it uses runflat tires and has a greater than normal range.

Although the Ranger has been sold in the form of many military models, the statistics below are for a civilian model. Because of its tendency to be used in the NACZ, it includes a "sunroof" with a weapon pintle mount, so that it can still be used as an escort vehicle or travel through unprotected areas of the zone.

Brennen Ranger			
Size	16	Speed	30
Defense	9 (side), 12 (front)	Acceleration	15
Protection	8	Maneuverability	8
Passengers	Driver+4	Weapons	1 360° mount, empty
Fuel Type/Range	Solar (N/A)	Hit Locations	Standard Car
Cost	\$180,000	Availability/Legality	I/License

ACE MB-230: The Anhui Consolidated Engineering MB-230 is an affordable fuel-cell

powered motorcycle designed to meet the demands of a post-war China. Able to function with only monthly refueling and maintenance, its hydrogen cell fuel source and electric engine offer superb weight-to-effect, giving the MB-230 a reputation as a “zippy” vehicle for individual users. However, its small size makes it too small for a second rider, and many riders find it uncomfortable.

ACE MB-230			
Size	11	Speed	20
Defense	14	Acceleration	20
Protection	4	Maneuverability	15
Passengers	Driver	Weapons	None
Fuel Type/Range	Fuel Cell (N/A)	Hit Locations	Cycle (Double)
Cost	\$30,000	Availability	I/License

Jensen Atomics Iapetus/Iapetus RV: The Iapetus is a fusion-powered minibus designed for civic transportation needs. However, an RV version has been manufactured that is available for those who like the comforts of home on the open road. While it is a common choice for long-distance travel, the Iapetus has seen less adoption in cities. As such, third-party up-armor packages are available for use in war-torn regions. While there are not integrated weapons solutions, all of the windows can be opened and used as firing ports, on both the minibus and RV models.

JA Iapetus/RV			
Size	20	Speed	20
Defense	5	Acceleration	20
Protection	6 [12 with kit]	Maneuverability	5
Passengers	Driver+34 / Driver+7	Weapons	None
Fuel Type/Range	Fusion (N/A)	Hit Locations	Large Vehicle (Wheeled)
Cost	\$1,000,000 [\$150,000]	Availability	I/License

AIRCRAFT

SPACECRAFT

WATERCRAFT

CYBORG FORMS

Cyborg forms are distinct from drones; they are controlled by an integrated cyberbrain using nerve-cluster analogues. Although this means that cyborg forms feel natural to most cyborgs and are easily adapted to, they also have the downside of preventing effective remote control of the system. Many cyborg forms also benefit from artificial faces with full ranges of expression; while they are still obviously cyborgs, and some details are left out to avoid the

uncanny valley effect, cyborgs or androids in cyborg forms can easily interface with humanity as a whole.

HUMANOID

Graves Ares: The Ares is the mainline human replacement cyborg form produced by Graves Biopharmaceuticals. The first Ares model was created to test the cyberbrain with an android gestalt mind, but later models saw popular adoption by cyborgs. Although it is not particularly different from a baseline human form, it is still popular among athletes and soldiers, in part due to aggressive advertising campaigns and in part because it offers the advantages of being a cyborg with relatively little of the stigma and a low adaptation from human bodies.

Graves BP Ares			
Size	10	Armor	None internal, can wear
Strength	0	Cyberbrain	Yes (Cyborg)
Toughness	0	Hit Locations	Human
Speed	0	Cost	\$70,000
Availability	I	Legality	Anyone

Graves Hephaestus: The Hephaestus is a larger-than-standard cyborg form produced by Graves Biopharmaceuticals. Its large size means that it cannot use most body armor, but since military contracts make up a large portion of the Hephaestus' sales, and its official civilian sales are mostly industrial, the Hephaestus has built-in armor.

Graves BP Hephaestus			
Size	11	Armor	2 integrated, cannot wear
Strength	1	Cyberbrain	Yes (Cyborg)
Toughness	1	Hit Locations	Human
Speed	0	Cost	\$110,000
Availability	II	Legality	Citizen

Graves Persephone: The Persephone is a smaller form for cyborgs. Although it has few top-seller features, there are those who prefer its smaller form for the maneuverability it offers, and it is also somewhat cheaper than most of the other cyborg forms on the market.

Graves BP Persephone			
Size	8	Armor	None internal, can wear
Strength	0	Cyberbrain	Yes (Cyborg)
Toughness	0	Hit Locations	Human
Speed	0	Cost	\$55,000
Availability	I	Legality	Anyone

EXOTIC

DRONES

GAME MASTERING STREET RATS

The job of the GM is a difficult one. Street Rats is built to tell a story in which the players' characters are desperately trying to survive, and it's not something where characters exist in a vacuum. Each character's Secret and Responsibility give you things that you have to deal with, and Street Rats is built around a very particular genre.

The goal of the characters should simply be to survive. Not save the world, not even save the city. Such things might occur, but if they do they happen in back alleys, with no accolades, and as part of staying alive. There will always be a bigger fish, and pride cometh before the proverbial fall. Your job as a GM is to tell stories of despair, hope, and frantic grasping.

THE COMPLICATION DIE

The Complication Die is a mechanic that adds more randomness to Street Rats. While a character's normal rolls serve to give a baseline for their results, the Complication Die represents the force of the world around them. Sometimes a character just gets unlucky and has something particularly bad happen, despite otherwise succeeding in their goals.

The Complication Die is not simply a mechanic that reflects opposition, it is a mechanic that adds randomness. It should not be used with every single roll, but rather with crucial rolls. The Complication Die is a standard d20. When rolled, a result of 20 means that something that will ultimately detriment the players has occurred, regardless of the player's roll. Otherwise, reduce the player's result by the number on the Complication Die.

As a GM, you must remember that the Complication Die is not a way to punish players. The goal of the Complication Die is to prevent the advent of the routine. Roll it when the action is getting too slow, when the players have been getting too lucky, or when it adds to the tension. Feel free to roll a die and not count it from time to time, just to put players on the edge.

When dealing with the Complication Die, focus on four main themes: detection, reinforcements, breakage, and disappointment. For instance, if a character is opening a locked door and you roll a 20 on the Complication Die, they might set off an alarm. If the same thing happens in the same place, they could catch the attention of a police car that just turned around the street corner. Alternatively, they could unlock the door, but break the mechanism so that anyone trying to use the door notices the intrusion. Finally, they could unlock the door and step inside to find out that the building they are entering is not the one they got a floorplan for (note that in this example they would still be in the correct building, but their intelligence was wrong).

The Complication Die should be something that forces the players to think on their feet. It's not a punishment, nor should it necessarily increase the risk of the scenario. The Complication Die adds new opportunities and a spark of spontaneity.

Players can spend Instinct to see the result of any hidden roll: this rule applies to the Complication Die. When working with the Complication Die, you may choose to give players a “gut feeling” if you plan to have the Complication Die result in something particularly dangerous.

AVOIDING A SUCCESS/FAILURE DUO

Even good Game Masters sometimes find themselves in an embarrassing situation where the result of a player's actions are essentially summed up as “Um, you succeed” or its negative equivalent. In *Street Rats*, with its focus on hidden results and complications, you might not want to have a character know whether they “failed” or “succeeded”, especially since saying that a character is off the hook when they're really moments away from a cranial rearrangement is somewhat poor taste.

As such, always think about what the players want to achieve. Avoid situations where players say things like “I'm going to roll [Skill/Attribute]” by including scene descriptions and verifying their intentions behind their actions; if someone says “I'm going to roll Electronics.”, redirect them with a question “To rewire the door panel and open the door?”, which then allows you to give an outcome like “With a spark from the wires you are holding, the door hisses open.”, which will let you have secret penalties waiting without necessarily just saying “you succeed”, which implies that the door was opened without any negative side effects.

Likewise, remember that something that appears to work may not necessarily work, and something that appears to fail may not have actually failed. To expand on our example above, someone could have seen the players attempting to access the door over a camera surveillance feed, and opened it remotely at an opportune moment to lull them into a false sense of security, or the door panel may spark and the door fails to open because the system has a short time delay after being tampered with, but will then comply with the operator.

One of the important roles of the GM is to make dramatic outcomes possible, and having a mentality that avoids pairing success and failure as opposites can lead to more exciting and interesting adventures.

FIGURING OUT WHERE TO START

Street Rats can be overwhelming, but the mere act of storytelling can also be a mire. When telling a story, there are a few things to consider. First, you have to deal with the desired feel and genre of the game. *Street Rats* is designed for a traditional cyberpunk playstyle, even if some of its trappings are modernized; the players should be kept guessing on every run they attempt. If they fail, they're going to face real issues, and even if they succeed they need to make sure that they don't bring the wrath of a big corporation or government down on themselves.

Of course, you can make decisions with the group about what exactly the play style should be, adding and removing rules as you do so. You might not like a part of the system, and simply ignore its effects in play, or even remove it entirely. Feel free to remove, modify, or add rules as the GM; it's your prerogative, and it's crucial that you make the game work for you. If you're running a game where the players are corporate agents, many of the rules should be adjusted to reflect the fact that a steady paycheck and organizational support can stave off

many of the consequences and responsibilities of the average Rat.

Once you've decided on the basics of the feel, whether you're going for the classic cyberpunk setting that Street Rats favors, a lighter affair, or even a more exotic setting, you can begin to piece together the people, places, props, and events of your storylines.

YOU ALL MEET IN A BAR

The classic cliché for introducing parties in tabletop roleplaying games is that “you all meet in a bar”. While this is still acceptable in cyberpunk, there are a million other ways to introduce characters. Matrix messages, mysterious meetings, even just seemingly random coincidence all can work to draw together a group of Rats and put them in business.

Forming a good party will depend on you as a GM. You need to give players enough independence so that they can play the characters they want to explore, but it never hurts to have a few base rules and guidelines for character creation.

First, make sure that you clearly communicate the themes and ideas of your campaign. Is it light-hearted pink mohawk play with rapid action, jokes off the cuff, and moral clarity? Is it a mirrorshades and black suits campaign of spycraft, espionage, and deniable assets working in giant corporate and governmental machines? Is it an examination of conspiracies, moral quandaries, and the ethics of humanity's emerging evolution? Talk about these things with your players, and come to an agreement on what you all want to do. Keep it fun for everyone, and you'll find players to be more cooperative with the ways that you want to develop your campaign.

Now you can focus on how the party came together. One common method of getting a group together is the mysterious invitation. In many cases, this is posthumous, which provides players with a mystery to solve from the very drop of the hat, and in others it may introduce the players to an ally or source of work that will follow them throughout the campaign. In another campaign, they could all be quasi-employees of a company's deniable assets division, being paid from the same black operations budget.

In addition, the players could be childhood friends, if their characters' backgrounds match up, matrix contacts, or co-workers (legitimately or in the shadows). They could have shared interests, or simply shop at the same grocery store and rise to the call when a robbery goes down. The possibilities are endless, and your job as a GM is to provide something that segues neatly into whatever you want to have the first adventures of your group be and that fits the character dynamics of the party.

YOUR PEOPLE

Coming up with an idea of the people and characters that will populate your world is a crucial part of any roleplaying game's storytelling process. Starting with people when crafting a world allows you to have more flexibility in events and places, since you can merely adjust characters as needed for the campaign to make sense.

Note that Street Rats is set in a world with a lot of diversity. If you have any issues coming up with characters, think outside the box; if they are in the UAS, toss in someone from the FS or NACZ, just to make things interesting.

GENERAL NPCs

Making non-player characters is a key role of the Game Master. A NPC serves as a dramatic tool that enables the GM to push players onward. It's not typically necessary to create an NPC within the context of game rules; some simple eyeballing of numbers will suffice for most characters, though it's important to come up with good guidelines, such as those in the NPC creation section.

A NPC is distinct from the everyday drones and grunts that the players might encounter in the world. While it is likely that the players will encounter some of the faceless masses and immediately seek out deeper relationships and communications with them, essentially turning them into an NPC, you can add a new NPC to give the world vibrancy and complicate plot matters.

When coming up with an NPC, think about the things that make people interesting to interact with.

To create an interesting world, it is recommended that there be multiple different groups of characters in the game to complement the players' characters. First, create a supporting cast. These non-player characters can be used for a number of purposes, such as aiding players on missions they don't have the capability to accomplish, adding more flavor to the world, and creating something for the players' enemies to target.

Good protagonist supporting casts are not perfect. They fail, they have their vices, and they certainly can't help the players all the time; their own lives interfere with the plot, which not only keeps the players feeling that they have agency but ensures that the supporting characters feel like they have their own actual lives to live. The number of supporting characters needed for a game varies; you only need a few to start the game with, and you can introduce players to the friends of friends and the valuable business partners that will make up the supporting cast quickly enough.

The second group of people are going to be the story's antagonists. At the very least, these people will have conflicting interests with a handful of the players or the supporting cast. They are not necessarily irredeemable, and they may actually be amiable when interacting with player characters, but they serve as rivals or competition. Antagonists, unlike supporting casts, work best in small numbers. Keeping track of overlapping plots can be stressful and often goes unnoticed; antagonists also often form less of a cohesive unit than the protagonists' supporting cast: they may be unaware of each others' existences or actively working against each other, meaning that most plots against the players from antagonists unfold separately.

Street Rats is built around potentially threatening the players with law enforcement or corporate security at any time, but this is not the same as having antagonists. Each antagonist should have a name, a face, and some unique quirks and capabilities that make them troublesome for the players.

Antagonists revolve around being reprehensible to the players. They often are easiest to pull off as mustache twirling villains, but just as frequently you can have very subtle characters who have nuance. One great way to make an antagonist is to give them a personal connection to the players. Betrayal, theft, or even attempted murder all tend to create grudges, which will unify your players against your antagonist.

One reason for having an antagonist with a face is that it will unify your players against a central purpose. This keeps them directed without you having to force them into something. In *Street Rats*, where characters may lack a central unifying purpose, the addition of an antagonist can forge a group's bonds.

EVENTS

THE SOYBURGER MODEL

Incoming transmission from 1a5.53.0e.12f
(phx.up3.civ.SigCom14.usgs.r@net.TheBeastMachine):

Now, English teachers and professors have been using this model to teach the chronically underperforming students of the US and UAS for years, so I'll rephrase it for you quickly. This model works for both campaigns and sessions alike; you simply alter the pace of each session to reflect where you are in the story as a whole. When telling a story, you want to make it like a soyburger. You've got two buns made of bread (or reconstituted soy foam #37), some ground up tubesteak (or, if you're using the cheaper kinds, spread out), algae, and whatever veggie found its way into the FoodCo dumpster.

Each of the buns makes up the top or bottom end of the burger. One will stand in for your introduction, the other for the closure of your campaign or session. Don't wrap your burger in algae; that's a cop-out and nobody really likes that. Embrace the carbs. Your introduction involves exposition, which is a fancy word for setting stuff up. Where are the players? Who wants them to do something? What is that something? At the beginning of the campaign, you might even ask who they are, but sessions typically are pretty short and sweet.

At the end of the session or campaign, you have your resolution. This gives players a breather, and allows a crafty storyteller to amplify the mood of the session; nothing amplifies the feeling of doing good like seeing the local street urchins appreciate the crate full of Kalashnikov plushies you liberated from Armory Toys, and nothing emphasizes a royal failure like getting caught in the rain after leaving your coffin apartment key in the Fort Rothmann latrines (there's a story there, but I won't tell it).

Now, you have to set up each of the scenes between the introduction and the conclusion. Being a Rat means that events happen, so unlike stories where the events are fixed, you'll either have to figure out all the possible outcomes ahead of time, or improvise. I recommend improvising, unless you've found a bargain deal on aspirin. Sketch out each of the central events that your scenes will focus on. Accentuate your strengths and the things the party likes, and gloss over stuff you don't like. I like to have a lot of combat in my stories, just like how I like to put a full pound of tubesteak on my soyburger (meat ain't murder if it's grown in a lab). That said, make the story work. Each of your metaphorical toppings should compliment each other, like a hand grenade and a room full of Blackthorn weapons engineers. Seriously, try it some time. Pure magic.

Anyway, you need to make sure that events flow logically and clearly. Or, if the hamster's falling off the little wheel inside your head: make it make sense. I like to set up events that are likely to happen regardless of what's going on. For instance, in the introduction the players get a mission that involves getting a disc from a research facility (the tubesteak), then they have an issue where some moron sideswipes them, taking out their car just before

rush hour traffic hits (the algae), and then finally their employer refuses one of those offers you can't refuse and he's knee-deep in mobsters when the players return (the "bakon"). Whether each bit of the session fails or succeeds, the players have something to chew on, and it keeps them flowing. The way events unfold determines the conclusion.

That's all for today, kiddies. — Mongrel

APPENDICES

Currently just a placeholder. Will serve as a reference guide once finished, including many of the tables and crunchy tidbits from throughout the rest of the book.

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Thank you for reading, playing, and/or reviewing Street Rats' alpha!
Any feedback can be sent directly to us at ADMIN@HOMOEOTELEUTON.COM, or you can view
and comment on our TRELLO! Enjoy