

DAYTRIPPERS

A Surreal Science Fiction Reality-Hopping RPG

CORE RULES

As If Productions | Version 1.4 | May 2015

In a sun-bleached barn outside of Sacramento, a group of physicists, shady g-men, grad-students, tourists, and an array of amateur explorers and nü-gonzo-revivalist writer-dudes gather around a collection of strange vehicles that resemble lunar landers. Each is painted a garish colour and prepped to "slip" into a crazy new plane of existence.

The time is shortly after the year 2100, the location is the first world. Massive megacorporations dominate the economic landscape and incredible advances in technology make the most miraculous things possible, from genetic modification to medical nanotechnology and microfusion power generators. But the most earth-shaking development of the 21st century is one we're just beginning to see the ramifications of.

*As the 22nd century enters its second decade, the inner and outer realities of **SlipSpace** are opening up to human exploration thanks to the development of the Slip Capacitor, based on the groundbreaking work of Zayim Diaspora. This amazing device allows travel to other dimensions in vehicles known as **SlipShips**.*

*The bold explorers who pilot these vehicles face a multiverse of physical and psychological dangers to bring back priceless knowledge and powerful artifacts from far-flung dimensions and other realities. They're called **DayTrippers**, and you're one of them.*

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Zayim Diaspora - The First DayTripper

MARCH 21, 2097

Savant microfusion technologist and open-source homefab guru Zayim Diaspora completes construction on his unique vision for a "Temporal Resistance Amplification Pod" at his home workshop in Sacramento, California. The inner workings of the vehicle, a matter of highly contested debate in certain circles, are an application of Diaspora's radically new theories on the nature of reality. If it works as Diaspora claims, an onboard pilot will effectively direct the vehicle in "slipping" relative to the fourth dimension while shielding the vehicle from all other dimensional vectors of force. Few people in the world, even among his followers, claim to fully understand his work or its implications.

Over the last three years Diaspora has been working in an almost sleepless frenzy. His auto-broadcasted efforts have been unceasingly observed, recorded and archived, then meticulously annotated and endlessly debated by a global audience of several thousand high-tech home-based tinkerers, many of whom see him as a role model; an exemplary champion of human technology and Promethean progress. The inventor has come under constant scrutiny and occasional threat by energy companies and investigative bodies both governmental and private, a fact which he not only admits but celebrates and lampoons. Unmarked black drones are seen frequently in the area of his 20-acre ranch.

APRIL 3, 2097

First Full-System test of TRA Pod 1, which due to its spindly appearance has been dubbed "Ariadne" by popular vote on *DSource* (the unofficial fancast of Diaspora Labs). The network audience watches astonished as the pod disappears in an explosion of red sparks...

...and then reappears two minutes and thirteen seconds later, facing in the opposite direction, its position displaced by a little more than a meter, the left side of its carbonex casing streaked with deep gashes and burns. The Ariadne lurches momentarily over a bent forestruct and then collapses, rolling onto its side upon the cement floor, billowing smoke. The support crew rushes in to examine the vehicle. High levels of gamma and exotic spectral signatures radiate from the twisted pile, necessitating emergency security measures.

As the crew dons hazmat suits and the overhead sprinklers shoot into action, Diaspora's arm slowly emerges from the vehicle. His quivering fingers tightly clutch something astonishingly black and highly reflective, roughly the size of an eightball. Upon extraction the eccentric inventor is incoherent and incontinent. He is quickly hospitalized.

Many weeks pass during which no news is heard. Speculation runs wild on all the major tech talknets.

The pod disappears in an explosion of red sparks ... and then reappears two minutes and thirteen seconds later, facing the opposite direction.

The mainstream media, encouraged by advertisers to dismiss Diaspora's theories, denounce the experiment as a ridiculous stunt, then quickly stop talking about it altogether. Jealous rivals and science pundits lambaste Diaspora on the talknets for failure to adhere to professionally-recommended safety practices and professionally accredited peer reviews. Someone points out that he never went to college. Conspiracy theories begin to circulate regarding the inventor's state of health, the reasons for his continued silence, the parties for whom he is suspected to have been working, and most especially, the nature of the object he brought back from wherever he was for two minutes and thirteen seconds on April third.

JUNE 27, 2097

Shortly before midnight in an unscheduled transmission from his bedroom, surrounded by medical equipment and beeping machines, Diaspora opens up a broadcast talknet and addresses the world. DIY technicians and armchair physicists all over the world flip on their recording software. In the short but historical broadcast Diaspora announces that he will never again pilot a TRA Pod: His body is riddled with cancer, he is not long for this world. He speaks in convoluted sentences, between heavily-drawn breaths.

His fondest wish, he pleads of the open-source community, is to see his theories successfully implemented. For this reason, he has decided to release the archive of fragmentary research and pure theory - some symbolic, some speculative - that fueled his mad dash during the creation of the ill-fated Ariadne. He provides a URL.

Throughout the Summer, threadlines on *DSource* experience record-breaking amounts of traffic; server slices are cloned repeatedly as freeventors and curious intellectuals rush to download the mysterious archive. Many thousands of copies are distributed to who-knows-where; most as digital souvenirs, never to be unpacked. But some are actually put to use. Several hundred crowdsourcing projects, technology corporations, independent labs and lone enthusiasts quickly ramp up to begin unit testing their own variations on the Diaspora Device.

With a renewed sense of vigor the mainstream media, assisted by government mouthpieces and corporate scientists wearing power ties and class rings, publicly discredit the man and his theories. Naysayers disparage his state of mind, calling his sanity into question. Defenders insist that he always talked

that way. Conspiracy theorists wonder out loud whether the man in the broadcast was the real Zayim Diaspora at all.

OCTOBER 6, 2097

Diaspora Labs hosts a gathering of microfusion enthusiasts and temporal shift experimenteurs at the California ranch, for what is expected to be the great man's final public appearance. Dozens of well-known independent talknet hosts and a few mainstream news reporters are present, minicams and backholo projectors at the ready.

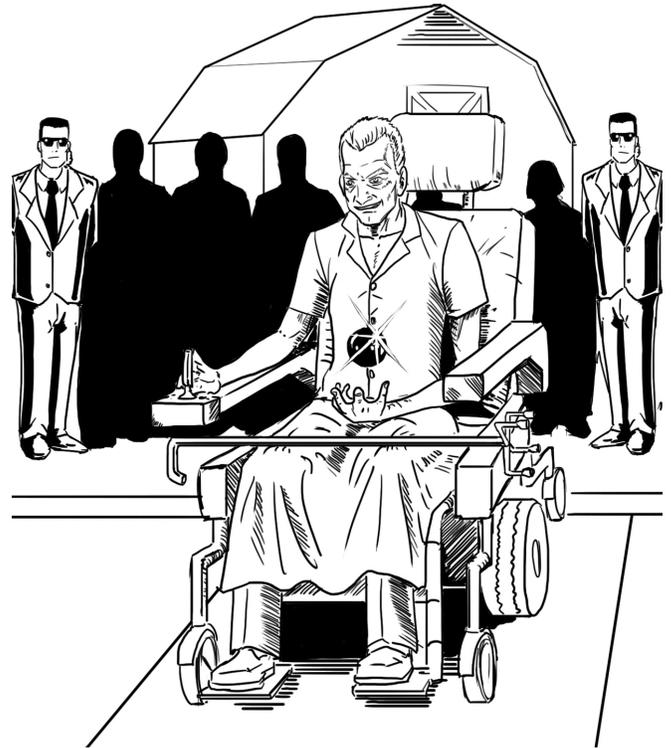
The ranch takes on a carnival-like atmosphere of techno-excitement. Diasporans of all types have brought prototypes of their own designs to set up throughout the rambling grassy area, interspersed with food booths and merch vendors. The black drones are noted to be in buzzing attendance, and sunglassesed men in groups of two and three walk calmly and observantly around the buzzing grounds, speaking quietly into their lapels.

Shortly before sundown, Diaspora is pushed slowly out onto the main stage in a wheelchair, surrounded by his technical assistants and support crew. He is pale, wan, and speaks with great difficulty. His words are instantaneously transmitted around the world, to be streamed to storage units in geekdorms and tech-filled basements everywhere.

"My fellow Prometheans," he says to the quieting crowd, "in a manner of speaking, precisely although not completely, it shall there-then appear evident that in this arrangement of forces seeming to be a place-time which you call today, the metaphorical I-here-now shall appear to pass from one superstructural set of bounded frequencies into another which is equally stability-generating via the naturally-arisingness of its own heuristic feedback mechanisms as inverted and perceived from the exterior along a selected or determined angle-duration of slip - this is only relative to the dynamic tendencies of the positions to which its elements appear, of course - and yet, never have I not been here-now with you. And so."

He holds his bony hand aloft, gripping the eightball.

"The seeming appearance of what you will discover to have recognized within your own inverted perception after what seems to be the event," he says, "is nothing but the selected or determined proof that it itself cannot be, and yet is, itself as it were providing subjective validation of all tendencies selected or determined by your own stability-generating feedback mechanisms as operating or operated under the imperative of your naturally-arisingness as perceived along a selected or determined angle-duration of slip, which by then-place you will, of course, have unrecognized." Withdrawing his hand, he fumbles for the walking-stick laying across his lap. The mysterious black sphere remains where he left it, hovering in mid-air.



NOTES:

1. Diaspora (think Buckminster Fuller + Douglas Coultter) died soon after. What was the eightball? You tell me.
2. He was wrong about temporal slip: there isn't just one direction of time, there is a large (maybe infinite) number of potential slip-vectors along various axes.
3. He was not properly shielded from the massive influx of radiation that his body endured during his journey into the unknown. This is what caused his cancer, and this imminent danger will later inspire DayTripper and homebrew inventor Demetrius Jackson to create the Automated Survival Suit.
4. Diaspora didn't know this at the time, but later DayTrippers discovered: **You must return within twenty-four hours of your original starting-point in Home-Earth's timeline.** Failure to do so will result in your being "ceased" – i.e., utterly and permanently eradicated from this reality. Your vehicle's resistance fields can offset no more than twenty-four hours of shift. This means that from an observer's perspective on Earth, the duration of your trip must be less than 1 Earth day.

"Sunday Driver, Yeah" – A Visit to Tracy Island

by Kim E. Bruller for *Rolling Stone*, Aug 2009

Tracy Island, also known as Diaspora Ranch, is a modest holding nestled in California's arid central valley, a little under an hour out of Sacramento. The journey soon exits the freeway, and my editor and I are forced to follow the satnav on manual steer. As we creep slowly towards the checkpoint, an audible hum draws our attention to the military drones casting shadows over the road ahead. Were it not for the inhospitable terrain and reception, "the Hangar" – the Ranch's main building, clearly visible over the top of the squat patrol hut – might well be the most photographed barn in America. It's the perfect picture of old timey rural America, hidden away in the golden grasses of historic Yolo County, but inside is the most outlandish cutting edges of intra-space technology – and today they're taking me along.

Am I nervous? You betcha! Who knows what's going to befall this plucky reporter? I was there at Diaspora's last press conference and I saw first-hand the ruined little man and his amazing treasure, the flying eightball.

The smooth, dark glass of the rock out of space-time distorts my reflection as it floats in a special alcove on the far wall of the plasterboard reception office. Beneath it is a small plaque bearing Diaspora's name. Despite the armed security at the gate the first impression is of a low rent law firm, executive embellishments gone faded and dusty. The secretary chews gum and directs us lazily into the hangar. She does not offer to answer our questions. It's all very hush-hush. Only the floor of the reception area hints at the bustling hive of activity beyond the quaint wooden doors, where the nylon carpet has been worn nearly bare by the daily passing of what rightwing pundits have denounced as "madmen, terrorists and cosmic saboteurs."

***"Your own space collapses into you!"
says Yoshitomo excitedly.***

Nigel Wainwright, chief engineer of the British-backed craft 'Merlin 7,' grins at me as he gives me the tour. "We're relatively comfortable compared to some of the other engines in the field." He gestures around at the bright team colours of the slip-pods, dappled under the strip-lighting and obscured by the barn's low beams. Each ship is sunken into a 6 foot concrete well, but even then the tallest and more advanced designs have to had the ceiling cut away to accommodate

them. Tracy Island was the fictional south-pacific base of the futuristic do-gooders *International Rescue* in the *Thunderbirds* TV show, a hidden base filled with underground rocket silos and secret gadgets feels like a suitable call-name for this place. The sound of arc welders and NPR mingles with the calls of ground crew in preflight preparation and the loudspeaker announcements blare imminent departures off the timetable. There are only four windows for slippage today and I get to know the order well:

"1316 hours craft designation Yamato, vector Russel, point-oh-two; 1324 hours craft designation Shenzhou, vector Lazuli, six-point-oh-nine; 1459 hours craft designation Ariadne 9, vector Tempus, two-point-nine-nine; 1902 hours craft designation Merlin 7, vector Descartes, point-oh-oh-two." That last one is us, I'm told. We're early, but Nigel's happy with the prep so far and agrees to guide us around what he describes as his "home away from home". He gives us a look at "Bay X", an empty landing pad which is kept RA-fielded at all times in case of emergency returnees. "It comes in handy when damaged or out-of-phase vehicles pop in unexpected," he says.

"The RA field must be stable and the craft must be hermetically sealed. The slightest leak in the hull and the whole thing is Annihilated without trace!"

Merlin 7 itself is a 23 foot tall craft that looks a lot like a big blue lunar lander. Large white stars have been painted on by the crew in the style of the Disney character's robes. Thick cables connect Merlin to a bank of computers and it whirrs continuously, undercutting the general hangar din. It takes 12 hours to charge up for a slip and perform the required math. A platoon of khaki-shorts-wearing techies chat over coffee, e-cigs and clipboards. It's going well, it seems. My attention is drawn to a whiteboard covered in equations and a large intricate drawing of a tesseract. Soon I'm getting a lecture on N-dimensional slippage.

"Your own space collapses into you," says Nara Yoshitomo excitedly, "but by the time it gets there, you're already gone!" Dr. Yoshitomo, recently of the Tokyo Institute of Aerospace Technology, draws a line from the perimeter to the center of a blue circle and strikes the marker against the board for emphasis. "The atoms of the craft are accelerated beyond the speed of light along with anything within the radius of the field, and *wham!* – before you can blink, you're in another universe!" The marker skitters across the board beneath his fast-moving hand, leaving a trail of dots that implies a trajectory into a green circle several feet away. "But it makes just as much sense to say that you remain in place the whole time, while entire universes re-arrange themselves around you. Remember, the closest we can come to understanding is a metaphor." He gestures at the tesseract as proof of this unsettling fact and continues speaking at his frenetic pace.

"Mind you, the RA field must be stable and the craft must be hermetically sealed. The slightest leak in the hull and the whole thing is Annihilated without trace!" I can hear the capital "A" in "Annihilated" fall into place. In this business annihilation is a technical term, a real occupational hazard. "Of course, it means we never have to worry about trash disposal. Just tether it to the outside of the craft and it's instantly atomised. The smell's bad but it's good for the planet."

"Or planets, rather," chips in Nigel. He's confided in me that he must have seen at least nine of the eleven Alternate Earths that have been discovered in SlipSpace, and is wildly regarded as an expert on the subject. "There's Jungle World, Nazi World, Water World, Silicon Earth, Earth Thirteen, Zombieland..." he counts off on his fingers...

The prospect of Alternate Earths seems suddenly intimidating, but I'm told such missions are actually much easier than those reaching deeper and darker places in the multiverse.



SlipSpace

It turns out we all live in SlipSpace, and we always have. Every Slip Destination or "Node" has its own Coordinates in this hyperdimensional space. Some Coordinates are well-known, some are traded freely, and some are highly secret.

SLIP TYPES

So far, five different types of slip have been discovered:

CARTESIAN SLIPS result in nearly-instantaneous space travel within our universe, similar to traveling via wormhole or teleportation. These journeys include slips to known and unknown planets within our galaxy and other galaxies within the universe of Home-Earth.

PARATERRAN SLIPS are traversed to visit "Alternate Earths" in which major changes have occurred relative to our timeline, usually descended from a single pivotal bifurcation in history. These timelines may be pictured as four-dimensional "cords" running parallel to our own history, with occasional branches, bridges and offshoots between them. The philosophical implications are immense.

TEMPORAL SLIPS travel forward or backward within the timeline of our own Home-Earth. *[This is what Zayim Diaspora was intending to do.]* The ramifications of time travel are only beginning to be understood, and temporal slippage is regarded as a major ontological risk by conservative theorists. Some DayTrippers refuse to take these missions.

SUBJECTIVE SLIPS are journeys into manifestations of subjective realities such as Dream Worlds; the most common type of Node *[this is what Diaspora actually did]*. Subjective slips are among the least understood of all intraspace dynamics. It is theorized that the interplay between subjective and objective perceptions causes waves of uncollapsed potential to ripple throughout the multiverse, resulting in millions of "pocket universes" with their own laws of physics and varying degrees of stability.

COMPOUND SLIPS – multiple Slips at once – are rarely attempted except by the most experienced pilots. They sometimes happen due to Flux Storms, and may result in your ship being dropped into the *Multiversal Chao*.

A NOTE ON NODES AND COORDINATES

With each successful slip our knowledge of the multiverse grows, as does our ability to exploit this knowledge. Within the last decade, a number of SlipSpace Nodes have become regular travel destinations – and for people who aren't necessarily the technical type. The *Big Model* (a digital map of the multiverse) now includes assorted tourist resorts, corporate extraction zones, political theaters of relation, ports of trade, etc. The majority of Nodes are far less hospitable. The Coordinates of newly-found Nodes are often closely-held corporate secrets, to be revealed as strategy demands. A new Node is usually valuable to *someone*, whether for raw resources or for some other aspect of the reality it inhabits, and therefore it's not surprising to find government and corporate agents working on both sides of the launch console. Unscrupulous DayTrippers will go far to acquire the Coordinates for a jealously-guarded Node.

The World of DayTrippers

The world of DayTrippers is kinda dull, stupid and ridiculous, punctuated by spectacle, festooned with advertising and dripping with irony. It's a place of technological progress and rampant global capitalism, complete with continuous media charades and enormous social inequity, somewhere between "2001" and "Idiocracy".

MEGACORPS & COMPANIES

Below are some of the largest organizations and most well-known SlipSpace transport companies in the world today. Newly-minted DayTrippers may be contracted on long- or short-terms by these organizations, and most veterans have done the same at some point in the not-too-distant past.

ACADEMY OF INTRASPACE TECHNOLOGY

AIT/West in Long Beach, California, is the university of choice for students of Slip Dynamics and IntraSpace Technology, with state-of-the-art labs, trillion-dollar test facilities and a bevy of world-reknowned theorists. The main campus tower – a black stepped pyramid known as "The Ziggurat" – dominates the Long Beach skyline.

BODINGA BAY

An upstart company in the interdimensional transport business, Bodinga Bay's fleet features three small, fast interdimensional vessels called "SlipRippers" with a horizontally-oriented design and excellent atmospheric maneuverability.

CHURCH OF OMG

In 2085, the world's major organized religions united in founding the multid denominational Church of OMG ("One Miraculous God"). Thanks to new "user-friendly" integrative belief systems and pleasant interfaces, religion is not only more popular than ever in the west, it has become a growing service industry for the stressed and depressed person-on-the-go. OMGees (as they are called) use PSAs ("Personal Spiritual Assistants") for spiritual consulting and chemical maintenance. PSA kiosks can be found in convenient locations throughout any major metropolis near you.

DEZLU DAYTRIPPING

Founded in 2098 by Slip Dynamics theorist Dez Tanner and her lifepartner cyberathlete Ani Lu, the DezLu DayTripping Corporation handles the majority of trade runs between

Home-Earth and *Keefe II*, from which the majority of the world's color-shifting plastics come today. The company is rumored to be expanding their fleet this year.

DIASPORA LABS

Founded by Zayim Diaspora, inventor of the Temporal Resistance Amplification Field Generator (progenitor of today's Slip Capacitors), Diaspora Labs is an applied technology company with all ten fingers in the pie of intraspace. Diaspora Ranch is a dozen cabins and barnlike buildings on a 20-acre ranch outside of Sacramento, California. In the rough center is the converted industrial farming facility called "Tracy Island" from which most DayTrips are launched. This facility never closes. Amenities at Tracy Island include dorms and a commissary for DayTrippers, as well as a world-famous emergency landing pad called "Bay X". Regular upgrades, revolutionary engineering, round-the-clock pit crews and safety drills make Tracy Island the safest place in the world to slip from, or to.

GLOBAL NATION PRODUCTS

The principal provider of cheap manufactured commercial goods for the entire world, GNP owns thousands of semi-autonomous megastore chains and online retailers, vast drone-based delivery stockhouses and secured shopping districts of all types. Practically everyone buys practically everything from GNP. Their fastest-growing division is *In-Out* ("The Interactive Outlet"), a biophone-based interactive "best friend" and shopping app with one-day drone-based delivery. Their advertising slogan is "You Need What We Have."

MEGAMEDIA

The dominant provider of mainstream news and entertainment programming for the world, with over 80% of the world's microfreq, cable, satellite and interactive network programming and advertising, bundled with the world's most popular operating system - which they also own. The megacorp controls tens of thousands of production studios and tightly-licensed media distributors, who receive both content and direction from the corporate center in New New York. Their advertising slogan is "Better Watch It".

NODEX INTERDIMENSIONAL TRANSPORT

The largest SlipSpace cargo firm in the business, employing twenty pilots and a small fleet of nondescript cargo couriers colloquially referred to as "Brown Boxes". NIT handles interstellar waste management for the state of Alaska, in addition to a wide variety of other contracts.

SCILLA SARDACIAN

Heiress to the Sardacian Hamloaf fortune and star of the popular stalkshow "Follow My Ass", Sardacian owns two customized DynaLuxe SlipShips to transport herself, her

entourage and invited guests to intraspace destinations for the show. Throwing the net's biggest bashes in the multiverse's most exotic locations is what she's all about, and many of the world's most reknowned DayTrippers have worked on at least one episode.

SLIPFISH

SlipFish is a new company staffed by young SlipSpace theorists straight out of AIT, specializing in trips to known planets for trade and tourism. Their ship *Schrodinger's Can* possesses some highly unusual design features.

SLIPTRIP TRAVEL

The most well-known purveyor of SlipTrip tourist packages, based in New New York with offices in every major metropolitan area. STT often finances research missions to newly-discovered Nodes in search of hip travel destinations, and hires DayTripper crews both permanent and temporary to serve as pilots and guides for wealthy vacationers. Their flagship *The Emerald City* is the largest SlipShip ever constructed.

VALDEZ AND CO

Hector Valdez runs a small, tight DayTripper company comprised entirely of ex-military personnel. They focus almost exclusively on government and military missions, but have been known to take exploration jobs on the side.

LUXURY ITEMS

DayTrippers who strike paydirt may enjoy some affordances...

ITEM	COST
Exotic Car	4M
- upkeep	1M per year
Helicopter	65M
- upkeep	10M per year
Mansion, Small	50M
Mansion, Large	200M
Palatial Compound	2,000M
Personal Staff (1 Professional)	1M per Year
Private Island	500M
- upkeep	2M per year
Private Jet	500M
- upkeep	25M per year
Sports Car	1M
Yacht	60M
- upkeep	6M per year

TECHNOLOGY

The technology of the 22nd century has reached levels barely imagined by the people of 100 years ago. The combination of artificial intelligence systems and nanotechnology perfected over the latter decades of the 21st century has yielded an amazing array of secondary applications which we're only beginning to feel the effects of. Wireless and microfrequency webs span the globe, connecting people with whole communities of networked AI dataservers, and providing up-to-the-moment programming of the intelligent personal assistants carried or worn by everyone, everywhere.

Any of the following technological wonders may be available in your DayTrippers world, subject to the GM's ruling and interpretation. They are listed in their approximate chronological order of development. Wherever appropriate, a base price is included in parentheses. You never know when you might need to regrow a limb!

- Digital Currency
- Driverless Cars (5-10M)
- Aquaculture
- Embedded Biomonitors (1M)
- Robotic Assistants (50M-100M)
- Robotic Surgery (1-6M)
- Embedded General-Purpose Computers (1M)
- Global Automated Retail Delivery
- Stem Cell Banks
- Cloned Protein Farming
- Fusion Power
- Mecha Suits (160M)
- Generalized Artificial Intelligence
- Smart Bacteria
- AI Advertising
- Limb Regrowth (10M)
- Holographic Entertainment
- Programmable Textiles
- Robotic Exoskeletons (20M)
- Hydrogen Fuel Cells (1M/10mW)
- Bionic Ears (10M)
- Bionic Eyes (15M)
- Medical Nanobots
- Sensory Recording System (30M)
- Artificial ESP System (40M)
- Nano Suits (2M)
- Aqualogies
- Arcologies
- Colony On Mars
- Antarctic Cities
- Dream Recordings
- Enhanced Memory (Stat cost in CP)
- Antigravity Powersources
- Force Fields
- Orbital Colonies & Factories
- Mining On Titan

Character Building



You build your PC (Player Character) by spending **Character Points (CP)**. Typical PCs begin with **100 CP** (subject to GM ruling) to spend on **Stats, Skills, Gear, Crew, Rank, Fame** and potentially a **Ship**. You may go into **Debt** to obtain more CP, and the GM will assist you in creating the details of that deal.

Note that you do *not* need to spend all of your CP right now. If you wish, you can hold some back for *Progressive Character Generation* later in the game.

CHARACTER CLASS

Choose a **Character Class** from the list below. This may also tell us your character's profession or type of work, and the GM may infer all sorts of relations, locations and obligations from this fact. You can make up a lot of these personal details, or even invent a new character class, subject to GM ruling.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Amateur Explorer | Celebrity/Entertainer |
| Gonzo Writer | Government Agent |
| Grad Student | Scientist |
| Politician/Nobility | Soldier |
| Special Forces | Tourist |

STATS

Your **Stats** tell us how well your character performs various types of tasks without any special training or equipment. They are rated on a logarithmic scale of 1 to 6, with 6 representing the apex of the human genome. Normal unskilled people have 1 in every Stat.

The **Stat Score** indicates how many d6's you'll roll for Actions relying on that Stat. The Stats and their areas of effect are:

- BRAINS** – knowledge & perception functions
- CHARM** – social & communicative functions
- GRACE** – agility & dexterity functions
- HEALTH** – biophysical & immunity functions
- MIGHT** – strength & force functions
- PSYCHE** – sanity & integrative functions

BUYING STATS

Every Stat Score starts at 1. To begin the game with higher Stat Scores, spend Character Points as shown below:

- To start a Stat at 2 = 5 CP
- To start a Stat at 3 = 15 CP
- To start a Stat at 4 = 40 CP
- To start a Stat at 5 = 100 CP
- To start a Stat at 6 = 200 CP

SKILLS

Your PC may possess any number of Skills, including Skills not listed in this book (subject to GM approval). Think broadly: it is possible to use a Skill you don't possess. (You'll just be a total noob at it, and you'll probably need help as well as luck).

SKILLS TABLE

SKILL NAME	BASE STAT
Acting †	Charm
Artform: _____ †*	Grace, Charm
Athletics: _____ *	Grace, Might
Camouflage †	Brains
Driving/Piloting: _____ *	Grace
Drug Tolerance: _____ *	Health, Psyche
Electronics †	Brains
Encryption	Brains
Fast-Talk	Charm, Psyche
Fighting/Weapon: _____ *	Grace, Might
Firearm: _____ *	Grace
Language: _____ *	Charm, Brains
Mechanics (repair) †	Brains, Psyche
Medicine †	Brains, Psyche
Mnemonics	Psyche, Brains
Mounted Weaponry	Grace
Psychology	Psyche, Charm
Rhetoric	Charm, Brains
Prestidigitation	Grace, Psyche
Programming	Brains
Science: _____ †*	Brains
Streetsmarts	Charm, Psyche
Slip Dynamics	Brains, Psyche
Stealth	Grace, Psyche
Stellar Navigation	Brains
Survival: _____ *	Brains, Health

* Select a specialty within this field (e.g.: "Science: Biology")
 † A "Pro Kit" exists for this skill (see *Gear, p.10*)

All Skills are based on a Stat. Some are based on two Stats, either of which may be used (depending on the fiction you come up with).

Skill Levels are rated on scale of 1 to 6, with 6 representing the epitome of human accomplishment, as shown below:

- 1 = trained
- 2 = journeyman
- 3 = expert
- 4 = master
- 5 = innovator
- 6 = legend

Skill Levels function as *Bonuses* to die rolls. Whenever your character attempts an Action, you will roll a number of dice equal to the Base Stat, keep the highest one, and add your Skill Level to that number (+1, +2, etc).

Example: *If you have a MIGHT of 2 and Fighting Level 1 you would roll 2d6, take the highest, and add 1 to that number.*

Note that Action Resolution is based on *narrative effect*, rather than any numerical value. Your rolls will be modified and your results will be described based on whatever makes sense in the context of the story at the time.

This means characters can use Skills in all sorts of creative ways, whether or not those uses are literally "part of" the Skill. The Skill of *Prestidigitation*, for instance, might be used for pickpocketing. *Athletics:Swimming* might be used to hold your breath in a toxic atmosphere.

Don't hold back. Use your Skills creatively and interpret them broadly. The GM can assign a DL (*Difficulty Level*) to any weird thing you can imagine, so it's really about the *fiction* that the Skill permits. Sure, the Level measures how good the PC is at using that Skill, but the creative ideas and applications of that Skill will come from *you*.

BUYING SKILLS

To buy Skill Levels, spend CP as shown below:

- To increase a Skill Level from 0 to 1 = 10 CP
- To increase a Skill Level from 1 to 2 = 20 CP
- To increase a Skill Level from 2 to 3 = 40 CP
- To increase a Skill Level from 3 to 4 = 100 CP
- To increase a Skill Level from 4 to 5 = 200 CP
- To increase a Skill Level from 5 to 6 = 500 CP

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Both PCs and NPCs may possess Skills which are not on the Skill List (subject to GM approval). For each new Skill named, a governing Stat (or two) must be determined.

Example: *The Prince has a Skill of "Petulant Frenzy +2". The GM decides it's based on CHARM. Just what is a "petulant frenzy"? It depends on the cause and the context, which may differ every time it's used. But when it happens, we'll know how good he is at it, and what number someone must roll against to resist it.*

SHORT FORM CHARACTERS

For faster character building, you can choose one of the following pre-assembled packages for Stats and Skills. Remember that any unmodified Stat has a Score of 1.

- 4 in one Stat, 3 in one Stat, one Skill +2, 15 CP left
- 4 in one Stat, 2 in all other Stats, one Skill +2, 5 CP left
- 3 in all Stats, one Skill +1, 0 CP left
- 3 in two Stats, 2 in all other Stats, three Skills +1, 20 CP left
- 3 in one Stat, 2 in all other Stats, one Skill +2, two Skills +1, 10 CP left
- 2 in all Stats, +2 in two Skills, 10 CP left

Once the assignment of Stats and Skills has been done, you can spend whatever CP you have remaining on Gear, or just hang on to it for later.

GEAR

All **Gear** (tools, weapons, equipment, "Pro Kits" and other practical things) is rated on a scale of 1 to 6 called a **Item Level**. The Item Levels are:

- 1 = superior/pure construction/components
- 2 = exceptional/customized/fine-tuned
- 3 = genius/exquisite/masterpiece
- 4 = revolutionary/legendary/mythic
- 5 = intelligent (literally a "smart device")
- 6 = inexplicable/magical (see *Clarke's Third Law*)

An Item adds its Level to the highest die rolled for all applicable Action Resolutions. When using an Item *and* a Skill, *both* bonuses are added.

Example: *A character with a GRACE of 3 who has Fighting Skill:Knives +2 and is using a custom knife (+2) would roll 3d6 and add 4 to the highest die rolled.*

Gear, like Skills, is mostly a matter of narration. There is no table of prices for a phased plasma rifle in the 40 watt range. Instead, the cost of the item will indicate its Bonus when rolling the dice, and *you tell us* the fictional reason why that is. For example, a firearm +2 might be a rare weapon inherited from a gun collector or munitions artisan, but if I find myself in possession of a +3 or +4 firearm, there's definitely a story behind it (perhaps it was manufactured by Samuel Colt himself and can kill demons?)

A "Pro Kit" includes the typical gear required for professional practice, and it's basically a narrative device allowing us to assume the existence of professional tools and basic equipment. The contents of the kit vary depending on the Skill. (a doctor's medical bag, a masseuses's folding table and oils, etc). This gear is high-quality but ordinary (+0).

BUYING GEAR

Money is measured in *Megas* (short for *Megabucks*), which are worth \$1 million. Costs are abbreviated as "1M", "2M", etc. During the Character Building phase, CPs can be converted into Megas at a 1:1 rate. Gear costs are shown below:

- "Pro Kit" = 1M
- Automated Survival Suit = 2M
- +1 item or weapon = 10M
- +2 item or weapon = 20M
- +3 item or weapon = 40M
- Other items = 10 times today's cost

An easy conversion rule to remember: 1M will get you roughly \$100k in early 21st-century dollars. That's 10 times the prices you're accustomed to today, so (for instance) a PleasureMeal at McBurger costs about \$50.

As a general rule, if a player pays 1M at the start of each year, we can assume that they have the money for any "normal" purchases they make in the course of that year (rent, food, gas and utilities).

CREW

You can hire as many crewmembers or staffers as you wish. These are NPCs (played by the GM but defined in part by you) with a score of 1 in all Stats. You may purchase additional Stats, Skills and Gear for them at the prices shown above.

A salaried crew or staff member may be hired for one year at a cost of 1M up front (i.e., 1 CP). Like your PC, they are assumed to have an unglamorous but serviceable place to live.

RANK

Military personnel, diplomats, politicians and espionage agents may possess a *Rank Level* rated from 1-6. In addition, they may have stated limits to their terms of office or tours of duty. Rank Levels may be purchased at the same CP cost as Skill Levels. Some suggestive terms for Rank Levels are:

	MILITARY	POLITICAL	SECRET
1	Enlisted	Civic Office	Spy
2	Lieutenant	Mayor	Cell Leader
3	Captain	Governor	Chief
4	Major	President	Diplomat
5	General	Emissary	Initiate
6	Admiral	Ambassador	Illuminatus

Subject to GM ruling, your Rank Level may be used when dealing with fellow enlisted to assert your authority, state your opinion to a superior officer, propose a plan of action to a superior officer, make a requisition of materiel, or give an order to a subordinate. The other person's Rank is the DL of the action, and you make a CHARM roll +Rank against it.

If you are involved in a public scandal or return from a mission that is deemed a total failure by the press, your Rank is decreased by 1.

If you are convicted of a felony, you are discharged. Your Rank is removed completely and forever.

If your Rank is 2 or higher, you may retire at any time. After retiring, your Rank will continue to work as described above, but at -1 of its "active duty" value.

If your term of office expires without scandal, your Rank will continue to work as described above, but at -1 of its "official capacity" value. Your Fame will become subject to the normal rules (i.e., it may decrease all the way to 0 again).

FAME

It's alluring and desirable, but also fickle and short-lived. You sell a book, do the lecture circuit, go on OprahNet (Oprah has undergone extensive rejuvenation treatments since 2024), and **boom!** you're nationally famous – at least for a while. But turn your back for just a few weeks, some B-list celebrity has a third breast implanted and boom, you're obscure again. Them's the breaks!

Fame Levels are rated on a scale of 1 to 6:

- 1 = local/professional
- 2 = regional
- 3 = national
- 4 = global
- 5 = historical
- 6 = cosmic

Fame can determine whether someone has heard of you. It may also be used to modify CHARM rolls anywhere you're famous, to impress someone or to get something you want for free (subject to GM ruling, of course). But there's a catch: in order to retain your Fame, at least once per month you must (a) make a public appearance or issue a press release, AND (b) pay the price of your Fame Level in Megas. If you fail to do either of these things, your Fame will decrease by 1. That's what they call "The Price of Fame".

BUYING FAME

Fame Levels cost the same as Skill Levels. For starting PCs, we assume you already have an agent, and you've done something worthy of public attention. It's probably a LifeShaper, whatever it is. The specifics are for you and the GM to decide.

DEBT

Don't have enough to set yourself up the way you'd like? Consider taking out a loan! For every CP borrowed, you owe 1 Mega to some character or financial entity. Your payment schedule is 1 Mega per month. Who gave you the money? Is this a LifeShaping Event?

PAYING YOUR DEBTS

Each month you fail to make a payment, bad things happen. Your Fame will decrease by 1 (to a minimum of 0). If your debt is to a financial institution, you must make a CHARM roll to avoid having your assets frozen. If your debt is to a private party, you must make a CHARM roll to avoid facing whatever repercussions the GM has in store. Broken kneecaps, possibly. In both cases, the DL (Difficulty Level) of the roll will equal the number of skipped payments. (See *Action Resolution*, p.18)

If you fail to make six consecutive payments you will be subject to arrest and trial on Home-Earth, or (in the case of certain private loans) a price will be put on your head, and avoiding bounty hunters will become a thing in your life.

THE PC SHEET

Record your choices and totals on the PC Sheet.

STATS & SKILLS

The upper portion of the sheet is for recording Stats and Skills. Write your beginning Stat Scores in the "Base" column. The "Curr" column will be used later, should your PC suffer damage. Write your Skills in the spaces to the right of their governing Stats, as shown below:

STATS	BASE	CURR	SKILLS	
BRAINS	3		Programing +1	Math +1
CHARM	2		Rhetoric +2	
GRACE	1			
HEALTH	2			
MIGHT	1			
PSYCHE	2			

FAME, RANK & MEGAS

Beneath your Stats and Skills are spaces for Base and Current Fame, Rank and Megs. To the right of these spaces are fields where you can record any important details you may need to remember. Your creditors will appreciate it.

OVERVIEW

Your character's backstory is entirely up to you, even though the GM and fellow Players may assist you in coming up with ideas and connections to other characters. But then again, it's not very important to have a detailed backstory at the

beginning of the game. A one-sentence overview, even just a few well-chosen words, oughta do the trick: "A something something from something". Or maybe "A something something who wants to something". Or something.

LIFESHAPING

At the beginning of play, your character may have undergone one or more *Lifeshaping Events* which molded their persona. You may even have some ideas about what those events were already. If you *do* have ideas about LifeShapers for your character, see *LifeShaping* under *Character Development* (p.15). Use this portion of the PC Sheet to record them.

If you don't have any ideas for LifeShapers, that's fine too. You can get into all that stuff later.

POINT TOTALS

That cluster of rounded rectangles on the right side of the PC Sheet is for keeping track of your point totals, including CP and XP. Once you see how it works, it's quite simple to use. First, some definitions:

- CP = Character Points (you already knew this one.)
- XP = Experience Points (may be spent just like CP)
- TCV = Total Character Value

So reading across each line: Your CP TOTAL minus your CP SPENT equals your CP AVAIL. Similarly, your XP TOTAL (the total number of XP you have earned, which is zero at the beginning of your character's career) minus your XP SPENT (also zero when starting out) equals your XP AVAIL.

Your TCV (Total Character Value) is the sum of CP SPENT plus XP SPENT. That's the number the GM will use to determine your character's base effectiveness.

Finally, the total of all unspent points (CP AVAIL + XP AVAIL) is called POTENTIAL. This is another number used by the GM; it indicates the amount of character change or development that might potentially occur in a near-future session.

NOTES

Incidental details about your character, or things you want to remember for later, may be jotted down in this area.

SUIT POWER EXPENDITURE

The Suit Power Expenditure box contains ten rows of ten circles each, for marking off all power used while wearing an Automated Survival Suit on a mission. For more information see *Your Suit's Power*, p.29.

GEAR

This space is provided for any Gear your character carries or owns. Your "Gear" includes not only your personal gear and carry-on items but also houses, cars, and other possessions that are important enough to take note of.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

A general description of common uses for each of the Basic Skills is included below. These descriptions are intended to be suggestive, not restrictive.

Some Skills possess multiple Classes within them. Your chosen Speciality will come from within one of these Classes. When attempting to use a related Skill within the same Class, your Bonus is decreased by 1. For Skills outside that Class, your Bonus does not apply at all.

Example: With a Rifle Skill of 1, Marty is assumed to be able to operate not only rifles but also carbines and Uzis with the same Bonus. But that Bonus goes down 1 point (becoming zero) when he tries to use a handgun. When he gets his rifle skill up to 2, his bonus with handguns will be +1.

ACTING - Portraying mood, pretending to belong to a group or class you don't, imitating people, lying, riffing in character. Can also be used to tell when someone else is acting.

ARTFORM - Creating and understanding artistic expressions. Physical: Designing, crafting or enhancing objects, or creating objects using a physical medium. Performance: developing or performing a live piece. Classes: Physical, Performance.

ATHLETICS - Sports, acrobatics, performing physical activities quickly, with great strength or precision, using muscular control to achieve a precise result. Name the sport. It matters.

CAMOUFLAGE - Concealing oneself or others from view, concealing objects from view, making use of local features to obscure detection while non-mobile. May also be used to recognize typical indicators of concealment.

DRIVING/PILOTING - Controlling a specialized vehicle (standard vehicles require no rolls under normal conditions), pushing a vehicle beyond its intended limits. Classes: Land and Sea vehicles, Air and Space vehicles. (Of human design.)

DRUG TOLERANCE - Understanding of effects and tolerance to the negative effects of a specific drug. Classes: Stimulants, Depressants, Hallucinogens, Psychoactives

ELECTRONICS - Wiring, understanding, connecting, building or fixing electronic units and systems.

ENCRYPTION - Digital or mental calculation of codes and cyphers, encrypting or decrypting messages of human origin. For message beyond human origin, well, it depends.

FAST-TALK - Conning. Bamboozling. Convincing someone in a way that temporarily confuses them into agreeing. Can also be used to spot another's Fast-Talk.

FIGHTING/WEAPON - Using a specified fighting style (including any martial arts style) or hand-held weapon effectively in combat. Classes: Martial Art, Hand Weapon, Thrown Weapon

FIREARM - Using a firearm. Classes: Handgun, Long Gun.

LANGUAGE - Speaking, reading or writing a language. Level 1 is pedestrian, level 2 is conversational, level 3 is educated, level 4 is authorial, level 5 is professorial and level 6 is encyclopedic. Languages from the same family may be considered in Class.

MECHANICS - Designing, understanding, machining, building or repairing mechanical devices.

MEDICINE - Diagnosing, understanding, curing, administering or operating upon the physiology of the human body.

MNEMONICS - Committing long strings of information to memory for later recall, and recalling things previously consigned to mnemonic storage.

MOUNTED WEAPONRY - Operating a ship-mounted or installation-mounted heavy armament or laser.

PSYCHOLOGY - Diagnosing, understanding, healing or modifying the balance of the human mind; understanding, prescribing or administering neuroactive chemicals; recognizing and understanding psychological processes.

RHETORIC - Using language and its presentation to affect the desired changes in the listener's attitude or opinion. May be used for arguing, bantering, negotiating, orating, joking, storytelling, rhapsodizing, proving, disproving, critiquing, questioning, seducing or convincing.

PRESTIDIGITATION - Using dexterity and misdirection to manipulate small objects while concealing or obscuring the fact that you're doing it, or seeming to do something else.

PROGRAMMING - Controlling digital systems by writing scripts and code in assorted computer languages. Designing, understanding, modifying, writing or debugging code.

SCIENCE - Familiarity, understanding, experimentation, theory, analysis and prediction of effects within the specified scientific realm. Classes: Physical Science (e.g.: geo, chem), Life Science (bio), Social Science, Formal Science (math, logic)

STREETSMARTS - Familiarity, understanding, fitting in, or successfully traversing features and characters in an urban environment to attain desired objects, action or information. Includes use of slang, contacts and "coolness" signifiers.

SLIP DYNAMICS - Familiarity, understanding, theory, experimentation, analysis and prediction of effects in IntraSpace, as well as the ability to calculate a slip vector for IntraSpace travel.

STEALTH - Moving silently, hiding, or performing actions without being noticed.

STELLAR NAVIGATION - Determining location of self and landmarks, or plotting a course over land, sea or interplanetary space, by using the stars.

SURVIVAL - Hunting, foraging, finding water, building shelter and maintaining healthy conditions within a specified type of environment. Classes: Desert, Forest, Tundra.