

Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri: **Racing the Darkness**

A megagame presented on the [Alpha Centauri 2 Forums](#)

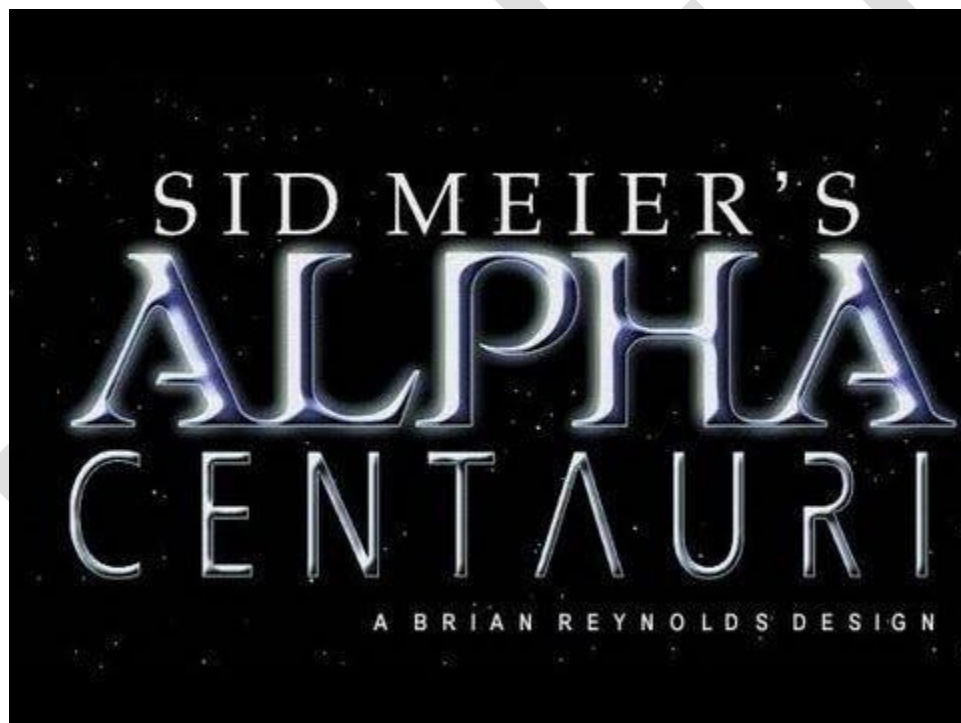
Player's Handbook, version 1.0

“Eternity lies ahead of us, and behind. Have you drunk your fill?”

– Lady Deirdre Skye, *Conversations with Planet*

Introduction

This is the story of an expedition into the unknown. It was an act of desperation, undertaken not in optimism or from a place of pride, but because our species, and the civilization it created, had run out of time. And so we fled the world we had seemingly destroyed for one that might yet destroy us.



Background

Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri (SMAC) is a strategy computer game designed by Brian Reynolds and developed by Firaxis Games™ in 1999.

Racing the Darkness is a multimedia fan fiction project set in the SMAC universe.

A **megagame** is a multiplayer roleplaying game that borrows ideas from board games, roleplaying games, wargames, and tabletop simulations. In Dungeons & Dragons, each player takes the part of individual heroes. In this game, each player will take the part of an entire faction. Just like with board games, there are rules. And just like in roleplaying games, there is a referee who helps facilitate the experience.

The term “megagame” is relatively new, but there is a very good chance you have run into megagames in a variety of settings and under a variety of names. In the military, they are called professional wargames. In business, they are called tabletop exercises. Online, you may have played in a Grand Strategic Roleplaying game or a Story Debate.

This creative, not-for-profit work, like the game on which they are based, speaks to a question that has occupied Earth’s greatest thinkers since time immemorial: how shall we now live?

Acknowledgements

Buster's Uncle

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Massive Attack

Trench Dog

Eyeless Wannabe

Ursur

“The most virulent disease is failure.”

– Director Tamineh Pahlavi, *Homo Sapien Superior*

The Story

Journey to Alpha Centauri¹

Soon after the dawn of the new millennium, humankind’s oldest enemies—war, famine, and disease—are winning the battle on planet Earth. Our waters are poisoned by chemicals, and the air heavy-laden with the radioactive soot of hundreds of “low-yield” atom bombs. The United Nations decides to attempt the impossible: colonization of a new world, before it is too late.

Codenamed “Unity,” the plan is simple: send an expedition to the nearest Earth-like planet, Chiron, in the Alpha Centauri system. Give them the seeds for planting a new society—technology, knowledge, and experts of every kind. Ensure that the mission stays on track by carefully monitoring its progress from Earth. Then, when the time is right, and if the need still exists, begin shuttling others to this *ersatz* Eden.

Difficult, yes, but not impossible. By the middle of the twenty-first century, there are permanent human settlements on or above every planet in our solar system nearer than Neptune. Nuclear pulse propulsion, while capable of just a fraction of the speed of light, should keep the journey to under a century. Colonists can be placed in suspended animation—cold sleep—to slow the natural aging process and reduce the logistical complexities of travel. A scouting mission, the Pathfinder Probe, goes ahead to lay the groundwork for something larger. Although contact with the Probe’s crew is quickly lost, they survive long enough to confirm that Chiron *is* habitable.

More than a half-century in the making, the Unity Project competes for interest and resources with other urgent imperatives: warmaking, peacemaking, and stabs at global preservation that do not involve leaving Earth behind. The interest and contributions of individual donors—states, corporations, and even criminal enterprises—wax and wane with the passage of time until the ship is a Frankenstein’s Monster of incompatible and

¹ This text is modified from the original by McCubbin, Chris. *Sid Meier’s Alpha Centauri*. (Firaxis Games, 1999), pp. 2-3.

obsolete systems, its crew a motley combination of the brilliant and the condemned, its cargo bays choked with surplus and cast-offs. Amidst countless arguments, accidents, and incidents of sabotage, entire sections were started, gutted, and either abandoned or started again as the opportunity presented itself. At *Unity's* dedication, Captain Jonathan Garland himself wryly observed that there was probably not a single accurate schematic of the whole ship anywhere in existence.

Some see the mission as a gross dereliction of duty by governments and institutions that have an obligation to save more than just the measly half-million people that can be crammed into a tin can ark. They do everything they can to stop it. Others are determined to get aboard no matter the cost. Violence, sabotage, and subversion impose long and painful delays. But the deteriorating conditions on Earth leave us little choice, and on February 2, 2071, the United Nations Starship *Unity* departs the Lunar Cradle for the Alpha Centauri star system.

The ship is as unlucky as the world it leaves behind. Just hours after launch, in November 2071, an explosion destroys one of the starship's four precious hydroponics bays. Finding that the ship is still space-worthy, Mission Control chooses to override automatic crew resuscitation and simply jettison affected compartments. At the push of a button, 10,000 passengers are sacrificed on the altar of human survival. The United Nations Intelligence Cell goes on to confirm that the cause of the explosion was sabotage. Odds of mission success are revised downward to >10%.

Forty-four years later, and against all odds, the *Unity* is just one week from deployment to Chiron's surface. A Forward Contact Team had already been planetside for a full month, working to clear a landing zone and seek out survivors of the long-ago Pathfinder expedition.

Then, at 01:19h Zulu Time, December 1, 2115, a micro-object impact cripples *Unity* when it is just 0.02 astronomical units from Chiron. Even worse, damage control efforts are just coming online when mutiny breaks out. Amidst this violence, the crew proves unable to resolve a reactor leak caused by the collision. The command crew confirms that contact with Earth has been lost and cannot be reestablished with the equipment at hand. They soon begin to argue about the best way to proceed, each leader articulating a very different ideology. The argument is heated and Captain Jonathan Garland is murdered by an unknown assailant. By now, each leader has surrounded themselves with dedicated followers. Initial cooperation has given way to bloody skirmishing as people and supplies are rounded up and put in motion toward the landing pods.

“The most powerful act that can occur between two people is that of validation. This is the politician's artifice: to frame a problem in such way that it seems to his audience they were the ones with the unreckoned foresight—first in perceiving it, and then in determining its correct solution.”

– Factor Roshann Cobb, *Threading the Mind's Eye*

The Human Factions on Chiron²

The human factions of Planet are not divided by race, language, or place of ancestral origin. Rather, they organize themselves according to ideological preferences. Each faction is guided by the vision of its leader. These visions, in turn, give each faction a unique set of advantages and disadvantages.

You are likely to find the game more enjoyable if you pick a faction you can empathize with (even if you don't necessarily agree with everything they profess).

What is a faction?

For gameplay purposes, a faction is a group of mission survivors organized under the charismatic leadership of a particular individual (or, in the case of the Dreamers of Chiron, two individuals). Some factions, such as the New Two Thousand and the Human Tribe, formed strong attachments many decades prior to Mission Launch and made the long journey between stars intact. This is reflected in their high cohesion. Others, such as the University of Planet and the Lord's Conclave, first came together aboard *Unity* and have yet to sort the wheat from the chaff. Just after the emergency of Planetfall, all factions incorporate unwilling captives, curious recruits, and many incidental hangers-on.

Factions have corporate personalities. Faction loyalists care deeply about orthodoxy. Faction dissenters, on the other hand, will grapple with their “bad fit” and explore opportunities to moderate the faction's positions or even depart for the greener pastures of other societies. Not every member of the crew is politically minded, of course. Many settlers care about faction leadership only to the extent that there is food enough to eat, recycled air enough to breathe, and a pressure tent in which to sleep.

University of Planet (Academician Prokhor Zakharov)

Soviet physicist Prokhor Zakharov was often touted as the greatest public scientist of the twenty-first century. At his suggestion, a group of survivors have organized themselves into an academic faculty dedicated to the empirical study of their new

² The introduction to this section is taken verbatim from McCubbin, *Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri*, p. 11.

homeworld. Zakharov is convinced that misguided deference to religion and folkways prevented Old Earth societies from embracing the technological tools that could have saved them. He has therefore called for a program of scientific inquiry unrestricted by “conventional ethics.” As the mission’s Chief Engineer, Zakharov led the failed effort to repair *Unity’s* damaged fusion plant. His followers received very high doses of radiation and now rely heavily on robot servitors. The University is a research powerhouse.

Gaian Stepdaughters (Lady Deirdre Skye)

Arch-environmentalists led by the radical conservationist Lady Deirdre Skye, a Scottish plant biologist once responsible for *Unity’s* food supplies. The Gaians believe all living things are interdependent. Skye teaches that humans essentially poisoned Planet Earth to death in a kind of oblivious suicide pact. Gaians insist that survival on Chiron will require living “in dialogue” with the land—in other words, practicing self-restraint to limit the impact of human settlement. The Gaians receive significant bonuses when interacting with Planet.

Human Labyrinth (Chairman Sheng-ji Yang)

Better known as “The Hive,” these hapless survivors are under the authoritarian control of Chairman Sheng-ji Yang, an ex-Chinese political prisoner-turned-*apparatchik*. Yang seeks to radically redefine what it means to be human, trampling preconceived notions about the capacities of the human brain, the needs of the human spirit, and even the concepts of right and wrong. Yang blames hyper-individualism for the disasters on Old Earth and teaches that only a completely new set of eusocial ethics, enforced by a philosopher king, can prevent human extinction. Yang immediately retreated with his people underground after Planetfall. The Hive has the makings of an industrial colossus.

Morgan Industries (CEO Nwabudike Morgan)

Nwabudike Morgan of Namibia was the richest man in human history. His companies had more power than many countries and were instrumental in building the *Unity* and training its crew. He has offered survivors a seductive argument: that humanity simply outgrew Old Earth. The only thing to do now is to resist misguided calls to change the age-old pattern of consumption. Life on Chiron will be exactly as it was before: a rat race to determine the haves and have-nots. There is no higher calling but to eat, drink, and be merry. Morgan was one of many mission stowaways, surrounding himself with picked retainers and emerging just prior to Planetfall. The Morganites have the tools to dominate trade on Planet.

Spartan Federation (Colonel Corazón Santiago)

Self-styled colonel, Corazón Santiago, grew up tough on the streets of New Los Angeles and later served on both sides of the Second American Civil War. She learned that Thomas Hobbes was right: existence is a war of all against all. Billions perished on Old Earth because they sat meekly by while the *Unity* left without them. Santiago infiltrated the ship's security detachment along with her followers and, when the time was right, they struck. Now, they are taking their share of mission resources and building a battle-ready society that will never be subject to tyranny ever again. Reflecting their recent past, the Spartans begin the game locked in a vendetta with all other factions for eighty turns, and with the Human Tribe permanently.

Lord's Conclave (Sister Miriam Godwinson)

American theologian and Christian ecumenicist Sister Miriam Godwinson was a rock of strength during the *Unity* Crisis and refused to leave the wounded and discarded behind. Now, she has cast them as the inheritors of a God-given bequest. For Miriam, lack of faith explains the collapse of human civilization. Who does not love God, cannot love himself. Who does not love himself is soon at war with his neighbors. The solution? Close study--and obedience to--His manual for right living. The Conclave is a cultural dynamo, and Miriam is determined to collect all the wayward lambs of the [i]Unity[/i] flock.

Peacekeeping Forces (Commissioner Pravin Lal)

Pravin Lal, a former U.N. chief of staff and *Unity's* Chief Medical Officer, was also a close friend and confidant of the late Captain Garland, whose mantle he has claimed. A Pakistani by birth, Lal holds that unfree governments suffocated human potential and doomed Old Earth to a death spiral of calamities they were powerless to resist. His followers are heirs to the Liberal political tradition: they avow that the only legitimate government is one that has the consent of the governed. The Peacekeeping Forces are a united society that punches far above their own weight on the Planetary Council.

Human Tribe (Selectman Pete Landers)³

The Human Tribe is a network of local self-defense compacts (some would say a cult) founded in the United States just before its last civil war. Members believe that the ideal society is no larger than a single neighborhood: intimate, immediate, and determinedly parochial. "Tribals" set aside their loyalties to unreliable governments and gathered instead with neighbors and blood relations--those under the same immediate threats. They follow the philosophical teachings of a lay pastor and radio personality,

³ The Human Tribe and Jean-Baptiste Keller are original creations of Thorn.

Jean-Baptiste Keller, who did not survive the Second American Civil War. Tribals, better known as Kellerites, stowed away aboard *Unity* and helped contribute to the ship's destruction—retribution, they said, for past persecution. Their veteran soldiers are highly effective, especially when on defense, and this suspicious society is hard to infiltrate or subvert. Reflecting their participation in the fighting that led to *Unity's* destruction, the Tribe begins the game locked in Vendetta with all other factions for twenty turns, and with the Spartans permanently. The Human Tribe is led by Selectman Pete Landers, an ex-U.S. Army National Guard sergeant lured away by the Kellerite movement.

New Two Thousand (Squire Oscar van de Graaf)

The “Bold Two Thousand” are investors, courtiers, employees, and hangers-on of Oscar van de Graaf, an ex-American cabinet secretary and industrialist who was also the largest private donor to the *Unity* mission. By the late twenty-second century, some on Old Earth had come to believe that a despot, well-educated, wealthy enough to resist seduction by special interests, and with the full blessings of genetic medicine, was a better guarantee of wisdom and predictability than the “democratic rabble” or even the boardroom. After all, with the expectation that their children would succeed them, a monarch might be expected to exhibit an especially strong interest in the welfare of their subjects. Might they measure their success using some other metric than quarterly earnings? The New Two Thousand are an expedition-within-an expedition: a joint-stock company that was promised land grants and political independence from the mission hierarchy after five years of service.

Human Ascendancy (Director Tamineh Pahlavi)

The Human Ascendancy is a society of eugenicists whose avowed intention is to produce *Homo sapien superior*, an artificially engineered human uniquely suited to life on Chiron—in other words, pantropy. To accomplish this goal, they will exploit genetic medicine to its uttermost limits and impose social mores that reserve the lion's share of community resources for those they deem likely to thrive. The Ascendancy is highly efficient and its super-soldiers are highly lethal in any situation but it suffers from major maluses to population growth and morale. The Ascendancy is led by Tamineh Pahlavi, the Persian director of *Unity's* Genetic Research Laboratory.

Planet-Hunters (Warden J.T. Marsh)

Jeremy Tanner Marsh led *Unity's* Forward Landing Team. Shocked to discover that the mission disintegrated during their thirty day head-start on Planet, they have since dispersed into a series of nomadic caravans, roaming the new frontier of Planet in search of adventure. Marsh, like his followers, is a man somewhat out of time--an

Anglo-Irish soldier-of-fortune who placed himself at the disposal of any number of doomed causes before leading a mostly-solitary life as a big game hunter and national parks administrator. From Marsh's perspective, the chief problem of humanity was straightforward: we engineered ourselves into a physical decline, and our willingness to do great things soon followed. Marsh's people, now scattered to the four winds, intend to safeguard Planet as a final frontier where men can be properly made.

New State (Contre-Amirale Raoul André St. Germaine)

This undersea faction is what remains of *Unity's* Aquatic Operations Division. Their leader is a former French sailor, Raoul André St. Germaine, with a decidedly mixed service record. The *Contre-amirale* is a paternalist, believing that, when under pressure, a people will always trade freedom of thought and action for an immediate guarantee of security. Compromise is therefore needed to safeguard the democratic process. Society must be carefully curated. Those with the sense and skill to advanced should be trusted with the difficult work of management, while everyone else is welcome to dwell in whatever dissolution they like, so long as it does not endanger the body politic. The New State is a caste society in which one's rank is determined by their service to the government. The New State makes Planetfall in the ocean.

Digital Oracle (Mediator Johann Anhalt)

Followers of the Digital Oracle believe that human survival depends on exploiting an intelligence greater than our own. Fortunately, we have already created it: the computer. The Oracle's aim is to built more perfect computers that can then be tasked to solve increasingly complex problems. The Oracle receives a very strong administrative bonus that allows it to make interesting and impactful adjustments to base operations earlier than any other faction, but this comes at a steep cost to efficiency. The Oracle is led by Swiss mathematician and civil servant, Johann Anhalt. Like the Hive, the Oracle's first base is below ground.

Dreamers of Chiron (Factor Roshann Cobb and Dr. Aleigha Cohen)

The Dreamers of Chiron believe that the secrets of the human mind, not of Chiron, deserve the focused attention of the mission survivors. The Dreamers begin with the Neuropsych technology, reflecting insights gained from decades of automated research carried out on *Unity's* quarter-million passengers while in cold sleep. The faction is unparalleled at Probe warfare thanks to its unique insights about how we think. They are led by the drug-addicted scion of a Hong Kong trading house, Roshann Cobb, and an Australian behavioral scientist, Aleigha Cohen, *Unity's* Chief of Neurosurgery. The Dreamers excel at trade, Probe operations, doctrinal research but face critical efficiency problems.

Shapers of Chiron (Synchronizer Shoichiro Nagao)⁴

Widely-revered Japanese geologist and environmental engineer Shoichiro Nagao did what he could to restore some of Earth's worst-polluted regions before signing onto Project Unity as head of Terraforming Operations. On Planetfall, he made what is now called the Great Promise: to take the unfamiliar putty of Chiron and produce a near-facsimile of Old Earth. Nagao's followers cling fast to the traditions of the place they left behind, and have every intention of going back to "rescue" its people. The Shapers have the resources to shape Planet in a way no other faction does at game start.

Legacy Initiative (led by Annunciator Sathieu Metrion)

All that remains of *Unity's* Data Services Division, Thai data librarian Sathieu Metrion and his followers have but one ambition: to ensure the free flow of information on Chiron. From this first and essential good, all the benefits of enlightenment and good governance may follow. These computer scientists, historians, and archivists see the information in *Unity's* computers, including the jettisoned Data Core, as the inalienable property of all mankind. The Legacy Initiative is designed for a late-game breakout in any of several directions, buoyed by advantages in efficiency, cultural output, and Probe defense.

⁴ The Shapers of Chiron and Shoichiro Nagao are original creations of Iron Talon.

How to Play

Racing the Darkness focuses on political, military, and diplomatic interactions between human factions and their environment, an alien planet. As in the original computer game, players explore, extract, expand, and, of course, exterminate the competition.

Each player assumes the role of a charismatic faction leader who directs a small community of human survivors in accordance with their particular ideology. Factions compete for access to resources, the allegiance of mission survivors, and to execute their respective agendas at the expense of everyone else.

A faction leader in theory directs all of the important activities of their followers, usually from a headquarters located in the faction's headquarters. Of course, for a variety of reasons, including the mediation of subordinates and the unreliability of communications equipment, it may be impossible for the leader to exert their influence perfectly in every situation.

To resolve the conflicts that will arise as we tell our shared tale, we will use rules inspired by something called Matrix Games.⁵ Invented by Chris Engle as simple guidelines for simulating competition between nation-states, Matrix Games are widely used by NATO militaries and university researchers to think about humanitarian crises, civil wars, and multilateral bargaining. Matrix Games build on a legacy of professional wargames that goes back to the nineteenth century and the Royal Prussian Army. Each player in a Matrix Game assumes a particular role with pre-defined objectives and unique resources that they can use to influence the game mechanics and each other. A referee provides a set of common facts, exactly like a Dungeon Master in a roleplaying game, and adjudicates conflict with the world or between players.

Gameplay Overview

Gameplay resembles the discussion-based interaction typical of a tabletop simulation or role-playing game. Players react to the information provided by a narrator (here, the Game Director) and, using play aids that describe their available resources, issue instructions to their subordinates that lay out the immediate objectives they wish to achieve during the next turn.

⁵ You can learn more about Matrix Games from the *Wargame Developments Handbook*, by picking up a copy of the very recent John Curry pamphlet, [Matrix Games for Modern Wargaming Developments](#), or by visiting the [website](#) of Chris Engle.

The critical play aids are: (A) the player's individualized Faction Profile, which serves as a kind of character sheet identifying priorities, resources, and capabilities, and (B) the generic Orders Template, used to issue turn orders.

While resources can be *used*, capabilities affect the likelihood that particular actions will yield success.

Requirements to Participate

There are very few requirements to participate: regular Internet access, English language proficiency, a registered (free!) account on the [Alpha Centauri 2 forums](#), and about two to three hours per week of free time.

Gameplay Objective

Each faction strives to dominate the course of human development on Chiron so that its society ultimately reflects that faction's theories about what is necessary to survive, and thrive, in the aftermath of Earth's destruction.

Secret win conditions are provided to each player as part of the Faction Briefing provided at the start of the game. Players win the game by fulfilling all of their faction's win conditions.

Faction Profile

A Faction Profile is like the character sheet used for a roleplaying game or the stats on the back of a baseball card. Each Profile includes:

- A biography of the faction leader, including a personal history, psychological insights, and a brief explanation of what they did during the *Unity* Crisis.
- Details about your faction, including its all-important ideology.

Faction Ideology

A faction's animating ideology is explained in its unique answers to three fundamental questions about its outlook and agenda on Planet.

1	What is the fundamental truth of the universe?
2	Why did civilization on Earth fail?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | What is needed for the survival of the human species on Chiron? |
|---|---|

Faction Preferences

A faction's preferences are its "personality."

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | What is your faction's Affinity? |
| 2 | What is your faction's attitude toward artificial intelligence? |
| 3 | What is your faction's attitude toward the use of genetic engineering and cybernetics? |
| 4 | What is your faction's attitude toward religion, including its stance on humanity's chief religious text, <i>The Conclave Bible</i> ? |
| 5 | What is your faction's attitude toward the possibility of restoring contact with Earth? |
| 6 | What is your faction's free starting tech? |
| 7 | What is your faction's research priority? |

Governance Dashboard

Each faction is abstracted onto a radar chart that has thirteen (13) dimensions. Think of these dimensions as equivalent to the medical statistics that indicate faction health. They are:

- **Administration**, a reflection of the efficiency and effectiveness of your government. Superior administration results in a greater number of orders per turn.

- **Cohesion**, a reflection of social stability. Higher cohesion makes it more likely a faction leader's orders will be obeyed. If cohesion drops too low, units will defect, drones will revolt, and a faction will collapse into civil war.
- **Culture**, a reflection of the society's overall creative output. A high score increases a faction's appeal to its neighbors and has positive effects on cohesion.
- **Economy**, a measure of the faction's material wealth.
- **Population**, a measure of the faction's size. Larger populations result in a greater number of orders per turn.
- **Industry**, a measure of the faction's production output.
- **Morale**, a measure of the training quality and determination of a faction's combat units. Higher morale translates to improved battlefield performance.
- **Planet**, a measure of the faction's impact on the natural environment. Higher scores reflect stronger stewardship of Chiron. Factions with lower scores will face more ecological damage, fungal blooms, and xenofom attacks.
- **Police**, which represents the degree of restrictions on personal freedom and the amount of resources devoted to social control.
- **Probe**, a measure of a society's effectiveness in the clandestine arts.
- **Research**, a measure of the amount of effort directed toward technological and doctrinal advancement.
- **Support**, a measure of the amount of resources devoted to keeping military units in the field.

A faction is rated between one (1) and six (6) on each dimension at game start. A score of 1 represents very low performance, while a score of 6 is very high. ***Scores are relative to other factions collectively.*** Over time, these scores can be increased or decreased through your own actions, those of other factions, or as a result of story events.

When writing orders, players invoke a particular dimension and roll that many dice to determine an outcome. More on this later.

Turns

This is a turn-based game. Each **Turn** is equivalent to one solar month. Turns are processed by the referee on a weekly basis according to a pre-determined schedule.

Turn Sequence

A standard turn of play involves the following steps:

1. The referee posts a general update on the forum. The update contains information about what has happened since last turn. The update includes a deadline for players to submit orders.
2. The referee distributes private updates to players. These updates deal with subjects like production, research outcomes, and reports from faction subordinates.
3. Each turn, the referee assigns each player a random event and a random chit.
4. The referee may introduce world events at random. These are circumstances that affect all players, such as natural disasters, refugee flows, global cultural trends, and xenological changes.
5. Players conduct diplomacy and ask questions of the referee as they contemplate the best response to the problems facing their faction.
6. Players draft and submit faction orders by the deadline. Orders are instructions: they contain both the actions players wish for their factions to take, such as moving game pieces on the map, and rationales regarding why they should be expected to succeed, including because the player has spent faction resources.
7. Players write narrative updates
8. The turn sequence begins anew.

A full turn sequence for all players is called a **Round**.

The Orders System

Let's talk about how to get things done.

The Order Template

Factions receive three (3) orders each turn unless population size or administrative efficiency dictate otherwise.

Each order must be linked to an attribute on the Governance Dashboard. The number of that attribute is the amount of dice rolled against a contested outcome.

Use the following template to take actions:

Location: Where the order will be executed.

Action Description: The order.

Objective: The desired result.

Attribute dice:

Rationale 1: Commentary on why the player believes that the action would likely be successful.

Rationale 2: Commentary on why the player believes that the action would likely be successful.

Rationale 3: Commentary on why the player believes that the action would likely be successful.

Notes: Additional remarks, as needed.

The Pip System

To determine whether a given action is success, the Game Director uses a combination of die rolls and personal judgment based on the quality of the rationales provided. The Game Director uses the strength of rationales to calculate a target difficulty threshold. The player may inquire what the general difficulty level of a given action is, but will not know the target number. The approach used in *Racing the Darkness* is taken from the old West End Games d6 roleplaying game system.

Each attribute score translates directly into the amount of d6 rolled against the target difficulty number. When a faction rolls close to the target number, the Game Director exercises personal judgment and again applies the rationales to determine a result. When a faction rolls or argues well short of the threshold, the cost of failure is increased. When a faction rolls or argues well beyond the threshold, the fruits of success are increased.

One die is always a different color than the others. This is the “Wild Die.” A one (1) on the Wild Die cancels out your other highest roll. A six (6) on the Wild Die allows you to roll a second time, adding to your original score. This incentivizes players to take “safe” actions consistent with the strengths inherent to their faction design and social engineering choices while nevertheless opening the door to occasional bursts of unexpected greatness in other areas.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	THRESHOLD RANGE
Very Easy	1 to 5
Easy	6 to 10
Moderate	11 to 15

Difficult	16 to 20
Very Difficult	21 to 25
Heroic	26 to 30
Miraculous	31+

Exploration

A core part of Racing the Darkness is exploration. At Planetfall, the survivors know very little about what lies beyond the horizon.

Most exploration is done by moving pieces around the map. It is also possible to salvage survey data from wrecked supply pods and trade maps with other players.

Players move pieces during Step 4 of the turn sequence. The referee usually reports results during Step 2 of the following turn.

Searching for Salvage

A unit that does not move or fight during its turn may search for salvage in a given hex. That player then rolls on the *Unity Salvage Table* below.

Once a hex is searched for salvage, the referee marks it “clear” on the master map, although this information is otherwise known only to the faction that undertook the search.

Note that a hex cleared of *Unity Salvage* may still yield Battlefield Salvage after any fight, depending on the result.

Extraction

Unless they are part of a faction’s starting pieces, resources can be obtained in the following five ways:

1. Production at bases
2. Production by tile improvements
3. Trade
4. Salvage
5. Seizure

Bases also produce a unique output, culture, which is an expression of a faction’s ability to persuade others of the correctness of its ideology.

Resources and culture accumulate monthly (each turn) and are “paid out” as chits to each player in Step 2 of the turn sequence.

Expansion

Players found new bases to increase their production and expand their political borders.

Founding your first base

While each subsequent base begins with just 1 population, a faction’s initial base absorbs all of its starting Specialists. Each faction begins the game with between two and six Specialists.

Population growth

A base’s population grows with every 10 surplus Nutrients. For each new point of population gained, the base gains a new Specialist. This Specialist has a probability of appearing as a Citizen, Drone, or Talent. The formula that determines this for bases founded and continuously occupied by you is:

$$\# \text{ of Drones} = (\text{total base population} - 1) + \{(\text{total base population} - 2)/4\}$$

Additional Drones may appear as a result of faction bureaucracy. This is calculated using the formula:

$$\# \text{ of Bureaucracy Drones} = (\# \text{ of bases} \times 2) / [(8 \times (4 + \text{Efficiency Rating above } 0) \times 1.6)]$$

The maximum possible number of drones at a base is # of Drones + # of Bureaucracy Drones, up to the base’s total population.

The Drone population can be reduced by reducing the amount of population working base tiles and turning them into Artisans, Overseers, or Organizers.

Extermination⁶

Each piece (unit) has a set of values that define its capabilities in terms of attack, defense, movement, and special features.

Combat begins when an attacking piece or pieces (the attackers) move into a hex occupied or contested by an enemy unit (the defender), also called the target hex. The hex from which an attack originates is called the jump-off hex. If combat is initiated by two units attempting to move into the same hex, the attacker is the unit with the stronger force. If both sides are equal in power, flip a coin to determine the attacker.

⁶ Combat rules, including the Odds and Results Tables below, are from Jim Wallman, *War in Bini: The Civil War Crisis Megagame – How to Play* (2017).

Conflict is resolved through a combination of modified die-rolls (d6 base) and the judgement of the referee, using orders submitted by the players themselves. The attacker rolls on **Table 1 - Combat odds table**. The defender may increase their own combat value by spending War Stores. Combat outcomes are determined on **Table 2 - Combat results table**.

Combat Odds Table

Table 1 - Combat odds table

Modified Score	1:1	3:2	2:1	3:1	4:1 or more	Modified Score
1	LOSE	LOSE	LOSE	DRAW	DRAW	1
2	LOSE	DRAW	DRAW	DRAW	PYRRHIC WIN	2
3	DRAW	DRAW	DRAW	PYRRHIC WIN	DECISIVE WIN	3
4	DRAW	PYRRHIC WIN	PYRRHIC WIN	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	4
5	PYRRHIC WIN	DRAW	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	5
6	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	DECISIVE WIN	6

Combat Results Table

Table 2 - Combat results table

Result	Effect on Attacker	Effect on Defender	Other effects
LOSE	1 step loss	0 step loss	Defender holds field. Attackers retreats 1 hex. Defender gains 1 Battlefield Salvage.
DRAW	1 step loss	1 step loss	Defender holds field. Attacker returns to jump-off hex.
PYRRHIC WIN	1 step loss	1 step loss	Defender retreats 1 hex. Attacker gains 1 Battlefield Salvage.
DECISIVE WIN		1 step loss	Defender retreats 2 hexes. Attacker gains 1 Battlefield Salvage.

Victory Results

A unit that holds the field after combat gains 1 Battlefield Salvage.

Retreats

A retreat begins in the “jump-off” hex, which is the hex from which the attack originated.

A unit always retreats directly away from the attacking unit if able.

If a unit cannot retreat, such as because it is in an enemy Zone of Control, it takes an additional step loss.

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Affinities

An invention of diarist and U.N. Peacekeeping Forces leader Pravin Lal and appearing in his great multivolume opus, *Planet: A Social History*, affinities are an analytical shorthand for understanding the way in which a faction's ideology both orients and constrains its cultural and scientific development.

Purity

“Feeling is information: a reflection of lived experience, and ritual, our means of accessing it.”

– Factor Roshann Cobb, *Human Calculus*

Purity preaches that humanity will forever be defined by our experience in the cradle of "Old" Earth. History and biology compel us to tell its stories to our children. How else will they understand themselves, except in the context of Earth's gravity, elements, atmosphere, and tragedies?

Chiron is merely a place—a refuge of convenience. It is our right to remake it in Earth's image. Purists look forward to eliminating the "pestilential" xenofungus and replacing the local ecology. Shapers call this process "rebuilding." Purist societies suffer less from the social dislocation of pollution and terraformation, which is an accepted cost of their grand project.

Because Purists perceive a threat of arrested development should we become disconnected from the traditions, artifacts, and, yes, biological distinctiveness, inherited from our ancestors they are leery of robotics. In their view, something irreducible and perhaps ineffable is lost when metal or plastic replaces flesh. Technology is a necessary evil, but once a thing is released from Pandora's Box, it can rarely be put back inside. For this reason, we should think thrice before using it to alter ourselves, or allowing it to dominate our lives. Computers eliminate the feeling from decision, and they can never be held accountable. That isn't progress.

In the cultural domain, Purists prefer doctrine and ideology that presumes a fixed and corruptible human nature, in need of close and constant tending.

Supremacy

“There are only two watchwords of progress: ‘Stay out!’”

– Squire Oscar van de Graaf, *Manifesting Destinies*

Both Man and Planet alike bear changing in the honorable search for objective perfection. The simple goal of our species is to perpetuate itself—by any means necessary. Stronger is better. Faster is better. In our race against a pitiless universe, and indeed a hostile planet, we would hamstring ourselves to overlook any advantage. Supremacists embrace the possibility of social and ecological experimentation, which will serve as the forcing function to produce new insights about how now we must live.

Supremacists seek out the practical and efficacious. They are neither above the introduction of invasive species nor below giving way to Planet when adaptation would be less work than resistance. Humanity, too, is what Supremacists make of it. Machines are tools. Their use and sophistication can do nothing to invert the relationship between master and servant.

Change is appealing to Supremacists. Since growth is the chief yardstick of success, the familiar is contemptible to them. "Humanity" is a concept that can be redefined at whim.

“In the great commons at Gaia's Landing we have a tall and particularly beautiful stand of white pine, planted at the time of the first colonies. It represents our promise to the people, and to Planet itself, never to repeat the tragedy of Earth.”

– Lady Deirdre Skye, *Planet Dreams*

Harmony

Humanity, the intruder, must alert its rhythms to suit those of Chiron, or else perish in its obstinacy. The wisest understand that one does not merely make a home so much as

one is made by it. The trappings of Old Earth are useful only inasmuch as they can be relied upon to temporarily bridge the gap between mere survival and full-fledged integration into both the new Chironian biosphere and indeed the new rhythms of the life and society the colonists are building for themselves.

Harmony says little about the utility of artificial intelligence, but persons inclined to Harmony usually wish to experience Planet directly and prize the role of intuition and emotion in guiding human affairs. Like Purists, Harmonists think machines make poor replacements for biological systems, which have been proving themselves for far longer.

Factions that promote Harmony usually practice lifestyles that require them to avoid inflicting traumas on the natural environment. They are also, on the whole, fairly sympathetic to the nonconformist. For a Harmonist, the defining feature of a system is that it is meaningful to the user rather than that it is predictable, or even successful. Folkways are inherently legitimate as an expression of self, which can be as important as allegiance to an illusory "public-interest" objectivity.

Resources

“Resources exist to be consumed. And consumed they will be, if not by this generation, then by some future. By what right does this forgotten future seek to deny us our birthright? None I say! Let us take what is ours, chew and eat our fill.”

– CEO Nwabudike Morgan, *The Ethics of Greed*

Factions may produce, capture, or salvage *goods* that can be used or traded. Various technologies and base facilities improve resource output.

Natural Resources

Factions require four basic natural resources to colonize Planet. Each map hex yields at least one, and perhaps all, of the four *natural* resources.

Natural resources can be harvested in one of two ways:

1. If a resource-bearing hex falls within the production radius of one of your bases, as well as in your territory, it can be worked by available population.
2. If you transport accumulated resources from a tile improvement to a one of your bases.

Water

Water is a basic requirement for human life. Colonies need it for drinking first and foremost, but it is also vital to irrigation and industry. Liquid water is found in abundance on Chiron, but its heavy metal content is usually high enough to pose a severe danger to human health. In order to be rendered useful, this *exowater* must be treated. Failing that, colonists can drink the very small supply of packaged water carried aboard *Unity*.

Colonies can obtain *exowater* from aquifers, springs, rivers, and lakes, both permanent and seasonal, as well as by collecting rainfall in basins, catchments, or other traps. In arid regions, moisture farming and strict conservation measures may be necessary.

On the world map, certain tile improvements can only be built if they are adjacent to a watered hex. Bases and tile improvements accumulate water, which is used for both upkeep and production.

Nutrients

At first, survivors will have no choice but to consume the rations they brought with them. Over time, however, they may seek to expand their diet by planting crops and raising

domesticated livestock, both terrestrial and native. Building greenhouses, farms, aquafarms, and plantations can ensure a predictable supply of food for your colonies. But be warned: agriculture is dangerous. Biological containment failures can have unpredictable and catastrophic consequences for the local environment.

Nutrients are required for upkeep—literally, feeding your people. Surplus nutrients contribute to population growth.

Minerals

Minerals represent the raw materials, including metals, combustibles, rare earths, industrial gases, and lumber, that used to build finished products, including base facilities, units, and war stores. Strip mines, pit mines, quarries, timber camps, and boreholes are improvements that can be built to enhance a faction's mineral production.

Minerals are used for upkeep and production.

Energy

Energy powers your economy. It is also used as currency. Energy is available from a variety of renewable and non-renewable sources. Build echelon mirrors, geothermal traps, dams, turbines, wind farms, and other power plants to generate energy, and industrial-scale batteries to store it.

On the world map, certain tile improvements require a direct path to energy supplies. Energy is used for upkeep, production, and as currency. As you might imagine, energy is also the “food” of a faction's robot subjects.

Strategic Resources

Goods

Goods consist of equipment and materials produced or found by the factions.

Emergency Supplies

Shelf-stable rations, packaged water, air tanks, rudimentary antibiotics, airtight shelters, and basic rescue gear. Emergency Supplies are obtained by salvaging *Unity* wreckage or plundering enemy bases. Players can use them to make up nutrient shortfalls, convert outposts into friendly bases, and heal damaged Infantry-class pieces. Emergency Supplies are the most common spoils of early exploration and battlefield victory. Emergency Supplies appear on the map as a loaded Scout Rover with stats of 1-1-3.

Medical Supplies

Complex pharmaceuticals and specialized diagnostic and surgical tools normally found in well-appointed settings, including surgical robots. Medical Supplies are occasionally awarded for successful salvage missions but can also be produced at a hospital facility following discovery of Biostatics. Medical Supplies appear on the map as a Mobile Surgery with stats 0-0-2. The Surgery can be moved to a neutral or allied base for trade or conversion to a Dreaming Den. When garrisoned in a friendly base, the same unit will provide a morale buff for as long as it is present. Combined with a Probe Team, a Mobile Surgery can be used to implement a Nerve Staple policy at any friendly base. Both the Peacekeeping Forces and the Dreamers of Chiron begin with 1 Medical Supplies each—an expression of their very different philosophies regarding drugs and their benefits.

Research Pods

Self-contained datalinks libraries or modular science stations fully equipped to study the new world. Taken to a friendly base, they can be connected to a Network Node for a free Tech advance of a tier equal to or less than the highest tier of the faction's progress along the discovery tree. Taken to a neutral or allied base, they may be sold, bartered, or gifted.

Trade Goods

Manufactured objects or consumables with explicitly commercial or recreational purposes. Examples of trade goods include hand tools, construction materials, computer terminals, entertainment software, cooking spices, and reading material. Trade goods appear on the map as a *Unity Crawler* with stats 0-0-2.

War Stores

The consumable supplies and equipment necessary to keep military units operating in the field. They include small arms and ammunition, crew-served weapons, medical supplies, body armor, communications gear, uniforms, and all the other implements and paraphernalia of violence. Militia can operate at no cost, but all other units must consume at least one War Store each turn while outside a base or face steep penalties to combat effectiveness and movement range. **War Stores** appear on the map as a Crawler with stats 0-0-2.

War Stores must be spent both to attack *and* to defend without a supply penalty.

War Stores can be spent for the following purposes:

- To pay the cost of combat during a turn

- To increase the die roll of an engaged unit by +1⁷
- To rebuild damaged units at a rate of 3 War Stores per step lost⁸
- In trade

Salvage

There are two types of salvage in *Racing the Darkness*.

Unity Salvage

Approximately thirty standard Earth days passed between the time that *Unity* entered the Alpha Centauri star system and the micrometeorite collision. A portion of *Unity's* crew and cargo deployed in advance of the main expedition and had already been on the ground for weeks before the micrometeorite collision and subsequent mutiny. However, *Unity's* automated systems also deployed hundreds of unmanned supply pods during this window. Many hundreds more were deployed manually during the evacuation by factions hoping to recover the cargoes within at some point after Planetfall.

Supply pods were made according to more than two dozen different designs and loaded with any of a thousand payloads, including colonists still in cold sleep. Pods were equipped with numerous systems including parachutes, internal crash restraints, retro-thrusters, and shock-absorbing bladders to protect their precious contents during atmospheric reentry, descent, and landing. As designed, they were also supposed to be hermetically sealed, capable of flotation and self-righting in water, and equipped with a self-activating, multiband homing beacon to alert the colonists to their location.

Like certain systems on the *Unity* itself, equipment contained in the pods was loaded over the course of more than seven *decades*, meaning that colonists can find themselves handling technology older than themselves.

Battlefield Salvage

Supplies and equipment recovered from a battlefield by the victorious force.

⁷ The unit must not be facing a supply penalty due to inadequate War Stores.

⁸ Destroyed units cannot be restored using War Stores.

Research

Each base and certain tile improvements contribute research output toward technological and doctrinal advances that enable new construction or social choices.

Two types of discovery are possible in Racing the Darkness:

1. **Technologies** are discoveries that lead directly to material improvements or empirical knowledge about the physical world. These are practical advancements made mostly in laboratory settings.
2. **Doctrines** are sets of beliefs or teachings that combine theory, history, and practice, leading societies to change how they behave.

Put simply, technologies are useful facts that help you to make better things, whereas doctrines are useful ideas that help your society to perform certain tasks more efficiently and effectively. Examples of technologies include penicillin, transistors, and the recumbent bicycle. Examples of doctrine include the Social Contract, blitzkrieg warfare, and the "Broken Windows" theory of policing.

Each of the hundreds of possible technological and doctrinal advances in RtD is organized along one of nine interwoven research paths. Just like the scientists at Bell Labs, your approach to research is guided: you might not be sure exactly how your experiments will turn out, but you know enough to choose where to spend your energies in the expectation that you're barking up the right tree. Technological advances are often incremental: one breakthrough creates the foundation for another. Therefore, as in the original game, your research horizons will be hemmed by your ignorance, only expanding gradually with each new dram of knowledge gained. Factions receive bonuses for conducting research on the paths they prefer based on their ideologies, but players will find it necessary to pursue many paths in order to be successful.

Nine research paths

The nine research paths help players to make informed choices about what kinds of discoveries they wish to prioritize.

- The **Build** path deals with advances in materials science and engineering. Discoveries along this path are most-useful for base-building and production.
- The **Discover** path deals with the Newtonian and Terran life sciences, including descriptive neurology and psychology. This path unlocks important advances for faction health.

- The **Connect** path features advances in information technology--computers, the data they process, and artificial intelligence. This path contains advances that boost overall research output, improve Probe Team performance, and help you to manage your Robot subjects.
- The **Explore** track is about engagement with the Chironian physical and life sciences. This path helps a faction better understand Planet--and, perhaps, to better steward (or exploit) its secrets.
- The **Conquer** set of technologies and doctrines has direct battlefield applications.
- The **Expand** path is all about discoveries and thinking that facilitate population growth and mobility.
- The **Command** path is about imposing social control over human subjects.
- The **Choose** path deals with the ethical challenges of tomorrow: how to use different technology to reorganize society.
- The **Unity** path is a short branch dealing with the Terran technologies that equipped the original mission. These technologies can be salvaged from *Unity* wreckage as well as researched in the classical manner.

Calculating research progress

The formula for calculating research progress for any player is as follows:

$$\text{Research Cost} = [11 + (\{\# \text{ of breakthroughs previously made by you} \times 6\} / 5) - (\# \text{ of turns passed since game start} / 8) - (\# \text{ of most techs discovered by any faction} - \{\# \text{ of breakthroughs previously made by you} / 5\})] \times \# \text{ of breakthroughs previously made by you} \times 1.6$$

Tile Improvements

Improvements not in the radius of a base stockpile produce resources until they are retrieved. Nutrients not retrieved at the end of a turn are lost to spoilage.

Automated mine

An unmanned dig. Produces +1 minerals/turn.

Botanical gardens

Greenhouse

Hunting camp

Nutrient farm

Produces +1 nutrients/turn. Irrigation increases yield to +1 nutrients/turn.

Minefield

Outpost

Purifier

Research station

Produces  research/turn.

Timber cut

Products +1 trade goods/turn.

Solar collectors

Produces +1 energy/turn.

If built outside the radius of a base, solar collectors are linked by a cable following the shortest possible route. If a hex with a cable passing through it is occupied by an enemy unit, the cable is cut and the yield is lost until the cable is repaired.

Sweetwater well

Thumper

Native units must move 1 hex closer each turn.

Work barge

Social Engineering

A faction's subjects are organized by class and specialization.

Each point of population is equivalent to approximately one thousand subjects.

Classes

Citizens

The typical worker, fully vested in society. Citizens exclusively work base tiles. Happier citizens produce greater yields.

Drones

"Social undesirables." These workers have the fewest rights, virtually no education, and often perform the most dangerous jobs. "Drone" is a pejorative term that covers indentured servants, prisoners, and anyone who has been nerve-stapled. Nerve-stapling causes severe (and often irreversible) brain damage, dramatically reducing cognitive, executive, and motor function. Drones engage primarily in unskilled labor. A nerve-stapled drone suffers severe production penalties.

They work base tiles. Drones are 50% less-productive than Citizens, with a minimum yield of one resource per hex worked.

Robots

Mechanical servants. Robots work base tiles. Robots consume energy in lieu of nutrients. Robots have a lower labor potential than citizens but are impervious to cultural drift.

Specials

Also called Augments or Perfects, are individuals with significant genetic and cybernetic enhancements that enable them to operate at significantly above human performance levels both mentally and physically. These individuals would qualify as genius-level Olympic athletes on Earth. A Special produces +1 yield of every resource type available in a worked hex.

Talents

Persons with standout educational and professional attainment. These individuals usually filled officer's billets on the Unity crew or else enjoyed management positions in the expedition. All faction leaders are Talents at game start. Talents are usually supervisory personnel or sole contributors in fields such as medicine, engineering, science, and the law.

Specialization

Each base has upkeep requirements that must be met to prevent starvation. Prudent governors will also wish to keep construction queues and production lines moving swiftly. However, given a surplus, some residents of each base can be made specialists.

Administrator

A bureaucrat tasked with serving the public. Administrators improve base efficiency.

Awakened⁹

The Planet-touched. Empaths who contribute to a faction's doctrinal and environmental output.

Librarians

Data scientists responsible for interfacing with mainframe computers. Librarians increase a faction's research output.

Technician

Skilled laborers.

Thinkers

Human computers with intense training in formal logic and systems analysis, sometimes aided by psychotropic drugs. Thinkers increase a faction's doctrinal output and base Probe defense.

Medicos

One who has received training and certification in any of the numerous fields of human care.

Officers

When military and civil defense professionals are present in the society, there are observable benefits to collective morale, social order, and the quality of advice received by the government. Officers increase a faction's pool of Action Points and add a point of **veterancy** to military units produced in the base where they reside.

Organizers

Organizers help optimize the use of labor through collaboration rather than coercion. The price of working with Organizers is that base operators' hands are tied: a certain number of issues sent to arbitration will be settled in favor of citizens, not faction elites.

⁹ This idea is from Yashugan00.

Overseers

Supervisors responsible to keep drones and robots in line. Overseers increase social stability and Probe defense at the cost of morale.

Reading the Faction Profile

Once faction claims have been decided, each player will receive a Faction Profile containing a leader biography, faction-specific resources, and other essential information.

Faction Name

This is what your faction is called by others.

Leader Bio

Basic leader bios, including personal histories and the notes from mandatory psych evaluations, are publicly-available information.

Goals

The secret win conditions for your faction, corresponding to your leader's particular ideology.

Affinity

A shorthand way to understand your faction's cultural values.

Research priority

The specific branch, or branches, favored by your faction. Research along a favored path proceeds more quickly.

Starting discoveries

The technology and/or doctrines already known to the faction at game start.

Action Points

Action Points represent the number of operations that a faction may perform each round. Operations include building base facilities, influencing non-player entities, and moving units. Each faction's pool of Action Points replenishes automatically at the end of a round.

Action Point totals are a reflection of each faction's administrative skill. Once the game begins, Action Point totals can be increased by improving the political cohesion of your faction, investing in communications technology, and improving your espionage capabilities.

Influence Points

Influence Points are a megagame concept. They “represent a combination of political argument, personal favors, media and information operations, intimidation, and promises.”¹⁰ Factions with exceptionally charismatic leaders or uniquely open societies start the game with more Influence Points.

Influence Points may be used for the following purposes:

- Bidding for political control of a non-player settlement or population;
- Affecting the loyalty of a player settlement or population;
- Persuading non-player actors to do something you want, such as agreeing to deals or demands;
- As currency to trade with other players; and
- Other uses that seem reasonable or consistent with reality.

Players may conduct diplomacy with each other, or with non-player factions, at any time and for free, but they may only spend or trade Influence by taking an action.

Influence points cost **X** credits each.

Special Action cards

Each faction has a hand of unique, **single-use** cards that can be played by the player at any time to gain the printed benefit.

Goods

Some factions start with a stockpile of goods.

Pieces

Each faction begins the game with a selection of units. These will usually be a

¹⁰ Jim Wallman, *War in Bini: The Civil War Crisis Megagame – How to Play* (2017), p. 7.

Appendices

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Gameplay Tips

Use the precepts of Live Action Roleplay to improve your experience.

1. For the purposes of writing orders, if it is reasonable to expect that your faction would have something, assume you do. If you are wrong, there will be an opportunity for correction before it becomes an issue.
2. With some notable exceptions (and they will know who they are), guns are rare at the time of Planetfall. People who know how to use guns well are rarer still.
3. Always be asking questions.
4. Talk to other players. Be a friend to make a friend.
5. Don't be ruled by fear. Take it from me: a spectacular flameout that leaves a lasting mark on the story will be far more fun than a lonely game of defense.

Social Engineering Table

	Prerequisite Discovery	Can work tiles?	Bonus to...								
			ACTION POINTS	DOCTRINAL RESEARCH	ECON	LAB	PSYCH	MORALE	POLICE	PLANET	OTHER
Administrator	Operations Research	No									
Awakened	Centauri Empathy	No		+1							
Citizen		Yes			+2						
Drone		Yes			+1						
Librarian	Mainframe Computing	No									
Liquidator	Centauri Conservation	No									removes pollution; prevents fungal blooms within base production radius
Medico	Austere Medicine	No									
Officer	Doctrine: Initiative	No									
Organizer	Doctrine: Syndicalism	No									
Overseer	Doctrine: Command	No									double drone limit
Robot	Robotics	Yes									
Special	Homo Superior	Yes	+1	+1	+1						
Synthesizer	Mind/Machine Interface	No									
Talent		Yes		+1	+1						
Technician		Yes			+3						
Thinker	Mnemonic Techniques	No	+1	+2							

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