

Guidebook for Special Forces Soldiers

Special Forces soldiers within this setting are elite individuals who serve the Imperial Army in roles calling for capability above and beyond that of a typical Army infantryman or Marine, and beyond that of even the Rangers. They engage in a variety of missions, from special recon to combat search and rescue to direct action. They utilize some of the best equipment the Empire has to offer, working closely with Combat Mages to execute the will of the Imperial body.

Chapter 1: Character Options

Building your character and your squad:

An operational squad is lead by either an NCO or Officer of Rank 3-4. It comprises a number of enlisted men and women, based on the template below, fulfilling a variety of roles depending on the situation. Special operatives are cross-trained in a wide assortment of equipment, allowing any one soldier in the squad to fulfill any required role. Specialists are individuals with enhanced training in a narrow field and normally are the primary operator of a given role. Due to the wide base of training in the basic template below, combat roles can be changed up between players with relative ease.

One example of how a squad could be equipped is this:

- Officer or NCO, probably carrying a rifle with grenade launcher
- 2IC, probably an NCO, carrying a rifle with a grenade launcher, possibly with comms, if required
- Assault infantryman, carrying a rifle and some kind of rocket launcher, likely a specialist
- A support weaponner, like a marksman or a machine gunner, likely a specialist, using select gear
- A designated patrol medic, carrying a rifle and some level of medical supplies and training

How your squad is equipped is ultimately up to the players to decide. A wide range of military hardware - basically anything that's plausible for light infantry - is available in a number of sourcebooks.

Specialist packages for certain combat roles are not required to fulfil that tactical position. They help by making you better than you already start off, but one could just as easily take the Linguist specialization and fulfill the role of squad automatic rifleman, or be the squad's IT specialist and find themselves also serving as patrol medic, or opt to take no specialization package and find themselves as the grenadier.

Notes on Rank:

Rank as given in GURPS is not by default very granular. Alternative systems exist, but are really not necessary. To get an idea of what the five different rank options available represent, view this forum thread: <http://forums.sjgames.com/showthread.php?t=4535>

If players choose to utilize a more granular rank system, they are free to suggest it for implementation.

Useful Resources for Soldiers:

Since you are a quasi-modern-era combat soldier, the two most useful books to you will be **GURPS: Tactical Shooting** and **GURPS Basic Set**. Both of these together will give you all the mechanics required for playing out gun battles on the tabletop. Additionally, **GURPS High Tech** can give you some insights on modern military grade hardware and upgrades for them.

Special Forces Soldier (240 points)

This template represents a basic graduate of special forces training. It has points in a wide base of skills, and good attributes. It is adapted from the SEAL template from GURPS SEALs in Vietnam. This represents the minimum a graduate has when he or she makes it out of training but does not pursue or excel in another specialization field and does not make NCO or Officer.

Attributes: ST 12 [20]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+2; BL 29 lbs.; HP 12 [0]; Will 14 [5]; Per 13 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 6.25 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0].

Advantages:

- Fit [5]
- Security Clearance ("Need to know" military and operational secrets beyond normal rank clearance) [5]
- Style Familiarity: IAMAS [1] (3 Points Known)
- 20 points chosen from additional ST or HT, Reputation (Decorations, SEALs p. 14), Military Rank 0-2, Talents or other Advantages befitting an elite combat soldier.

Disadvantages:

- Duty (The Empire, 15 or less; Extremely Hazardous) [-20]
- -30 points chosen from various disadvantages befitting an elite combat soldier.

Primary Skills:

- Armoury/TL8 (Small Arms) (A) IQ [2]-13
- Brawling (E) DX [1]-13 (Part of IAMAS)
- Camouflage (E) IQ [1]-13
- Electronics Operation/TL8 (Comm) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Explosives/TL8 (Demolition) (A) IQ [2]-13
- Fast-Draw/TL8 (Ammo) (E) DX [1]-13
- First Aid/TL8 (E) IQ [1]-13
- Guns/TL8 (Rifle) (E) DX+2 [4]-15
- Guns/TL8 (pick two from LMG, Pistol, Shotgun, or SMG) (E) DX+2 [3]-15*
- Judo (H) DX-2 [1]-11 (Part of IAMAS)
- Navigation/TL8 (Land) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Observation (A) Per [2]-13
- Parachuting/TL8 (E) DX [1]-13
- Running (A) HT [2]-12
- Savoir-Faire (Military) (E) IQ [1]-13
- Soldier/TL8 (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- Stealth (A) DX [2]-13
- Survival (Woodland) (A) IQ [2]-13
- Survival (Jungle) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Survival (Desert) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Survival (Mountain) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Swimming (E) HT+2 [4]-14
- Tactics (H) IQ [4]-13
- Throwing (A) DX-1 [1]-12
- Traps/TL8 (A) IQ-1 [1]-12.

Secondary Skills:

- Artillery/TL8 (Cannon) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Bicycling (E) DX [1]-13
- Breath Control (H) HT-2 [1]-10
- Cartography/TL8 (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Climbing (A) DX [2]-13
- Explosives/TL8 (EOD) (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Forced Entry (E) DX [1]-13
- Forward Observer/TL8 (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Gunner/TL8 (Machine Gun) (A) DX-1 [1]-12
- Guns/TL8 (GL) (E) DX+1 [2]-14
- Guns/TL8 (LAW) (E) DX [1]-13
- Guns/TL8 (pick two from LMG, Pistol, Shotgun, or SMG) (E) DX+1 [1]-14*
- Hiking (A) HT [2]-12
- Interrogation (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-13
- Jumping (E) DX [1]-13
- Knife (E) DX [1]-13 (Part of IAMAS)
- Knot-Tying (E) DX [1]-13
- NBC-Suit/TL8 (A) DX-1 [1]-12
- Scrounging (E) Per [1]-13
- Tracking (A) Per-1 [1]-12

Background Skills:

- Driving/TL8 (Automobile) (A) DX-1 [1]-12;
- Optional Specialization Package

Spend the balance of (8 points - your Specialization Package) on hobby skills or further professional skills to personalize your character. These could be anything, from horse riding to martial arts styles.

Techniques:

- Immediate Action (Guns/TL8 (Rifle)) (A) [2]-13†
- Two levels of Immediate Action (Guns/TL (choose from Grenade Launcher, LAW, LMG, Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, or SMG) and/or Gunner/TL (Machine Gun))†
- Rappelling (A) [1]-13
- Set Trap (H) [2]-12
- HALO/HAHO (Parachuting/TL8) (H) [5]-12

* Default from Guns/TL8 (Rifle).

† See GURPS High-Tech.

Specialization Packages:

These are optional “upgrades” for your character that represent more advanced training in various roles. You can spend up to 8 points in these specializations. If you intend to be an NCO, you have to select a Specialization.

Machine Gunner: 3 - 7 Points

- Increase Gunner/TL8 (Machine Gun) to 13 (DX) [1]
- Add Armoury/TL8 (Heavy Weapons) (A) IQ [2]-13
- OR Increase Guns (LMG) to DX+3 [8 - current]-16 instead

Grenadier: 2 Points

- Increase Guns (GL) to DX+2 [2]

Assault Infantryman:

- Increase Guns (LAW) to DX+2 [3]

Information Systems Technician: 4 Points

- Add Computer Operation/TL8 (E) IQ+1 [2]-14
- Increase Electronics Operation/TL8 (Comm) to 13 (IQ) [1]

Radioman (RM): 3 Points

- Increase Electronics Operation/TL8 (Comm) to 14 (IQ+1) [3]

Photographer: 4 Points

- Add Photography/TL8 (A) IQ+1 [4]-14

Electronics Technician (Pick and add one of the following): 4 Points

- Electronics Repair/TL8 (Comm) (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- Electronics Repair/TL8 (EW) (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- Electronics Repair/TL8 (Sensors) (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- Electronics Repair/TL8 (Security) (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- Electronics Repair/TL8 (Surveillance) (A) IQ+1 [4]-14
- NOTE: Should add Operation pairing (with default) or convert to Operation alone (getting default for repairs)? Goal of this is the guy who disables these items as well as deploys them

Patrol Medic: 8 Points

- Increase First Aid/TL8 to 16 (IQ+2) [4]
- Add Surgery/TL8 (VH) IQ-1 [4]-12

Linguist: 4 OR 5 Points

- Add <Language> Accented/Accented [4]
- Optional: Add Cultural Familiarity for a culture of the chosen language [1]

Demolition Specialist: 6 Points

- Increase Explosives (Demolition) to 15 (IQ+2) [6]

Marksman: 8 Points

- Increase Guns/TL8 (Rifle) to 17 (DX+4) [8]

Lenses:

Like Specialization packages, these lenses are also optional. Likely (but not exclusively), only one officer would be in the player group, and there's likely only one or two NCO's as well.

Commissioned Officer (+38 or 43 points)

You are trained as an officer. Officers typically completed Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) training while in college, or completed Officer Candidate School (OCS) after college. After volunteering, you were trained with the enlisted. Officers are expected to be able to do everything an enlisted man could do, only better. Many officers come from more affluent families, which themselves tend to have a history of military officership and or mage-bearing. To simulate a "risen through the ranks" style officer, take both this and the NCO lens.

Add the following:

- Military Rank 3 or 4 [15 or 20 points]
- Administration (A) IQ [2]-13
- History (Imperial) (H) IQ-2 [1]-11
- Intelligence Analysis/TL8 (H) (IQ-2) [1]-11
- Leadership (A) IQ [2]-13
- Mathematics/TL8 (H) IQ-2 [1]-11
- Navigation/TL8 (Land) (A) IQ [2]-13
- Research/TL8 (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Writing (A) IQ-1 [1]-12

Additionally, spend 8 points on skills related to a course of study (including a possible major, a minor, and/or additional studies), chosen among the additional skills listed above and the following:

- Biology/TL8 (VH) IQ
- Economics (H) IQ
- Engineer/TL8 (many specializations) (H) IQ
- History (any) (H) IQ
- Physics/TL8 (VH) IQ
- Politics (A) IQ

Finally, spend 6 points on advantages or other background skills. Officers tend to have better hand to hand skills, and many have trained in smallsword or sabre styles like their Mage overlords, for example.

NCO [+12, 17, 22, or 27 points]:

You are trained as a noncommissioned officer.

- Add Military Rank 3-4 [15-20]
- Add Administration (A) IQ-1 [1]-12
- Add Leadership (A) IQ [2]-13
- Add 4 more points in the skills of your Specialization

IAMAS (Imperial Army Martial Arts System) 4 Points

IAMAS is the official martial arts system taught to the Imperial Army. Special forces units, having completed Army Basic Training, carry these skills. Many choose to further hone them beyond the requirements bestowed on them by basic training. It includes basic unarmed hand to hand and knife fighting. More advanced classes teach combat with field-issue machete and advanced bayonet. Of course, many would be Special Operatives study styles of their own, from wing-chun kung fu to kendo.

Skills:

- Brawling
- Judo
- Knife

Techniques:

- Disarming (Judo)
- Elbow Strike
- Knee Strike
- Stamp Kick
- Targeted Attack (Stamp Kick/Face)
- Targeted Attack (Stamp Kick/Skull)
- Retain Weapon (Rifle)
- Ground Fighting (Brawling or Judo)

Perks:

- Improvised Weapons (Brawling)

Optional Traits:

Advantages:

- Combat Reflexes
- Fit or Very Fit

Disadvantages:

- Bloodlust
- Overconfidence

Skills:

- Shortsword
- Spear

Techniques:

- Targeted Attack (Spear Thrust/Neck)
- Targeted Attack (Spear Thrust/Vitals)

Chapter 2: Equipment Examples

While there is a wide variety of equipment available to the Special Operative, each fulfilling its own niche, a selection of equipment represents the standard issue. These are the preferred combat arms, at least on paper. Actual practice, as usual, varies based on the unit.

Basic Infantry Weapons

The basic infantry weapon is the FN MK 16 series - called the SCAR or SCAR-L. Though some might argue that this series enjoys deployment only due to political meddling, it is nonetheless the standard arm throughout the Army Special Operations forces. The basic rifle can be field modified into a carbine variant, LSW variant or a precision rifle variant, all of which are widely used. It is issued stock with a collimating sight, allowing for easier target acquisition, and fires 5.56mm rounds either singly or on full automatic. Several other attachments, like grenade launchers, foregrips and laser dot sights, can also be fitted. Unfortunately, it cannot mount a bayonet.

The MK 17 Mod 0 is a similar rifle firing larger rounds, but it is not widely deployed for reasons unknown. It is usually called the SCAR-H. It fits all the same attachments as the SCAR-L, and it can mount a bayonet.

Precision Rifles

The basic precision rifle is an augmented FN MK 16. Commonly referred to as a "Sniper Variant", this is not a true sniper rifle. Instead, it is a marksman's rifle, meaning it is more similar to the basic infantry weapon than not. This is a SCAR fitted with a longer barrel and a 4x sight to extend the squad's effective range.

For heavier long range support, the SCAR-H "Sniper Variant" is sometimes deployed. It has an even longer barrel and fires 7.62mm rounds, though it fits fewer in its magazine than the SCAR-L.

While not standard issue for them, the .50 caliber Anti-Materiel rifles have found their way into the hands of squad designated marksmen. These powerful weapons are the providence of dedicated snipers, designed to destroy engine blocks and key enemy assets. How they have come into the hands of squad designated marksmen is unknown.

Squad Automatic Rifles

The most common Squad Automatic Rifle is the FN MK 16 Squad Automatic Rifle (SCAR-L-SAR) variant. This is a SCAR-L with a longer, heavier barrel and extended magazines. Sizes range from 45 rounds (uncommon) to 100 round drums (most common). For reasons of heat dissipation, these usually feature foregrips and are usually issued bipods.

The decades old FN Minimi, usually just referred to as the Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) can still be found in some units. Unlike regular Army combat unit issue SAW's, these have folding stocks for greater portability. Performance is similar to the now more common SCAR-L-SAR, though it fits a larger 200 round box magazine.

For heavy duty squad support, the FN MAG, a 7.62mm machine gun, can be found. It features longer range than the Minimi or SCAR-L-SAR, and is fed by a 100 box.

For serious assaults, the venerable .50 BMG firing M2 Machine Gun is still held in reserve. This weapon

is rarely issued in the modern day, but stills sees service in some Direct Action missions.

Grenade Launchers

The M320 (use M203 stats) is the standard grenade launcher. Attached under the SCAR rifle, it can fire the full range of 40mm grenades.

The M79 "Thumper" grenade launcher, though ancient, is still popular due to it's greater reliability and superior "feel". Like the M320, it can fire the full range of 40mm grenades.

Sidearms

Most Operators are issued the FN 5.7mm pistol. Like the rest of the current issue equipment, political meddling is often named as the reason for it's issue. Originally specified to be a 5.56mm pistol capable of exchanging ammunition with the squad's primary weapon, adjustments during the design process resulted in a completely different outcome. It performs favorably against body armor due to it's unique round design, but has mixed reviews in the field. It fires the same round as the P90, which resulted in the latter's consideration for deployment before the selection of the 5.56mm rifle.

The USP .40 caliber pistol is a common alternative to the FN 5.7mm. It does not perform as well against armored opponents, but is more favorably received by Operators due to it's increased stopping power against the more common unarmored targets.

The IMI .50 caliber pistol, originally purchased as a potential replacement to the older 9mm pistol (replaced my the 5.7mm instead), still occasionally finds itself drawn out of supply. Heavy and unapologetic, it may break your wrist but it will never fail to down what it strikes.

Some of the old 9mm handguns still find their way around, though most have been mothballed. These are most popular with units opting for the MP5, due to interchangeability of rounds.

Submachine Guns

Submachine guns were never popular in the Army, nor in it's Special Operations detachments. Here and again the class is evaluated as a replacement for the carbine, but time and again it is rejected. Still, a number of models still circulate, kept in reserve for niche deployments. Most common are:

The FN P90 was evaluated recently. Conveniently firing the same 5.7mm round as the Force's standard firearm, it is a compact, high rate of fire weapon with a reputation for good performance against armored opponents. It's built in reflex sight is well received, as is it's 50 round capacity magazine.

The MP7, a very compact weapon platform, was another recent contender in the Army as a vehicle crew weapon, but was rejected. The stock eventually made it's way to Special Operation's store.

The MP5 series, which serves as the main-line submachine gun until today, was originally evaluated as a full replacement for the rifle. It failed, but it still sees use in MOUNT and recon deployed elements. The fact that it fired the same 9mm round as the old sidearm kept it in circulation.

Shotguns

The M26 MASS is the most commonly issued shotgun. This is a multi purpose shotgun capable of being mounted to the SCAR. It's primary use is for door-breaching, but anti-personnel rounds are still issued on request.

The USAS-12 is another shotgun that finds itself in limited circulation. It is selective fire.

Close-combat weapons

The primary weapon of an Operator is his rifle, but on occasion close order weapons are deployed.

The M9 combat utility knife is the standard issue. Formerly serving as a bayonet on the last series of rifle, it no longer fulfills this purpose. It is a well made, tough and dependable knife that can take a very fine edge.

The M4 Combat Machete is another tough and dependable close combat weapon. Primarily designed to augment e-tools in clearing brush and constructing defenses, it nonetheless has seen deployment in combat, particularly in dense jungle or woodland environments. Some instructors teach a more regimented manner of deployment, especially to units being deployed to dense terrain.

Body Armor

A wide assortment of body armor is available to the Operator, ranging from light and flexible kevlar vests to full body harness covering head to shin and featuring ceramic trauma plates. The latter, called the Reinforced Infantry Armor System (RIAS) is standard for heavy operations, though sees more frequent use in regular infantry units.

As of this year, hydraulic-assist powered armor units are being field tested as a means of carrying heavier firepower in the squad without sacrificing speed or carrying capacity.