

HACK THE PLANET

YOU are a teenage hacker, a console cowboy or cowgirl, in the year 1995. You face persecution from the authorities because they don't understand what you do; they think you're a criminal. You think you're a genius. Some days, you're both right.

Pick a meatspace name for your character, and pick a hacker tag as well.

Roll on the following table twice (or pick) to determine the key components of your signature outfit:

1. Neon camouflage
2. Skin-tight undershirt
3. An overabundance of piercings
4. Knee-high shitkicker boots
5. Oversized military coat
6. Two-tone biker jacket
7. Wraparound sunglasses
8. Leopard-print leggings
9. Tiny sunglasses
10. Enormous headphones

You also wear rollerblades; this is non-negotiable.

Roll on the following table once to pick what everyone *thinks* your goal is, and once to work out what your *actual* goal is. Keep your true goal secret but tell everyone your apparent goal. Where it says [other PC], randomise it:

1. To show [other PC] that you're hot shit
2. To make a load of money
3. To get into an Ivy League college
4. To make out with [other PC] while 90's music plays in the background
5. To have a virus named after you
6. To get revenge against some asshole
7. To build something that will endure
8. To hack something that's never been hacked before
9. To be regarded as an icon
10. To save [other PC] from themselves

When you achieve your true goal, you roll D8s rather than D6s when you act.

GM: You're in charge of the antagonists. Who is The Man? The Man can be a woman: it is a gender-neutral term indicating a high position within the kyriarchy. Roll, or invent your own conspiracy.

1. City Hall embezzlement scam

2. Illegal drug wars in South America
3. Mass identity theft by a corporation
4. Government surveillance botnet
5. Corrupt police chief in league with the mob
6. Government-backed hacker collective behind the scenes

Come up with some Faces - people who represent The Man, as well as an identity for The Man themselves. The hackers stumble upon the machinations of The Man during their day-to-day hacks. When The Man finds out they've been discovered, they'll stop at nothing to discredit, imprison, and threaten the hackers into silence. The hackers will have to use all the tools at their disposal to overcome their oppressors and liberate the flow of information, releasing it to the world.

ELITE

It's not all bad; each time you get in trouble, you get an Elite token. You can give another player an elite token to show that you think they're hot shit (and tell them why); for each elite token a character has collected from other players, they can burn it to gain +2 dice to any check they perform.

DESCRIBING HACKING

Although you may well flash back to images of your characters sitting in front of a computer, drinking soda and tapping away at a keyboard, every intrusion attempt must feature (but is not limited to) sped-up, high-contrast footage of: subway trains, traffic, computer games, floating equations, electrical impulses, fractals, glowing virtual cities made of data, cartoons, explosions, adverts, and so on.

POWER WORDS

Cut out these words and put them in a cup. When you start a hack, draw 3 words. When you are operating in cyberspace, you can use these words as part of your description of your intrusion or The Man's countermeasures and re-roll one dice per word you use. Feel free to write down your own words and put them into the cup too.

Splice
Motherboard
Glitch
Backdoor
Crosswire
Worm
Trojan
Virus
Antivirus
ICE
Thermal

Crash
Blackwall
Killswitch
Virtual machine
Crackbox
Data transfer
Hook protocol
Cerberus
Reboot
Smokescreen
Codebook
Programming manual
Trusted network
Phreak
Spoof
Termite
Hijack
Megabyte
System shot
Dial-in
Bad heat
Trapdoor
Viper
Slush Files
Nest Dump
Override
Jump the Network
Overload
Dual-connection
Refresh rate
Connection port

YOU HAVE TWO STATS: Meatspace and Cyberspace. Divide 5 points between them. Roll Meatspace when you do something in the real world: rollerblading away from the cops, sneaking into an office, laying down the moves on a cutie in a strobe-lit bar, etc. Roll Cyberspace when you do something in the virtual realm: defeating countermeasures, manipulating infrastructure, throwing people off your digital trail, etc.

Your stats are rated at between 1 and 5. When you act and the outcome is in doubt, grab D6 equal to your relevant stat and throw them; each one that shows 5 or more is a success, and 6's explode. Depending on how difficult the action is, the GM will ask for more successes: 1 for something simple, 5 for something truly difficult (like Hacking the Gibson).

HEAT

For each 1 you roll, you gain 1 point of Heat. Each time your Heat reaches 5 (so at 5, 10, 15 etc) you get in trouble with The Man - and the higher the score, the bigger the trouble. There's no way to reduce your Heat until you prove your innocence and the corruption of The Man. Once you hit 20 Heat, there's a warrant out for your arrest.