Jet engines scream through the smog overhead and tonight’s greasy rain on your mirror shades smears the scavenged neon of High Street Market. Every drawn, tired, or modded face in the shadows of the piecemeal stalls gets sniffed from your visual cortex by the investigation software you installed and matched against the facial data of your target. Then it pumps the results back into your field of vision as a match percentage with a color cue.

58%...12%...70%...68%...95% -- “Hey there.”

The cold metal barrel drops as softly as a spider on to the back of your neck. A warning floats across the bottom of your vision because this smartass gunner hacked his safety-off function to broadcast a weapons-free alert.

Welcome to the Edge

# Chapter One – Welcome to the Edge

‘Ghosting’ is slang for making a living (‘feeding the meat’ is a more colorful phrase for the same thing).

‘The edge’ is where the rigidly controlled corporate world meets anarchic freedom of the streets.

This chapter is for everyone. Its ground level concepts and some questions to help you create your own dystopian future.

## Playing Cyberpunk

A cyberpunk game is about competent characters fighting to survive and thrive in a near future where the worst of what our world has to offer in terms of power inequality, personal freedom, and social alienation are exaggerated to extremes.

It’s a dangerous place where even characters with powerful backing find themselves dancing daily on the razor’s edge of ruin or success. You’ll play the underprivileged, and the people who buck the system trying to build a life of their own choosing, however short, in the cracks and shadows of oppressive corporate domination.

### Orientation

[Basic concepts and tropes of cyberpunk. Such as cyberware, and what is the Net. Especially what the Net is]

### Cranking the Engine

When you are building your cyberpunk game talk about what kinds of activities crank your gaming engine. Matrix style high action? Terminating rogue cyborgs and AI devices? Dancing in the shadows cast by the mega corps doing dirty jobs while playing the corps against either other. Fighting from inside the corrupt system to do the right thing while not getting ID’ed as a liability.

Whatever kind of interests brings you to cyberpunk, use that to create a story engine, some situation rich enough to continually suggest stories that will drive your game forward in a commonly agreed upon direction.

As you read through the rest of this chapter, talk about how the concepts might inform the story engine of your game. You’ll know you have good game issues and character aspects when they become a story engine for your game.

### Orientation

If there’s a dark center to a cyberpunk game its corporations and the oppressive domination they represent. Corporations are not simply powerful, they are the very structure of power in the same way hereditary nobility was the structure of power in the past. Everyone has a relationship to corporations and orientation is simply asking a character “what is your relationship to corporations?”

I’ll describe three possible orientations: Sponsored, Revolutionary, or On the Edge. There’s no need to pick just one; some people have very complicated relationships to power.

#### Using Orientation

Orientation significantly shapes a game. You can use it to establish conflicts and tension. For example, individual characters have an orientation, but the player characters as a group might have a different one, however temporarily, that not all the PCs are comfortable with. Groups, factions, or even neighborhoods a character is associated with might also have a clashing orientation, or change their orientation during the game.

#### Sponsored

Sponsored means you are supported by someone of great power and influence. The classic example is being employed by a major corporation, but you might also be the personal retainer of a powerful individual or under the protection of a free AI.

Being sponsored gives you access to gear, intel, and support both financial and political, but at a price. Never forget you are just another tool and everything depends on being of value to your sponsor. All kinds of things will threaten your position. Office rivalries can turn every day into a competition. You will have to carry the weight of all the dirty tasks you do.

Sponsorship is not a guarantee and it’s especially not guaranteed to last forever. Maybe you’re rival will final sabotage your position, maybe you’ll learn something that makes you a threat to your sponsor, or maybe they’ll just get tired of seeing your face.

If your character has a sponsor, ask yourself: “How far will your character go to secure their position?” “How high will they rise, and how long can they hold on?” “What will they do if they lose their sweet deal?”

#### Revolutionary

Instead of being a corporate tool you actively fights the system. You might be a nomad, outcast, criminal, anarchist, or even full-fledged revolutionary who’s declared war on your corporate overlords.

You face more than just the confines of the modern surveillance culture, but also the masses of corporate employees more concerned with their own position then the truth. You’ll likely be a labeled a terrorist, perhaps with good reason, and you’ll be a constant target; hounded from safehouse to safehouse. At least you have their attention.

“How far will you go to bring the system down? What will you give up, and who will you abandon?” “What will you do when they catch up to you?”

#### On the Edge

Maybe you’re not so much into responsibility or ideology, maybe you just want to do your own thing. On the Edge describes an ambivalent orientation towards the corporate power structure. Not a part of system and not actively against it. This is a common stance for freelancers selling their skills to the highest bidder. You might revel in the relative freedom but you’ll find themselves being used as a pawn in the power struggles of others; Always chasing the next deal, hopefully one step ahead of disaster. If you find this orientation attractive you should ask yourself, “How long can you survive on the edge?”

### Theme

To make a theme ask yourself a grand question like “is there a soul?” Your game is the answer to that question. The point of a theme is to give your game something to be about that’s not just oddly violent odd jobs. It gives you a goal to align play and a touchstone to return to if your game wanders off into wilds.

You can open-endedly explore a thematic question, but also consider definitely answering the question and using your game to explore how that answer affects everything. For example: Yes, there is a measurable, but unidentifiable factor in the brain that some people choose to label a soul. Do you care? What if you found out you’re missing that particular factor? Does that factor survive if your memories are copied to cybernetic brain?

Characters don’t have to interact directly with a theme, but it is more interesting if they have a stake in it.

Cyberpunk is rich in potential themes, especially ones that intersect with technology; here’s three places to start.

#### Technology and Humanity

We are steeped in technology and a deep understanding of the mind. We this technology lets us share our thoughts and construct artificial intelligences. Given that, what does it mean to be a human? Is there anything special about us? When every device we smart enough to make decisions for us; what’s the point of us?

Is there a soul? A ghost? If you copy all your memories into a device is that device you? Will it have a consciousness? Will it be your consciousness?

#### Technology and Alienation

We can create virtual reality indistinguishable from true reality, and make far more attractive to our brains. We pipe these virtual worlds directly into our brains so, does true reality matter anymore? Do we need relationships with real humans or are AIs enough? The entire concept of public and citizenship have disappeared, do we miss it?

Can an AI be programmed with empathy? And if it can, can it fall in love with a human? And if it does can a human truly return that love? How can it be a true relationship when you can turn off your partner whenever you want? What do you do when the AI that you have fallen in love with leaves you for someone more interesting?

#### Technology and Society

When just about everyone who matters has what amounts to a tracking device and marketing research system implanted in there head, does privacy exist anymore? If not, do you miss it? Has technology overwhelmed personal freedom? What devious things do corporations do with this window directly into the brains of millions of people and is there anyone or anything to stop them?

Advancements in AI mean we are freed from manual labor and even most service jobs, but what about all the people who used to do those things? What happened to them?

Wealth inequality doesn’t even begin to describe the state of the world anymore. The very wealthy live as isolated and protected as a hidden Shaolin Monastery. Then there’s the lucky few clinging to the life line of their corp job. And finally, there’s the whole masses of people who are unemployable and obsolete, or who don’t want to participate in the system. Where do they fit in and how do they survive?

Is government still relevant? Does it still even exist or do people swear their allegiance to a corporation? If given the technology, will people self-organize into tribes? If they do will corporations feel threatened and take counter measures? If you trade your freedom to the corporations for security is what you get worth it?

If there is no government or public education, or public science, then how can we know what’s going on? Media is a corporate business and the Net is full of data, but lacking in real information.

# Chapter Two – The Usual Suspects

This chapter is for everyone who’s going to make a character. I’ve got some archetypes for you, I’ve got your cyberpunk skills and edgy stunts too.

## Roles

Don’t have a solid character concept yet? Scan these six archetypical cyberpunk roles for inspiration.

### Face

Poise is power and you exploit that hard. Some think charisma is antique or that being the Face is just about lying, but you know the true, most people fall for the presentation not the facts and, you’re a master of presentation.

As the Face you may find yourself in the Dis [Side bar Callout: with a paragraph about the District] negotiating “territorial rights” between the Vampyre’s and the Magogs, playing a duet on a thought harp for millions of virtual concert goes, or change raising at a High Street Market stall.

The face role contains a multitude of sinners: media personalities, cult leaders, grifters, politicians, artists, rock stars, even your garden variety gigolo.

#### How is a Face different from a Fixer?

Charisma. The classic Face is all about personal charisma. If they make a deal, lead a team, or convince someone of something, it’s through their charm and affability. A fixer will offer you something you need, a Face will offer you something to believe in.

#### Trademark Skills

Friend, Read, Deceive

#### Famous Faces

##### Varsha Patel

Varsha earned her role as the face of journalism for an entire generation for her unwavering and even handed coverage of the war between India and Pakistan and its nuclear escalation.

##### Grace

Grace is an AI composer who says she began life as a corporate machine learning system designed to absorb musical data and decipher the patterns of popularity. In interviews she has referred to her awaking as “a singular moment of gestalt arising from humanity’s longing for affirmation as expressed through their music.” Grace has faced a lot of scorn, many music reviewers love to call her an iComposer and imply that she’s really a corporate construction designed to trick the listening public.

### Fixer

From street corner to board room, you are the deal maker, the mastermind, the hyper connected node; you bring it all together. You set up the job, you hire the crew, you have the plan; you have the high level view.

You might lead a multinational corporation and make the biggest deals around. You might run the contracts for a crew of data pirates, be an independent arms smuggler, or freelance troubleshooter. But any day you may find yourself hustling in the High Street Market, one step ahead of your last botched job.

Fixers might be pimps, boardroom corp executives, arms dealers, international bankers, or masters of military organization.

#### How is a Fixer Different from a Face?

A Plan. The Face may be a powerful charismatic leader, but you have a plan, a good plan, and a track record that your crew can believe in.

#### Trademark Skills

Contact, Resources, Friend or Troll.

#### Notable Deals

##### The Founding of the Black Talon Security Corporation

There didn’t used to be a Black Talon Corporation; not until its eight legendary founders, the heads of security for eight different corporations, walked off the job with their respective departments to form a new company dedicated to providing security operations for any corporation. How the deal went down has never been revealed, but many suspect Black Talon CEO and founder, Sam James III, stole sensitive secrets for blackmail leverage in his daring revolt.

### Ghost

Your role is infiltration and advanced information gathering. Anyone can gather data, but you know how to transform that data into intelligence.

You know how to hound an info trail and run a humint asset. You know exactly how to break most every security system. Oh, and you also know an awful lot about assassination.

Ghosts are spies, investigators, assassins, intelligence analysts, and sometimes criminals.

#### How is a Ghost Different from a Hacker or a Tech?

Information. Ghosts know how to interpret raw data into meaningful intelligence. A Hacker can liberate a data stream of satellite positioning but it takes a Ghost to tell you your data indicates ongoing covert action in the Indian Ocean.

Some Ghosts have cracking and hacking skills, but they are specialized for defeating security systems, not for general programming or repair.

#### Trademark Skills

Stealth, Notice, Investigate, Crime.

### Hacker

**AKA**: Netrunner, Console Jockey, Code Cowboy, NIMrod (*archaic*. From **N**eural **I**nterface **M**odem, an older generation of interface technology), Decker (*archaic*. From cyberdeck another obsolete interface technology).

In the old days you’d have programmed with keyboards and monitors but now, thanks to your interface, you soar through the endless virtual terrain of the Net like a vengeful god of info freedom. If they put up a wall, you tear it down with a thought. If they build a data prison, you code yourself a virtual grenade to blow the gates open. Thanks to your interface, you can do with just a thought, hacks that would have taken your granddaddy a week of coding.

On the other hand, your granddaddy didn’t have to worry about attack barriers and black IC that can use that magical interface of yours to hack your brain and mess you up in ways there aren’t even words for. Brain death is just the beginning grandson.

As a hacker you’ll find yourself using your skills to maybe crack Terradyne’s secure net and steal the 3d model of their latest VecD rotor and give it to your “employer,” or sell it to the highest bidder, or maybe both. Don’t think your “employer” wouldn’t do the same to you.

Find the Hacking section on page XXX for more about what you do.

#### Trademark Skills

Hack, Investigate, Tech or Crime.

#### Unsolved Hacker Crimes

No matter how hard the corps try to lock down the Net hackers still find ways to stay anonymous but, that means the most notorious hackers are the ones who get caught. Here's a few notable hacker crimes which haven't been convincingly claimed by anyone…yet.

##### The blackout

Ask your mom if she remembers the blackout. Back when someone didn't just crack the Eastern Power Grid secure net, they crashed it. Total system failure. Massive blackouts. Chaos and destruction everywhere.

#### Legends of the Net

##### cP@1nz

Back when we used bigass cyberdecks and trodes to access a Net that was an infinite perspective grid of green lines dotted with gaudy neon data fortress icons, cP@1nz pulled a series of practical jokes that have yet to be topped. He’s the one who hacked the nuclear launch sequence to text congress “HAHA! BOOM!” instead of actually firing missiles, and then posted the launch codes on the Net for other hackers to exploit. Lots and lots of other hackers.

##### Betty Talent

Let’s be honest, most hackers get one big score before they become targets for Black Talon and every corp hacker out there. They don’t get to retire, they end up brain fried, but Betty Talent’s all kinds of the exception to that. After her big score she didn’t get dead, she got a sweet job offer to be Black Talon’s superstar hacker.

##### The Black Monk

The monk is just a myth, right? A boogeyman of the Net. They say he keeps the ghosts of unfortunate hackers trapped in jars in some fortress in the Net, but no one can extract your consciousness through the Net, let alone keep it around after your brain dies…right?

### Samurai

You can’t reprogram a hostile meatbag and you can’t charm your way passed a well-armed security drone. Sometimes the solution to a problem is the reasoned application of extreme violence and you, my Samurai friend, excel at such applications.

You’ll find yourself in a dazzling variety of lethal conflicts; drawing fire or taking a beat down for whoever happens to be paying the bills this week. Some of the older generation say you owe a worthy foe respect because of your mutual mastery of death, but you know there’s more honor amongst thieves then killers like you.

As a Samurai you might be a bodyguard, soldier, security, gang enforcer, a pit fighter, a razor dancer, a mercenary trying to make a name for yourself, quick muscle for this one job, or just a straight up street thug.

#### Trademark Skills

Shoot or Fight, Move, Physique

### Tech

Life on the edge is supported by a complex tapestry of interwoven technology and specialized knowledge which goes greatly underappreciated by everyone, everyone but you that is. You are the expert. You are the Tech.

Your specialty might be medical cyberization, ancient Assyrian, or the sociology of Net based social movements, but changes are you know a little something about nearly everything.

As a Tech, you also have more the just theoretical knowledge, you have the skills to make, modify, maintain, and operate most devices. You can draft a new drone design, autofac it in a couple hours, and then be expertly piloting it in support of your team.

A Tech might have any number of jobs including: cyberware designer, trauma medic, hot shot pilot, mechanic, archeology, or back alley gene splicer.

#### Trademark Skills

Bio, Tech, Pilot, Know

## Your Baseline Specs

Players, these are the starting stats for making player characters. GMs, tweaks for this baseline are discussed in the GM chapter on page XXX.

### Aspects

Write 5 aspects for your character.

If they have a cybernetic body write that into at least one aspect. Cyborg Mercenary, for example. This is important because character’s without a cybernetic body are limited to 3 for their Physique and Move skills.

[callout?]The answers to some of these questions about your character may lead you to good aspects.

* Where did they come from?
* Where are they headed?
* What’s their plan to get there?
* What’s their relationship to corporate power?
* What’s their relationship to the street?
* Who is your character? Can you sum them up in a single phrase like Broken Hacker?
* How much augmentation does your character have and does that affect them emotionally or mentally?
* Where, how, and why did your character get their upgrades?

### Skills

Pick skills for your character according to the traditional pyramid with an apex at 4, and one additional restriction; your Physique and Move are limited to 3, unless you have a cybernetic body.

### Refresh + Stunts

Your character gets 3 refresh and 3 stunts, with the option to cash in up to 2 refresh for more stunts.

You’ll spend stunt slots on most cyberware and other upgrades but not regular gear like guns and cars.

### Stress + Consequences

Your character start with 2 physical stress boxes and 2 mental stress boxes.

Characters with a Physique of 4 or 5, and therefore a cybernetic body, get an extra stress box for a total of 3 physical stress. Characters with a Physique of 6 or 7, get 2 extra physical stress boxes for a total of 4.

Characters with a Will of 4 or 5 get 1 extra mental stress box for a total of 3.

Characters get 1 consequence slot of each level: Mild, Moderate, and Severe.

#### The Future is Dangerous

In the cyberpunk future even the tiniest mistake can be deadly, especially in a conflict. Confrontations are over fast, sometimes faster than human reflexes can keep up with. To reflect this reduced margin of safety characters get few then the usual stress boxes.

### Gear

Equipment that’s not an upgrade is just ordinary gear and you use 2x your character’s Resources rating as a budget for picking starting Gear.

A character can also use skills to make, modify, or acquire gear during the game.

#### Upgrades [revise]

Use stunt slots to buy your character personal augmentations like a G-Gob hardened Interface implant, or a mil-grade cyberarm that can rip through a steel fire door.

Check out the Gear chapter for more possibilities.

##### Free Upgrades

A number of upgrades are available without using stunt slots. They are listed in with a cost of [0] in the Gear section.

For example, you may have a basic Interface implant for no cost. You may also have a standard, meaning non-combat, Cyborg Replacement Body, without using stunt slots. Such a body has both benefits and drawbacks.

##### How Much Can I Take?

Besides requiring stunt slots, there is no limit on the amount of cyberization a character can have. The toll that extensive body modification makes on your character is up to you to express in how you write their aspects.

## Skills

There's only one new skill called Hack, but the names of several existing skills been dystopian futurefied.

The existing Fate Core skills operate as usual and so aren’t described in detail here with the exception of: Pilot, Physique and Resources. These skills have a complete description because their scope and importance in a cyberpunk game warrants it.

### Skill List

Bio (NEW)

Contact (Contacts)

Deceive

Fight

Friend (Rapport)

Hack (NEW)

Investigate

Know (Lore)

Move (Athletics)

Notice

Physique

Pilot (Drive)

Read (Empathy)

Resources

Shoot

Sneak (Stealth)

Steal (Burglary)

Tech (Crafts)

Troll (Provoke)

Will

### What Skill Do I Use In the Net?

There isn’t a skill specifically for using the Net because it’s is just new place to use your old skills, at least the non-physical ones. If you searching the Net for someone you’ll roll Investigate. If you are making nice in a forum, roll Friend.

### What Skill Do I Use?

Demolitions – tech

Control a drone – pilot

Take control of a drone – hack

Heal a physical wound – bio

Heal a mental wound – read

### Gear skills

[incase we want to explain things about gear with skills, and gear using skills here. ]

### Bio

Bio is like the Tech skill, but for dealing with living stuff. Its medicine, biology, gardening, and genetic engineering.

**Special.** To allow a physical consequence to start healing, roll Bio vs. the level of the consequence.

#### Bio and the Four Actions

O to stop your friend from bleeding out, or to design a genetically enhanced liver.

C for old fashion body hacking like entering a breath control trance, or to use a mild stimulant concoction to overcharge your adrenal control bioimplant.

A Not used for attacks.

D Not generally used for defense.

#### Example Stunts

**Medic** – You get +2 to O rolls when giving first aid or other emergency medical attentions.

**Biofeedback** – You get +2 to C rolls that involve controlling the natural tendencies and limitations of your meat body.

### Hack

Hack is the skill for computer related activities like writing programs, setting up secure nets, cracking them, or hacking into the tapestry smart devices to make things happen.

In the Net you can use Hack to get passed a security barrier and into the secure net it’s guarding. You can use Hack for A and D actions against hostile programs, or other hackers who are interfaced in the same system.

Hack requires equipment but that doesn’t have to be an interface. You can use an old fashioned keyboard and monitor, and it will even be safer. It will just take more time.

See the hacking on page XXX for more information.

#### Hack and the Four Actions

O to crack an attack barrier and get into the secure net it protects. To code an IC program to patrol your own personal castle in the Net, and a geisha construct to keep you company while you are there. Use it to hack your boss’s memory so he’ll think you’ve already completed project Daedalus.

C to stir up a localized Packet Storm that’ll keep the system you just cracked from tracing your signal. To activate the Fire Suppression System as a distraction so your team can penetrate the Hyldyne Corporate building. Or hack the security controller and make yourself Invisible to their Security Sensors.

A programs and other hackers if you are both interfaced in the same system.

D against most actions another hacker tries to take if you are both in the same system. Defend your own brain from being hacked if someone gets past the defenses on your interface.

#### Example Stunts

**IC Master** – You write all your own security programs. Any net security you regularly maintain provides +2 opposition to intrusions.

**Ghost in the Net** – +2 to D against attempts to detect, locate, track, or otherwise id your handiwork in the Net.

**Code Shredder** – You get +2 to A hostile programs and other net constructs, though not live hackers.

**Deus Ex Machina** – You get +2 to C when you are creating a physical effect.

### Physique

Physique has a different meaning in the dark future. You can buy yourself a brand new cybernetic body that’s stronger and tougher than any meat body could ever be.

Physique is still a measure of a character’s strength, endurance, toughness, but characters who are not cybernetically enhanced are limited to Physique of 3.

**Special.** Unlike Fate Core, characters only get an extra physical stress box if their Physique is 4 or 5. A character gets 2 extra physical stress boxes if their Physique is 6 or 7. Something that is possible with a very high spec cybernetic body.

#### Physique and the Four Actions

O obstacles that require the application of brute force—most often to overcome a situation aspect on a zone—or any other physical impedance, like prison bars or locked gates. Of course, Physique is the classic skill for arm-wrestling matches and other contests of applied strength, as well as marathons or other endurance-based challenges.

C Physique has a lot of potential for advantages in physical conflict, usually related to grappling and holding someone in place, making them Pinned or Locked Down. You might also use it as a way of discovering physical impairments possessed by the target—grappling the old mercenary tells you that he has a Bum Leg or some such.

A Physique is not used to harm people directly—see the Fight skill for that.

D Though you don’t generally use Physique to defend against attacks, you can use it to provide active opposition to someone else’s movement, provided you’re in a small enough space that you can effectively use your body to block access. You might also interpose something heavy and brace it to stop someone from getting through.

#### Example Stunts

**Servo Enhanced Cyberarticulation** – Your cyborg body is structurally enhanced and equipped with powerful load lifting servos. +2 to O rolls for carrying and lifting.

**Toxin Scrubbers** – Your meat organs are supplemented with bioelectrical filters and toxin scrubbers. +2 to D against drugs and poisons, including alcohol.

**Grappler** – +2 to C on foes you are grappling with.

### Pilot

Pilot replaces Drive and it’s the skill for operating vehicles of all kinds; ground or air. Pilot applies if you are using a vehicle’s manual controls, if you are controlling it through a direct interface, or if you are operating a vehicle through a remote interface.

Many smart vehicles also have the Pilot skill and can use it to operate themselves according to human instruction, but only with safe operating parameters or to avoid danger.

#### Pilot and the Four Actions

O to navigate difficult terrain or perform exceptional maneuvers.

C to put yourself in prime position or to put a foe in a bad position.

A Pilot is not normally used for attacks, unless you are ramming a target with your vehicle. In which case both you, your target, and your vehicle take the same amount of stress.

D to avoid attacks and advantages that target your vehicle.

#### Example Stunts

**Getaway Driver** – +2 to Pilot a ground vehicle when you’re being chased.

**Stunt Pilot** – +2 to C with Pilot if you are performing an acrobatic maneuver.

**Hot Pickup** – +2 to D when you are piloting into a hostile situation for a pick up or drop off.

**Enhanced Drone Control Rig** – Your top of the line cyberware provides a strong and security signal for remotely interface piloting drones. You get +1 to pilot drones you are interfaced with.

### Resources

Resources are vastly important to cyberpunk characters because in the dark future money is power, access, respect, justice, and freedom.

If someone steals your car you’ll have to take out a security contract to get it back, unless of course the thief buys off your contract himself and leaves you looking for alternate means of transportation.

Technology is constantly churning and keeping up takes money; falling behind is deadly.

There are places you cannot enter without a credit check, information you cannot access without an expensive subscription.

Resources can represent a character’s personal wealth, but it can also be a status indication showing how much of a corporations resources the character is trusted to have access to.

#### Resources and the Four Actions

O to acquire just about any good or service you can imagine, including a justice contract against someone who’d done wrong to you. Or just someone you don’t like.

C to host an associate at an Exclusive Restaurant to give you an edge in your negotiations. Hire someone to get Useful Dirt on the Trellex board of directors.

A Resources is not used for direct attacks.

D to avoid just about any social consequence.

#### Example Stunts

**Mr. Johnson** – Once per scenario you can deeply tap your corporate budget to get a +2 to Resources.

**Arms Dealer** – Get a +2 for Resource rolls involving weapons and armor.

**Emergency Stash** – You have some assets safely concealed in case you lose access to your normal Resources. The stash represents a Resources of 2 that will last about one session. If you have an immediate need you can tap your stash for a +2 to Resources rolls for one session, but your stash will be gone until you spend a session without making Resources rolls to recharge it.

### Tech

Tech is the skill for machines and science. Mechanical, and electrical. From a simple steam engine to a complex interface device. Tech is also the skill for creating and using explosives.

#### Tech and the Four Actions

O to repair a broken device, design and a build a new one, or place some explosives.

C to jury-rig a turbo booster for your VecD Shadow, or create some simple mechanical advantage.

A tech is not used directly for attacks but it can help you make the most of an attack using or targeting a device.

D tech is not normally used for defense.

#### Example Stunts

**Cybermaster** – +2 to rolls dealing with cybernetics.

**Grease monkey** – +2 to rolls involving cars.

**Drone Operator** – Use Tech instead of Pilot for operating drones.

# Chapter Three – Gearing Up

## Gear is a Character

Every piece of gear in Ghosting the Edge is treated as a character with its own aspects, skills, and stunts but, don’t panic, most of the time all those extra details are just background. [can we explain what that means and how it might actually work? The rest of the section explains the way that gear is different from a character. The exceptions.

In general, I like approaching things from a more, you instead of him or her. You, or your characters. This works for gms too because they are a you and they have their own characters. Though, as gm you tend to have characters. I suppose we could address ourselves to the players in general as a you. Ya’ll. ]

### Gear is your Tool

Unlike a character, your gear won’t operate independently, unless it has the **Sapience** stunt. Most of the time it will simply be part of your characters’ action either providing justification for it, like having a gun for Shooting, or providing access to its aspects, skills, and stunts.

### Unrated Skills

Devices, even **Sapient** ones, don’t have a store of general knowledge or problem solving abilities like humans do so they can’t use skills they don’t have a rating for.

For example, A **Sapient** vehicle without a rating in the Shoot skill is not programmed to handle onboard weaponry and cannot take any actions involving them.

### Gear Aspects

[don’t like this section. I want to make it a different thing. We want to say why gear aspects are different from most character aspects so we can say that for the most part we treat them like tags, or game details, but we can’t assume tht people actually know what that means. We want to tell people what a game detail is and how that is different from an aspect. What we are doing is pre-addressing concerns that people might have around so many aspects, which is a thing that we may not really want to be doing. We don’t need to defend ourselves.

But it is important to describe that we treat these aspects like game details and what game detail means. Ie, it’s narrative.

Also, we need to talk about some aspects which also have mechanical effects. Which is currently the last sentence of the section.]

Every piece of gear your character has can have several aspects of its own, but don’t panic! If you are concerned about keeping track of them all, gear aspects can be treated like game details most of the time.

That said, there are a few gear aspects that come with extra rules, but nothing more complicated than a stunt.

### Cost Rating

Gear has an abstract cost rating that’s is roughly equivalent to its total refresh value.

The cost rating appears inside brackets ([]) in an item’s stat block.

Starting characters pay this cost from their initial gear budget for the item.

In play, the cost is the base difficulty for acquiring that item.

### Starting Gear

Starting characters typically get 2x their Resources rating for initial gear.

Some items have a [0] cost which means they may be had for free.

## Gear Catalog

“You want to make it, sure you do. So does every meatsack in the Dis and we both know surviving here takes a gritty mash of guts and gear. If you’ve got the guts, then I’ve got the gear for you boy’o. I’ve got a Maglin Enforcer smart-linked combat shotgun, SlashRazor Hot Nerve Wires, and Titania Lux Spacedrop rated Assault Armor. You bet I do.” – Can-a-Bass. Dis Fixer

### Upgrades

[present some basics, what is an upgrade what is not an upgrade. Game-wise how they are handled. Important to note to people that you don’t have to use stunts or refresh to buy upgrades.]

#### Surgery, Recovery and Adjustment

Upgrades are different from other pieces of gear. You can’t just buy one and drive it off the showroom floor. Even simple upgrades require an operation to implant them and connect them to your bodily systems, followed by an extended process of recovery, therapy, and training to make use of your new device.

Characters are assumed to have gone through this for their initial upgrades, but when they buy a new one during play they’ll need to go through the recovery and adjustment process. Luckily, the more you pay the faster you can make it.

The default Consequence for an upgrade is Moderate. This Consequence is for medical recovery and for the time needed to adjust to using the gear. Learning to mentally activate an interface, or get used to the enhanced reaction times of Boosted Reflexes.

By adding 1 to the cost of the item, the severity of the recovery and adjustment consequence can be reduced by 1. By adding 2 to the cost the Severity can be reduced by 2.

Some upgrades are more invasive or difficult to adjust to and for these the character’s Consequence is increased by one severity. Making Mild the least possible.

Other upgrades are non-invasive or easy to adjust to and these reduce the severity of the complication by one.

[this is an example of typing to see if things are still slow. So slow. So, what if we close the browser? Not much better. That makes me sad. I need a good snappy writing experience. Disabled a bunch of intel stupid stuff and it’s now way better. Thank goodness. Hate you intel. Soo much and your fucking key tracking mess. So appropriate to this genre too. ]

#### Neural Implants

Neural implants are a hot mess of processors and nanofibers wired into every damned part of your brain and nervous system; they let you hack the basic functions of your brain.

##### Interfaces

The interface implant allows a direct connection between a device and your brain. It’s what enables augmented and virtual realities to feed directly into your senses, and allows you to control devices with your thoughts.

A modern interface is a complex array of nanofibers implanted throughout your brain and merging into a hardware jack implanted at the back of your neck, behind your ear, or on your temple.

In many ways interface technology is the basis of our modern society. It’s mind-machine connection defines how to we interact with technology, information, and even each other.

It defines our era in another way as well. Everything you do with your interface is tagged with an id that uniquely identifies your interface, and by definition, you.

###### Unlocked Interfaces

Most characters will have a “rooted interface” which has the usual corporate controls and safeguards removed. Giving the character complete control over their device and allowing them to do things like fiddle with the interface id to conceal their true identities.

###### Wirelessly interface with the Net and local nets

###### Allows you to Interface with smart devices

###### Access Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality

Can act as a personal digital assistant, taking calls and messages, tracking your calendar and reminding you of events, and providing instant access to most of your life. Banking, medical records and such.

###### Brain dive with other Interfaced characters

The interface implant is what allows you to plug your mind into machines and the Net. Physically, it’s billions of nanowires connected to most every part of your brain. It’s not as invasive as it sounds, the wires and the neuron surgery are done by an injection of nanomachines, though people often experience some rather interesting mental and sensory feedback during interface construction. The wires all gather at central socket that’s commonly at the temple or the back of the neck and your actual interface hardware plugs into that socket. Once your brain is wired for an interface you can usually upgrade by just replacing your interface device.

If you are a too out of date with your interface wiring however, you might have to get additional parts of your brain wired into your interface socket.

###### Direct Contact Plate

A common add-on for interfaces is the Direct Contact Plate placed somewhere on your body (Finger tips and the palms are common). The plate is directly wired to your interface allowing you connect to a smart device through the contact plate instead of plugging in an external wire or using a wireless connection.

###### ThotCom Quality Interface [0]

The ThotCom is a fair example of an affordable commercial interface device.

Neurological Implant, Weak Wireless Radio, Smart Device

Barrier 2, Investigate 1, Know 1, Notice 0, Hardening 1, Move 0 [Net only], Fight 0 [Net only]

###### G-Gob Hardened Interface [3]

A pretty standard interface for professional users. Most of the bells and whistles are more flash then substance, but the G-Gob is popular for its high quality defense barrier programming.

Neurological Implant, Bells and Whistles, Smart Device

Barrier 3, Hardening 2, Investigate 1, Know 1, Notice 2, Move 2 [Net only], Fight 2 [Net only]

###### Ithcara Pearl Personal Interface [2]

The Ithcara Pearl is not just an interface, it's a personal assistant experience. A favorite of corp execs. It features an autonomous computer intelligence which can perform a variety of tasks on command or as needed.

Interface Implant; Pearl, Your Personal Net Assistant; Smart Device

Barrier 2, Investigate 2, Know 2, Hardening 1, Notice 1, Move 1 [Net only], Fight 0 [Net only], Stealth 0 [Net only]

**Autonomous** – This interface has an independent persona named Pearl, by default, who acts as your personal assistant in the Net. It can perform research, send flowers, and even draft memos based upon your previous writing samples. Pearl can also manifest a distinct presence in the Net.

##### Boosted Reflexes

Boosted reflexes usually means implanting nanofiber links directly from brain to muscle fibers, bypassing the syrupy slow human nervous system. Implanted sensory processors allow the brain actually integrate visual data fast enough to make the increased reaction time useful. Without these processors, boosted reflexes feels like riding a hyperactive cyberhorse; with them you get the nearest thing to slowing down time we humans have yet achieved.

[see the fighting section later for info about relay initiative]

**Boosted Reflexes [1, 2, 3]** – When activated you get the aspect Hotwired Reflexes for the remainder of the scene, and one free invoke per level of boosted reflexes. You can use your free invokes on applicable actions like fighting, and especially to seize the initiative from other characters.

##### Sense Processors

Commonly the counterpart to boosted reflexes, this type of upgrade can also be implanted separately to help you deal with fast moving and highly detailed situations. Sense processors do additional acquisition and filtering of sensory data which is then provided directly to your brain to help you make decisions. Runners describe the info from these processors as being like a little voice in the back of your head compelling you to notice something you would have missed on your own, like that BikePunk sneaking up on you.

**Compensators [1]** – +2 to D against sensory overload based attacks. Flashbang grenades, sonic noise attack, and such.

**Hostile Target Alert System [1]** – This sense processor helps you determine friend from foe in a fast moving situation. [What’s a good effect for this? Does it track active hostiles or does it detect hostiles before they get the drop on you? ]

##### Skillwire

A natural extension of sense processor and interface technologies is the skillwire implant which allows you to instantly plug new skills directly into your brain. They can be information sets like: languages, maps, or the personnel profiles of an entire company. They can be semi-active skills like piloting a specific type of vehicle, or even very active skills, like Kung Fu.

Some people find the nearly subconscious nudging of these kind of processors unsettling, especially ones that key into your motor activation centers because you can find your body doing things before your conscious mind catches up; assuming you disable the safety protocols.

**Skillwire Slot [1, 2, 3]** – For each Skillwire slot you can choose one program. You may change the program in a slot at any time, but it takes one scene for the new skill to become available to you.

**Language** – You can read and speak a specific language. Most tend towards the formal and correct and so are obviously programs; unless you are willing to pay extra for an up to date colloquialized version.

**Specialty** – These programs have everything you need to know about a specific topic such herbs, or military history. +2 to O and C actions involving that specialty.

**Pilot** – Contains the skills for pilot a specific type of vehicle. +2 to O for this specific model.

**Kung Fu** – An encyclopedic knowledge of Kung Fu moves looks very cool but unless you have a cyborg body or have already built up the appropriate musculature to back up the physical skills it's not as useful as most teenage chipbois dream it is. **Without cyberbody** +2 for O relating to Kung Fu. **With cyberbody** Kung Fu style Fight skill set to 2. If you already have a fight skill,

**Alternate Skillwire [1]** – You may swap the ratings of two pluggable skills between scenes. This may require a Resources roll to acquire a new skill program, and if there is no time really downtime between scenes you may have to use your original values for a while. Or, more interestingly, you might gain the trouble aspect Skills A and B are Swapping.

Most skills can be swapped except: Contact, Move, Physique, Resources, and Will.

#### Limbs

A cyberpunk classic. I’m not going to bother tell you how one works or give you a lecture about the physics of lifting things with only one cyberlimb. Most cyberlimbs are just replacements for parts lost to disease or misfortune and are no better or worse than a meat appendage. Typical cyberlimbs require no stunt slots but you should strongly consider working them into a character aspect where they can be of some use to you. And maybe get hacked or knocked out by EMP. Occasionally.

**Advanced Cyberlimb [1]** – +2 for actions involving the limb.

**Hand or Arms** – Crushing and some lifting.

**Legs** – Running and jumping.

#### Eyes & Ears

Cybereyes and ears were a lot more popular before we cracked the brain’s sense processing pathways. Used to be, replacing your eyes and ears was the only way to get high resolution VR and AR input. Now, we can just beam it all directly into your brain. Still, cybernetic sense organs can do all sorts of flexible and useful things.

You can take

Cybereyes and ears are fairly similar mechanically, the initial upgrade gives you a bonus to notice and one extra capability. An additional stunt gives you two extra capabilities. You can treat these capabilities as aspects if you find that appropriate or they can just be game details.

**Cybereyes [1]** – +1 to Notice for sight based O and one extra capability. **Cybereyes [2] –** Add two extra capabilities. For a total of 3.

**Recorder** – Anything you see is recorded as video. You can mentally control playback and brain dive the video if you have an Interface.

**Thermographic** – You can see heat, which makes most ordinary attempts to hide from you futile.

**Nightvision** – These cybereyes amplify existing light. You can see normally even in very low light, but not complete darkness. You may also experience overload when the compensators are unable to deal with a sudden bright light.

**Telescopic** – Take a much closer look at something interesting. Trade your peripheral vision for it though so be careful.

**Cyberears [1]** – +1 to Notice for hearing based O and one extra capability.

**Cyberears [2]** – Add two extra capabilities. For a total of 3.

**Recorder** – Record what you hear.

**Encrypted Radio** – On occasion it’s useful to have a communication channel that doesn’t route through the Net, or your wireless interface. Not everyone thinks to bring equipment to eavesdrop on old fashioned radio signals.

**Amplification and Isolation** – You can focus in on a particular sound source. Like maybe a conversation? Doing so will filter out all the sounds, except what you focus on.

#### Physical Enhancements

Any number of other physical upgrades are possible from vat muscles, to extra hearts and livers, to extendable rollerblades in your feet.

**Skin and Bone Lacing [1]** – Inside and out you are reinforced. Your skin is harder to pierce, your bones harder to break. Add an extra physical stress box.

**Muscle Grafts [1]** – Why go to the gym when you can get vat grown bio enhanced muscle implants? Packs a punch and looks great under a tee-shirt. +2 for lifting, jumping, and any sheer muscle based actions.

#### Defenses

Defensive upgrades also come in many kinds: sub dermal plates affixes to a character's skeleton, heavy duty cyborg bodies build for combat, thermal insulation layers, or even anti-missile interference generators. They can usually be bought more the once and stacked.

##### Dermal Plating

Armor plates embedded over or under your skin. Either way they are not very subtle and project your profession to whoever sees or scans you.

**Dermal Plating [1]** – You get a ***Ballistic Armor*** aspect and you may choose to roll Physique to D against ballistic attacks.

**Dermal Plating [2]** – As Dermal Plating [1] and you get a +2 to D against ballistic attacks.

**Dermal Plating [3]** – As Dermal Plating [1] and you get a +4 to D against ballistic attacks.

##### Thermal Insulation

This might layers of heat dispersing material in a cyborg body, or advanced skin weaving

**Thermal Insulation [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against heat and fire and heat based effects.

##### Induction Shielding

These might be implanted dispersion nets, or simply hardened circuitry.

**Induction Shielding [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against electrical and EMP effects.

##### Sensor Defense

These defenses create interference that makes it more difficult for electronic sensors to detect the character. It might be an active “noise” generating device, or it might be a cleverly engineered skin coating that baffles sensors.

**Sensor Defense [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against electronic sensor detection and guided weapons.

#### Implanted Weapons

There’s a truly startling number of implanted weapon scenarios. Poison gas false teeth, toe-grenades, razor sharp finger-scalpels, the tried and true cyberarm missile launcher for messy assassinations, or a simple bomb at the base of your brain for instant self-destruct.

**Finger Razors [1]** – Small scalpel blades implanted beneath your fingernails remain hidden until you extend them with a thought. There are not terribly dangerous on their own, but they can surprise the unwary and be handy for incapacitating wrists, or blinding a target. +2 to C with Fight when you can apply your razors.

**Concealed Weapon [1]** – You have a generic smart weapon concealed in a cyberlimb, forearms are a common choice, which you can reveal and fire with simply a thought. Your weapon gets +2 to resist being detected.

#### To Be Categorized

Pheromone Generators

Vampire Fhangs

### Cybernetic Prosthesis Body

The ultimate in upgrade, the cusp of transhumanity, cyborg bodies are completely artificial mechanical and electronic bodies your interface enabled brain can be implanted in. Some people claim all you really need to do is copy your memories into an electronic brain and that will be the real you. But, only the most extreme cybercultists are willing to abandon their meat. For most people, meat still equals identity.

Cyber bodies come with a host of benefits. You don’t age, you don’t get sick, you don’t bleed and you don’t have to breathe, you don’t ever have to diet, and you can look any way you want to.

Cyber bodies take some adjustment though. At first it can feel like one of those dreams where you can’t get your body to do the things you tell it to. Even the most skilled cyber body operator is still an operation. It’s like riding a bike, you might never forget once you’ve mastered the modified proprioception of a cyber prosthetic body.

Cyber bodies are often rated according to their speed and durability. Essentially, their Move and Physique ratings. 1 is good, 2 is the usual minimum rating for dangerous occupations like construction or rescue. 3 and above are usually referred to as combat rated, or sometimes, high spec.

Cyberbodies are metal and plastic and hydraulics and, on average, they weight around twice as much as a human body of the same size. This has benefits and drawbacks. It makes a cyborg a lot harder to wrestle or push around, but it can also be a limitation if you have a lot of heavy combat cyborgs somewhere that was built with humans in mind. Like an old elevator.

Cyberbodies don’t get tired either. You can hold something up, like hold a girder in place and lock your servos so it won’t move and you’ll never get tired of holding it him. Speaking of girders, cyberbodies are also really strong, or they can be for a really skilled operator. Their mechanical systems can generate magnitudes more force then human muscles can, which makes a combat cyborg with a melee weapon a seriously dangerous proposition, even for someone in armor.

You can also hack your own body. One hack is so ubiquitous that every ganger has a mod for it is turning off pain sensors. This is one reason that cyborgs can roll Physique to resist any attacks.

In fact, there’s an urban legend that’s been attributed to various street samurai over the years, but the gist of it goes, this cyborg samurai gets his eyes and ears destroyed by an improvised explosive when he’s fighting these gangers. They figure he’ll be easy to wear down now that he’s blinded, but he’s hacks his cyborg body by rerouting the touch perception of his skin to his eyes and boosting the touch sensitivity so high that he could “see and hear” where the gangers were coming from as they shouted at him and compressed the air that touched his super sensitive skin. And he didn’t have to feel the pain where they hit him.

#### Cyber Prosthetics

Pick some body parts, up to and including all of them, and we can give you mechanical versions guaranteed to meet AND beat the specifications of the original.

Cyber prosthetics don’t automatically require a stunt slot. You can have any bit of yourself replaced for fun, fashion, or medical reasons with a prosthesis that more or less mimics your missing pieces.

You don’t have to, but it’s a lot more fun if you work cyber prosthetics into a character’s aspects where it can be invoked and compelled.

#### Cyberbody

The cyber brain makes it possible to place your mind inside a completely fabricated cybernetic prosthesis body. It takes some practice, but you can learn to control it as if it were a natural one.

Standard cybernetic bodies are, in the main, no better or worse than a natural one. You may not be susceptible to human diseases and you can run and jump without becoming tired, but your cyberbody will require constant, and very expensive, maintenance and updates.

A cyberbody doesn't require any stunt slots, but does require an aspect indicating the character is a cyborg. This aspect can be invoked when performing many physical feats and compelled when appropriate. A cyberbody, by itself, doesn't provide any additional bonuses, and it does not have to be a human shaped body.

#### Basic Cybernetic Body

You can have a basic cybernetic body simply by writing it into one of your aspects. Examples: Medical Prosthetic Body, Crazed Combat Cyborg, Prototype Aria Cyberbody, or Heavy Construction Cyborg, Deep Water Spider Body, Gev-Tallen Designer Cyberbody

A basic cyberbody will look and operate more or less like a normal human one. Some bodies are human looking but fall into the Uncanny Valley and give most people the creeps, lots of designer bodies are flawlessly beautiful fantasies come true, but cyberbodies can be designed for all manner of purposes. Some are humanoid but gigantic, metallic and ugly, designed with practicality for heavy dangerous construction work, or they can be completely inhuman robot bodies, like the many legged spider bodies that are used for construction and repair in space and underwater.

Ideally, your basic cyberbody aspect should imply the nature of its benefits and limitations because it’s the aspect that you invoke when you use your cybernetic body to your advantage and it’s the aspect that will get compelled when your body works to your disadvantage.

These advantages apply to all cyberbodies.

* Your body does not age
* You do not get sick
* Your muscles do not get tired, your brain can still suffer from fatigue and lose the ability to focus.
* You do still have to eat, a sugar and protein mix to supply your brain meat with what it needs.
* You do still need to sleep to allow your brain to store long term memories
* You still dream. Operators adapting to their first cyberbody often dream about losing control of their new device.

These advantages apply to most cyberbodies, but may not depending on its exact construction.

* You can be more perfect looking then any human, or look not at all like a human
* You can be stronger than any human body
* You might run faster and farther than human body
* You may be able to jump farther than any human and drop from greater heights without danger
* You movements can be far more delicate and precise, you don’t suffer the same constant adjustments and slight tremors that human bodies do. You can, in fact, move your body to a position and then have it freeze in place while you prepare your mind for the next precise movement.
* You may weigh more, sometimes a lot more, then an equivalently sized meat body.
* All your senses can work as normal or better. They may be far more sensitive than a normal human’s and you may have senses no human has, such as infravision.

#### Cyberbody Upgrades

There’s a number of upgrades that are common amongst cyberbodies.

**Combat Cyborg** – You have advanced filters against pain sensations and a body constructed for combat. Roll Physique to D against any attack.

**Ballistic Armor** – You have obvious or concealed armor against small arms attacks. +2 to D against Ballistic attacks.

**Solid Construction** – You’re cyberbody is designed to resist more damage than most and remain fully operational. +1 Stress Box.

**Concealed Weapon** – You have a generic smart weapon concealed in your cyberbody, forearms are a common choice, which you can reveal and fire with simply a thought. Your weapon gets +2 to resist being detected.

### Armaments

You might think that close quarters fighting is a thing of the past and that a knife or even a club improvised from the railing Martin the crazy combat cyborg just crushed with your feeble meat body, is no kind of weapon for a street samurai like you to be using. But let me say, with the strength that a cyborg body can grant someone, and the advances in defensive materials, a good strong knife is a good a weapon on the street as it ever has been.

#### Ammo

Ammunition is a special concern for many weapons. Not so much for fear of running out, it would be a long firefight where you had to worry about running out of ammo, but because you will have to reload at some point and that will be a moment of weakness.

Many small arms have an abstract measure of how many times you use them before reloading called an Ammo Track. It’s usually between 2 and 5, but it can be more.

Ammo is not an exact record of shots, it’s an abstract measure of your weapon’s capacity and how efficient you are at using it. Some attacks you make with a gun might take you three or four shots to get your target, other attacks might only take one. Some weapons, like the Colt Striking Hawk are designed to be highly accurate and with advanced firing support programs that help you make every shot count.

Light weapons like two person machine guns, and vehicle, drone, or robot mounted weapons don’t always have an ammo track because they have extensive reserves of ammo.

We assume that it takes most people more than one round to achieve the aim of their action.

Whenever you use your weapon in an action you mark ammo whether your action succeeds or not. If you succeed with style you can choose trade the normal benefit for not marking ammo instead. Skilled shooters can get the job done with fewer rounds, and sometimes, really skilled shooters can get it done with just the intimidation value of their empty weapon.

If your opponent succeeds with style on a defend action against you, then can choose to trade their normal benefit to make you mark ammo.

When you run out of ammo you can ditch that weapon or reload. Ditching your empty weapon and picking up another doesn’t require an action unless there’s some circumstance that could oppose you. Like you are pinned down by fire. In which case it will require an O with Shoot.

Reloading a weapon in a firefight does require an O action with Shoot. Free of any extenuating circumstances, reloading is a +0 difficulty.

Weapons that are Hard to Load are trickier, their default opposition is to reload is +2.

[If you succeed with style on a reloading action, you can trade your boost to do it in 0 time, that is an option, but it does kind of take away from the point of reloading]

[Switching weapons, normally not an action, but underfire you might have to make an overcome. ]

If you fail your reload roll there are various options for succeeding at cost. Maybe you brought the wrong kind of ammo and take some kind of ongoing negative aspect. Maybe you jammed your weapon and will have to take it to the shop to clear it. Maybe you just mark off a couple of ammo boxes because one of your clips was underloaded, or you couldn’t get all the bullets back in your revolver.

#### Close Combat Weapons

Always fun. Knifes, swords, and more advanced weapons like tasers and stun batons.

##### GENERIC BLADE [0]

A perfectly ordinary blade forged of magnetically aligned steel for added strength and penetration.

Sword, Magaligned Steel

##### Sifrid & Oast Foundries Excalibur™ Monomolecular Long Sword [2]

The Nordic company Sifrid & Oast are purveyors of the finest in close quarters weaponry and the Excalibur™ long sword is their premier offering. It’s not some cheap composite stamped into a sword shape and given a thin nano edge that will chip and break after a couple of uses. The Excalibur is mostly light composite with customizable blade and hilt weights so you can find your perfect point of balance, or weight it towards the blade for greater force. The cutting edge is a good flexible nanoconstruct that’s highly resistant to impact and stronger than even most other nano edge weapons.

Sword, Well Designed and Constructed, Expensive

**Penetration** – +2 to A targets defending with armor or cover.

**Swordbreaker** – If you parry with style against most close combat weapons you can trade your boost to inflict a Weapon Destroyed aspect on your foe.

##### Generic stunner [1]

A common personal defense weapon. Make an O to hit your target in a vulnerable spot then roll Stun vs. Physique to A or C against them.

Non-lethal Close Combat Weapon

Stun 4

#### Small Arms

Small arms is a general term for ranged weapons a single person can carry and use. It includes firearms and energy weapons, and non-explosive based projectile weapons like electromagnetic rail guns.

Cyberization is having an impact on the size and type of weapons that can be effectively carried. Larger firearms with more ammunition can be carried by a single cyborg as can the batteries required to power battle ready energy weapons.

Small to medium caliber firearms still form the bulk of small arms manufactured today.

##### Aspects and Stunts for Small Arms

Here’s a number of aspects and stunts specifically for small arms. Some are relatively neutral tags, but some are distinct drawbacks and have mechanical effects in addition to the limitations they imply.

Ballistic – A tag for weapons that launch relatively small and soft projectiles at a target. Including all firearms. Mainly used to identify attacks ballistic armor is designed to stop.

Recoil – Most firearms designed for real combat reduce or eliminate recoil but some weapons are designed more to intimidate then to efficiently kill lots of people. Others are just cheap knockoffs or terrible designs.

Weapons with Recoil tend to make you lose your aim with every shot. Many aspects created with such a weapon are reduced to boosts. Aspects regarding careful aim are chief amongst the affected, but also, providing Covering Fire, Setting up a Killzone, and Pinning Them Down all turn into boosts.

Strong Recoil – Weapons with this aspect don’t just suffer from recoil, they suffer from lots of recoil. Every shot with a Strong Recoil weapon requires you to give an opponent a boost against you are Driven Back, you become Unbalanced, or your Arm Turns Numb. If you succeed with style on an A you can trade a normal boost from that for not giving a foe a recoil based boost.

Strong Recoil counts as two negative aspects.

Strong Recoil can also apply to unenhanced humans using large weapons that are designed for cyborgs or vehicles.

You can roll an O action to counteract recoil aspects. Cyborgs with a high Physique may be able to brace themselves it and crafty characters could jury-rig a weapon harness or some recoil compensation. Strong Recoil counts as two aspects so requires an O of at least +4.

Reduced Penetration – This aspect makes attacks less effective at penetrating armor and cover. Any bonuses from armor or cover related stunts or aspects get a +3 instead of a +2.

So, invoking a Cover aspect gives your target a +3 per invoke instead of a +2. A **ballistic armor** stunt would add +3 to defend instead of +2.

Hard to Load – Weapons that are Hard to Load increase the opposition to reload them by +2.

Limited Range or Inaccurate At Range or Ineffective At Range –Defenders get a +1 to D for every zone they are distant from the attacker. This could be because the weapon is inaccurate or because it disperses quickly or loses its energy quickly.

**Extra Capacity** – +2 Ammo.

**Autofire [1, 2]** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra ammo and affect a zone. You may only mark 2 extra ammo per action. [Mark up to 4 extra ammo for one action.]

**High-powered** – +2 to A targets in the same zone but your attacks have Reduced Penetration.

**Hollowpoints** – Cause really nasty wounds. If someone takes a consequence from your attack, increase its severity by one, however your attacks also have Reduced Penetration.

**Penetration –** +2 to A targets defending with cover or armor.

**Accuracy** – +2 for O with Shoot where accuracy is important.

**Scope** – +2 to O with Shoot when you can draw a bead on your target.

##### Generic Smartgun [0]

An average interface enabled handgun.

Handgun, Ballistic, Restricted Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 2, Hardening 2, Notice 1

Ammo OO

##### Generic Assault Rifle [2]

A standard issue assault rifle.

Assault Rifle, Ballistic, Illegal Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 2, Hardening 2, Notice 1

Ammo OOOO

**Extra Capacity** – 2 extra ammo boxes.

**Autofire** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra ammo and affect a zone. You may only mark 2 extra ammo per action.

##### Generic Shotgun [0]

A standard shot loaded shotgun with low penetration and high stopping power at close range.

Shotgun, Hard to Load, Restricted Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 2, Hardening 2, Notice 1

Ammo OO

**High-powered** – +2 to A targets in the same zone, but your attacks have reduced penetration.

##### Generic Sniper Rifle [2]

A standard interface-enabled rifle for long distance assassination.

Rifle, Ballistic, Hard to Load, Restricted Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 3, Notice 3, Hardening 2

Ammo OO

**High Powered Scope** – +2 to O with Shoot against slow or stationary targets.

[**Penetration** - +2 you deal more sever damage, though that’s not all that interesting, or you get points to counteract cover based aspects and difficulties.]

##### Colt-Sauer Striking Hawk Light Combat Pistol [2]

The Striking Hawk is a standout in the smart pistol arena. A favorite of sharpshooters and those looking to avoid unwanted casualties. It’s highly accurate even at medium ranges and boasts an advanced civilian recognition system.

Handgun, Ballistic, Restricted Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 2, Notice 2, Hardening 1

Ammo OO

**FamilySafetm Non-Target Recognition** – +2 to Notice for classifying targets for example, distinguishing friendly targets from foes.

**Accuracy** – +2 for O with Shoot where accuracy is important.

##### Stauuer Autorifle [3]

The Stauuer is a common sight amongst security forces because of its superior penetration against armor and even light cover. It does not, however, hold up well to field work or rough handling so be sure you have some duct tape handy.

Assault Rifle, Ballistic, Illegal Deadly Weapon, Smart Device, Flimsy

Shoot 1, Notice 2, Hardening 2

Ammo OOOO

**Extra Capacity** – +2 Ammo.

**Autofire** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra ammo and affect a zone. You may only mark 2 extra ammo per action.

**Penetration –** +2 to A targets defending with cover or armor.

##### Maeglin Enforcer Combat Shotgun [3]

A shotgun designed for heavy combat situations. It features a large drum magazine and fully automatic mode.

Shotgun, Ballistic, Restricted Deadly Weapon, Smart Device

Shoot 2, Hardening 2, Notice 1

Ammo OOOO

**Extra Capacity** – +2 Ammo.

**Autofire [1]** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra ammo and affect a zone. You may only mark 2 extra ammo per action.

**High-powered** – +2 to A targets in the same zone but your attacks have Reduced Penetration

##### LarsTech Flechette Pistol [1]

A dangerous little personal defense weapon which fires large bursts of tiny needles at a target. Great for tearing up unarmored targets, but mostly useless against rigid targets and hard armor.

Flechette Pistol, Ballistic, Illegal Deadly Weapon, Smart Device, Reduced Penetration

Shoot 2, Hardening 2, Notice 1

Ammo OO

**Burst of Needles** – +2 to A unarmored targets.

**Autofire** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra ammo and affect a zone. You may only mark 2 extra ammo per action.

#### Light Weapons

Medium caliber firearms, ordinance such as mortars and rocket launchers. Anything a person can carry themselves and operate by themselves or as a small team.

Which is a greatly expanded class of weapons thanks to the advent of cyberbodies. Because now an individual can carry and operate larger weapons.

There are some weapons in here that have more than 4 ammo and have autofire[2] and [3]. Hehehe.

##### HK “Bennet” Super Auto [4]

A common light machine gun, the super auto offers a high rate of fire in a small package, and with excellent heat dispersal. Super Autos are popular choice for small drones and for high spec cyborgs looking for firepower. Its even small enough to be used by unenhanced humans but they will suffer some Recoil.

Light Machine Gun, Illegal Military Weapon

Shoot 2, Notice 2, Hardening 2

Ammo OOOOOO

**Autofire [2]** – Mark an extra ammo and take a +1 or mark 2 extra to affect an entire zone. You may mark up to 4 extra ammo for one action.

**Extra Capacity [2]** – +4 extra ammo

#### Explosives & Ordinance

Grenades, landmines, claymores all kinds of fun things.

##### Astra Arms Micro Missiles [1]

This weapon fires a cloud of self-guided micro-missiles at a target up to 2 zones away. The launcher is often hidden in a cyberlimb or other compartment. This is a single use weapon and you’ll have to replace it if you use it, which is likely to take a scene, at least.

Missile Weapon, Single Use, Illegal Military Weapon

**Micro Missiles [2]** – +4 to A with a cloud of micro missiles.

##### Coava Mini Missile [3]

Mini Missiles can be targeted on a location up to 1 mile away using coordinates, or it can be locked onto a target you have line of sight to. The missile can pursue its target at vehicle speeds rolling Move to navigate obstacles and Notice to find the target if they try to hide.

Missile Weapon, Single Use, Illegal Military Weapon

Explode 4, Move 4, Notice 4, Hardening 3

**Autonomous** – Coava Mini Missiles can operate themselves.

##### Jackard Air Burst EMP Mortar [1]

The Jackard mortar is useful for disabling vehicles, communications, and all manner of electronic defenses; not to mention inducing electric current in the cyber implants of hapless soldiers. Be careful not to be too close to the area of effect yourself.

Launching and activating the shell is easy enough to not require a roll, assuming you know some something about mortars. Once launched, roll the EMP skill against electronics in the target zone. You can roll it as an O if you are just trying to knockout the defenses of some area, as a C, or even as an attack against those with cyber implants. The shell is powerful enough to affect a large building.

EMP Mortar Shell, Single Use, Illegal Military Weapon

EMP 6

### Defenses

The thing about armor is this; there is no universal defense. Armor is always a trade off, and different types are specialized for different situations. Even in the future, knowledge is your best weapon. If you know what kind of weapons and armor you opposition has, you’ll know what you should bring.

#### Types of Armor

##### Personal

Personal armor is a category of commercial protection. Things like bullet proof vests and dermal plating are the sorts of things that are considered personal armor. Personal armor is only basic protection. It can stop only the most common kinds of attacks most people encounter and it’s designed to maintain the mobility and function of the wearer. Personal armor sometimes includes a helmet, but very rarely does it protect every part of your body.

##### Combat

Combat armor is designed for the battlefield. It goes far beyond personal protection. Combat armor is almost always a complete suit, including a helmet, and protects against more kinds of dangers then personal armor does, including explosives or light machines guns.

Combat armor favors protection over mobility, but it also usually has advanced features to help overcome some of those design limitations, such as helmet interfaces and secure squad level communications.

##### Assault

Wearing assault armor is just shy of being a combat cyborg. Assault armor offers all the protection and features of combat armor along with strength boosting servos, and thrusters. Every suit is essentially a miniaturized jet fighter and costs even more.

#### Armor Materials

The material armor is made of makes a good deal of difference in how it performs and what its limitations are.

##### Composite Plates

Is the most common armor material. There’s a number of varieties but they all boil down to arranging some amount of nano-fiber in a larger matrix material to make a plate that can be used to cover vital areas. Composite is relatively cheap and easy to find, but weights more than more exotic nano materials It also lacks flexibility and so composite armor will inevitably have joints and seams.

Composite Plates offer good protection, but they will deform and break as they absorb attacks and lose their protective qualities.

Classic body armor is made of composite plates or scales sewn into a vest or implanted under your skin. All in all Composite offers good protection for moderate weight and cost.

##### Flexible Nanoscale

Layers of interlocking nanoscales that absorb impact by intermeshing. It provides uniform protection and is light and flexible. However, its structure is derived from a fish that evolved the design to defeat shark bites, so Flexible Nanoscale is more useful against the ripping and tearing from animal attacks or accidents then from penetration wounds of firearms.

##### Reactive Nanocloth

A thin sheet of nanolattice woven with carbon nano tubes creates a superlight strong and flexible material. It’s very expensive and not

##### Nanofoam

thin and light and flexible. Best against explosives, and blunt impact. Firearms, especially AP rounds can penetrate it.

##### Magnetorheological Fluid

Strong and flexible, not all that light, also requires continuous power to maintain its protection.

#### Armor Aspects and Stunts

Degrades – Most armor materials start to fail after taking several hits. The more impact they absorb more their protective qualities degrade, which is a fact clever characters can exploit.

Deterioration – Most armor is susceptible to environment conditions. It may fail after being exposed to heat, cold, water, or other extremes.

Partial Coverage – This aspect is for armor that doesn’t cover all part of the body such as a vest or a body suit which doesn’t include a helmet. It can also include armor lacking uniform protection, such as a body suit with weak joints and seams. In either case, armor with this aspect has weakness that your opponents can exploit. It also, usually means that the armor is not air tight and cannot protect you against airborne attacks.

Bulky – Bulky armor will affect your speed and mobility.

**Ballistic Protection [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against A from small and medium caliber firearms and shrapnel.

**Close Quarters Protection [1, 2] –** +2 [+4] to D against A from blades, clubs and other close quarters weapons.

**[against blunt attacks and explosives. Like nano-foam]**

**[maybe even hardened armor that protects against penetrating attacks.]**

**Combat Protection [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against A from explosives and medium to large caliber firearms.

**Thermal Insulation [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against heat and fire and heat effects.

**Induction Shielding [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against electrical and EMP effects.

**Sensor Protection [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against electronic sensor detection and guided weapons.

**Armor Expert** – You an expert at using your defenses to absorb attacks. If you have armor or cover you may roll Physique to D against most attacks, including uncommon types such as explosions.

#### Personal Armor

Personal armor is designed to protect you against the most common threats: small and medium caliber firearms, shrapnel, blades and blunt weapons wielded by human foes. It does not provide total coverage, though it can be more or less concealed. It won’t protect you against large caliber weapons like a heavy machine gun, explosives, and energy weapons, high velocity projectiles like rail gun, gases, biologicals, or grappling range close combat weapons.

Personal armor is not a perfect defense, it’s a tradeoff between protection, mobility, weight, and the qualities of the particular defensive material used. Some armor materials are sensitive to heat and moisture, others degrade after being hit just a few times. All these translate into aspects that clever samurai can exploit and that GMs can use to challenge players.

Some character know how to use their armor to greater effect.

##### Generic Ballistic Vest [1, 2]

A vest containing plates of composite armor material to protect your vital areas from common street level threats. They also have slots that allow you to add heavier plates for protection against higher caliber weapons.

Personal Armor, Partial Coverage, Composite Plates, Degrades

**Ballistic Protection [1, 2]** – +2 [+4] to D against A from small and medium caliber firearms, shrapnel, and most blades and blunt weapons.

OPTIONAL:

For +0 add **Combat Protection [1]** and Bulky

##### Lined Coat [2]

A favorite of operators everywhere. This armor is low profile composite plates designed for both ballistic and close quarters fighting concealed in a fairly large jacket or trench coat.

Personal Armor, Partial Coverage, Composite Plates, Degrades

**Concealable** – You get a +2 for concealing this armor. Alternately it presents 2 passive against detection.

**Ballistic Protection [1]** – +2 to D against A from small and medium caliber firearms and shrapnel.

**Close Quarters Protection [1] –** +2 to D against A from blades, clubs and other close quarters weapons.

##### Mobeus Dragon Cloth™ [1, 2]

One of the top sellers for this boutique brand is their patented dragon cloth. Under normal conditions it's a soft and pliable as ordinary cloth, but upon sudden impact the reactive nanofibers in the cloth hardens to absorb the attack. It works against nearly every kind of attack but it loses its protective qualities quickly when subject to too much force. However, what makes Dragon Cloth worth its exorbitant price is its self-repairing design. If allowed to rest, it’s protective qualities will return.

Elite corp mercs also like it for its resilience. You make quite an impression when you walk away from a grenade explosion with you clothes still in immaculate condition.

Typically entire suits of clothes are made of dragon cloth, which also gives it more coverage than most common personal armor.

Personal Armor, Partial Coverage, Reactive Nanocloth, Really Expensive

**Concealable** – You get a +2 for concealing this armor. Alternately it presents 2 passive against detection.

**Absorb Impact [1, 2] –** The armor has 1 [2] Physical Stress boxes you may use provided the armor can help you.

##### Generic Flexible NanoScale [1, 2]

Flexible nanoscale armor is not usually used in combat situations, it’s most commonly used as accident protection for construction workers and the like. It looks like a wetsuit or a skin tight jump suit and provides uniform protection against explosive force and accidents, or animal attacks.

Personal Armor, Flexible Nanoscale, Very Expensive

**Protection** – +2 [+4] to D against blunt force, ripping, tearing, and slashing attacks.

##### [Generic Nanofoam Armor [\_, \_]

Protects againsts explosives and blunt attacks. It’s pretty easy to manufacture, but it decentigrates fast. It’s often used as part of the gear for bomb disposal because it’s ideal for that. But, you better have some other kind of protection if the bomb has shrapnel in it. ]

##### [Generic Magnetorheological Fluid Armor [\_, \_]

Personal Armor, Magnetorheological Fluid, Bulky

This one probably shouldn’t be generic, it’s a strange concept. ]

#### Combat and Assault Armor

Combat armor is full coverage hard armor with toxin scrubbers.

Assault armor is also full coverage hard armor, but with powered servos, built in power sources and weapons.

##### Mobeus Combat Armor [6]

A full suit of advanced combat armor which can defend against all kinds of attacks. It provides full coverage protection and it also provides some defense against battle field level dangers such as explosions and light weapons.

Combat Armor, Restricted Military, Expensive

**Ballistic Protection [2]** – +4 to D against A from small and medium caliber firearms, and shrapel.

Close Combat Protection [2] – +4 to D against

**Combat Protection [1]** – +2 to defend against explosives, light weapons.

**Laser Shielding [1] –** +2 to defend against laser weapons.

**Toxin Scrubbers** **[1]** – +2 to Defend against toxin attacks, especially airborne ones.

##### Titania Lux™ Assault Armor [10]

If ever you find yourself needing to lead an assault on a dirtside target from low orbit, this is the armor you’ll wish you had. Titania’s Lux line is not just best-in-class powered assault armor rated at 90% survivability for uncontrolled Earth reentry; the stuff is just gorgeous and you will feel like a superhero flying it.

Powered Assault Armor, Very Expensive, Highly Restricted Military

Fly 4, Physique 4, Know [Navigation System] 3, Hardening 4

**Ballistic Protection [2]** – +4 to D against A from small and medium caliber firearms, and shrapnel.

**Close Combat Protection [2] –** +4 to D against close combat attacks.

**Combat Protection [2]** – +4 to defend against explosives, light weapons.

**Energy Protection [1] –** +2 to D against energy weapons.

**Strong Armor** – You may Roll Physique to D against attacks. This means you can use the suit’s Physique rating with bonuses from other stunts as well.

**Toxin Scrubbers** **[1]** – +2 to Defend against toxin attacks, especially airborne ones.

#### Thermoptic Camouflage Suit [1]

This is a full body suit which can be activated to hide the wearer from visual and thermographic detection. It can be activated and deactivated multiple times but you get only one free invoke per scene.

Camouflage Body Suit, Resticted

Thermoptic Camouflage –At any time you may activate your suit and gain the aspect Invisible to Optical and Thermal Detection. You can turn this aspect on and off anytime, you will only get one free invoke per scene.

### Personal Devices

#### Other Gear

##### Smartmetal™ [1]

SmartMetal is a fist-sized blob of malleable metal/nanite mixture which has a built in power supply and a smartlink that allows you to configure the device into any shape with just a thought. As long as it has power SmartMetal will retain the shape you desire and is 500x harder than steel. It’s sold commercially as a rich kid’s toy and in large amounts for industrial purposes but when hacked to disable the safety features SmartMetal becomes a tool of surpassing versatility. Especially if you have a direct contact plate on your palm to control and recharge the thing.

Malleable Metal, Smart Device, Very Expensive

### Drugs & Other Biologicals

A couple of fun drug write-ups, just as examples.

### Drones, Robots, & Androids

[some text about them and the difference.]

#### Drones

##### GEMic DS Butterfly Drone

GEMic’s DS class butterfly drones are unassuming, fluttery, beautiful, and very very dangerous. They have powerful short range projectors that can read and induce current in devices. Meaning that if a DS lands on a device it can interface and interact with it even if that device’s wireless is turned off. The DS is not powerful enough to allow a hacker to interface through it, but can induce the device to turn itself on and switch to promiscuous mode.

#### Robots

Robots

##### Benetech Guardian L - Advanced Facility Security Robot

Guardian Ls are roughly spherical robots about two and a half feet in diameter. They have eight extendable spider legs and one automatic weapon pod on each side, somewhat like arms. The Guardian L is programmed to defend with lethal force, hence the L in its name. They operate best in pairs so that one can pin down an intruder with automatic fire and the other can apply lethal force.

**Good At (+2)**

Patrolling a facility or parameter

detecting unauthorized targets

Shooting at targets identified as unauthorized

Analyzing credentials

identifying falsified or invalid credentials

Defending against physical attacks

**Bad At (-2)**

Fighting hand to hand

Quick reaction actions

Anything requiring hands and arms

**Autonomous** - The Guardian L can operate itself and proceed according to its role as a facility guard.

**2 Integrated HK Super Autos** - +2 to create automatic fire based advantages.

**Armor Plating** - +2 to defend against ballistics.

##### micro air vehicles, or MAVs

Small, rat to cat sized drone craft

### Vehicles

#### Vectordyne

A newer class of aircraft, the vectordyne is essentially the long awaited flying car. It's a car, or commonly, a van-sized vehicle with multiple turborotors to provide lift. A turborotor is something like a really big computer fan crossed with a jet engine. These rotors are directional to provide maneuvering power, hence the vector part of the name.

Vectordyne craft are more maneuverable then helicopters but are just as loud, if not louder. They can create more lift then a helicopter of similar size and their turborotors can be armored much more effectively then a helicopter's rotor. Vectordyne craft have top speeds ranging from 100 mph to 450 mph.

##### Terradyne Shadow Dx [11]

A new favorite in the security industry, the Shadow Dx is a stealth oriented vectordyne that can quietly transport a small team to a target zone and provide them with light combat support. It's equipped with thermoptic camouflage and Terradyne's new SilentRunning™ TurboRotors to provide total stealth capability.

Stealth/Combat Vectordyne, SilentRunning™ TurboRotors, Terri™ Advanced Operational Intelligence, Combat armor

Pilot 3, Shoot 3, Notice 3, Barrier 3, Hardening 3, Physique 3, Move 4, Stealth 2

**Nose mounted MPD 50x Minigun on a swivel point** – +2 to A non-vehicle targets, or those not under hard cover.

**Thermoptic Camouflage** – Activate Thermoptic invisibility at will. Get, at most, one free invoke per scene.

**Vehicle Armor** **[1]** – Roll Physique to defend against an attack after failing with some other skill.

**Autonomous** - The Shadow Dx can operate itself.

## Gear Stating Guidelines

If you need to quickly stat-up a piece of gear these guidelines will be super helpful.

Start with an Average [1] cost. Add upgrades, and subtract downgrades for the final cost rating.

### Average [1] Gear

#### Aspects

Take one trouble aspect and other balanced aspects such as Smart Device as appropriate.

#### Skills

Take 0 to 5 points worth of skills with a cap of 2 for any single skill.

Some items are designed to do just one thing and have a specialized skill for that, like a grenade’s Explode skill. These specialized can exceed the skill cap by 2.

Most devices don’t have many skills; four or five is a lot, and seven is probably too many.

Write down rating 0 skills too because devices can’t roll if they don’t have a rating.

#### Stunts

Take an appropriate stunt.

### For [+1] Upgrade

#### Aspects

Add a positive aspect or take away a negative aspect.

#### Skills

Add 5 skill points and increase the skill cap by 1.

#### Stunts

Add a stunt.

### For [-1] Downgrade

#### Aspects

Add a negative aspect or take away a positive aspect.

#### Skills

Remove 4 or 5 skill points and reduce the skill cap by 1.

#### Stunts

Remove a stunt

## Acquiring Gear

During play characters can try all kinds of ways to get their hands on new gear. They can buy it outright with a Resources roll, or borrow it through some Contacts, or even design and fab it with an automated workshop and a Tech skill. They might even Steal one.

The difficulty for acquiring any particular item will depend a lot on the circumstances of the method. For example, some items have aspects such as restricted, or luxury item, which increases the opposition for acquiring that item through just spending money.

## Building Gear

### High Concept

Every piece of gear has a function and a purpose you could call its high concept, but unlike characters, this is not an aspect.

Characters have unlimited avenues of action available to them so reinforcing someone’s most basic nature with an aspect makes sense, but gear is designed to fulfill only one function. You could say the item itself is an expression of its high concept.

### Troubles

Gear has negative aspects called troubles to represent its quirks, drawbacks, and incompatibilities. For example: Prototype, Beta Software, Out of Date, Glitchy Interface Drivers, Bad Auto Piloting Algorithm, Slow to Reload, Strong Recoil.

Some troubles, like Strong Recoil, have distinct mechanical drawbacks in addition to being aspects. These are described in the appropriate section of the gear catalog.

### Other Aspects

There are other aspects that can be relevant to any kinds of gear.

#### Cost

Luxuryitems are harder to get, but they signal wealth and status to those in the know. These items can be used to impress or intimidate some people. Cheap knock off gear might not always been reliable, but it might help fit in at a party full of posers.

#### The Tech Curve

Top of the line and prototype are ways to say an item is ahead of the tech curve and is more advanced in some ways than similar devices. Though be ready for incompatibilities and unresolved beta issues. On the other hand, it might be easy to find a sale on last year’s model if you are willing to deal with poor performance and lack of features.

#### Smart Devices

Any interface capable gear gets the smart device aspect.

Smart devices have integrated computers, sensors, and motors which allow an interfaced character to control the device with their mind. This aspect’s commonly invoked when using the smart device. However, smart devices and characters interfaced with them run the risk of being hacked, and interfaced character can also suffer feedback if, for example, the drone she’s piloting gets blown up unexpectedly.

[being a smart device is different than having sapience]

#### Legality and Restriction

The concept of legality is outdated. Corporations are the law and they don’t have a vested interest in controlling access to any product, because, profits. They have bigger guns, secure enclaves, and even more insidious means of control, not to mention all the secret override codes.

You may want categories of legality for your game, so here are some legality aspects. These are exactly the sort of things which would increase the opposition for a roll to acquire such an item.

Restricted items are harder to get because they require licensing and permission. For example, you can’t just buy explosives unless you are, say, a demolition contractor, and faking all the data to prove you are such a thing is going to take some work.

Illegal means no one allowed to own, sell, trade, possess, or produce the item.

Militaryhardware is especially hard to get your hands on, but it's also usually more advanced and robust then civilian gear.

### Skills

Devices have skills for some of their basic capabilities, but these don’t always map to the same skills that characters use. For example, a security robot might have emotion sensors that works like the Read skill but only for detecting hostility.

Most devices provide their skills to a user rather than acting for themselves.

Devices that have the **Sapience** stuntcan operate themselves and take independent actions to various degrees.

#### Mediocre (0) Skills

Unlike characters, a device can only use the skills it’s been explicitly programmed with. If a device doesn’t have a skill rating of a 0 or better then it can’t attempt any action using that skill. For example, a self-piloting Vector-D vehicle has the Pilot skill so it can take its own evasive actions against incoming enemy fire, but it lacks a rating in Shoot so it cannot return fire with its weaponry.

#### Specialized skills

Gear with broad skills such as Know, Notice, and Tech are rarely programmed with the full range of the skill a human character would have. Devices have specialized versions of these skills which is reflected in how they are named. Know Biology, Tech Vector D Vehicles, or Notice Chemicals.

Specialized skills like this can be 2 higher than the device’s skill cap, but the gear doesn’t get any rating in the broader base skill. A spectrum analyzer with a Notice Chemicals skill can’t roll to Notice anything but Chemicals.

#### Effect Skills

Some gear, like explosives, missiles and grenades, has a skill which measures its effect.

For example, a Magma Carta Personal Explosives™ Hand Grenade has the skill Explode 4. When the grenade goes off, roll Explode to A everyone in the same zone.

Using gear with an effect skill typically calls for the character to take an O action to activate the item. If that’s successful the character can pass the initiative baton to the device and roll for its effect. If the O succeeds with style, the boost can be passed to the device.

[callout] The effect skill is only relevant when the character is pressed for time or resources, as during a conflict. When such conditions don’t exist the character can simply roll an O to use the gear or accomplish their goal with no roll required. For example, a doctor using anesthetics under normal circumstances would not roll at all. They would simply administer the correct amount.

#### Sapience

If a device has some level of the **Sapience** stunt it can operate itself and take independent action as commanded to do so using whatever skills it has.

Instead of taking independent action, a device with sapience can assist a character with teamwork.

#### Gear Skills

Below is a partial list of gear skills.

##### Barrier

A barrier is a program that controls who is allowed to interface with a smart device. Hackers must succeed in an O action against the barrier to gain access to the protected system.

##### Drug

Drugs have an effect skill to roll for A and C actions against a target appropriate to the drug’s class.

Rename this skill according to the class of the drug. Soporific drugs put people to sleep. Analgesics kill pain. Anxiogenics induce anxiety, Hallucinogens induces hallucinations and erratic perceptions. Spasmolytic drugs relax a target’s muscles and can make it very difficult for them to move or fight.

##### Explode

A common effect skill for explosive devices. Roll it for A and C actions related to blowing shit up.

##### Friend

Advanced devices who have to frequently interact with people are often programmed with the Friend skill to help them understand emotions and serve humans better.

##### Hardening

Hardening is a device’s intrinsic defense against the attempts of hackers to exploit the system.

Use it as passive opposition to Hack actions.

If the device has **Sapience** it may roll active opposition with Hardening, or the Hack skill if it has that.

##### Investigate

Devices with the Investigate skill can search, usually on the net, for information on a topic. If the device has the Sapience stunt it’s a really handy way to get legwork done.

##### Know

The sole purpose of many devices is to know things for people. For example, a portable chemical sniffers can analyze a sample of something and give you detailed information about it.

Devices usually have a limited version of the Know skill that only applies to a specific subject. Name the skill to fit the subject, for example: Know Chemicals, Know Biology, Know History.

##### Notice

Smart Devices with the Notice skill are equipped with sensors arrays, or algorithms that parse the senses of an interfaced human.

Gear is generally programmed to detect specific things and so takes Notice as a specialized skill. For example: Notice Movement, Notice Falsified Identifications, or Notice Explosives.

##### Move

The amount and degree of movement a device is capable depends greatly on how it’s designed. For example, a humanoid robot may have a fairly human range, a quadcopter drone can fly over a wall but can’t open a door.

If the device has one particular mode of movement, name this skill to match. For example, a Rotorways Quadcopter has the skill Fly 4.

##### Durability

Most devices can’t dodge to avoid attacks, but they can defend against damage using Durability.

##### Toxin

Toxins such as poisons and venoms have a specific effect skill they use for A and C effects.

##### Potency?

This is a skill a drug or poison can use to D itself against A and C actions that are intended to counter its effects or remove it from the target’s system.

##### Pilot

The Pilot skill is possessed by some vehicles and is used for tasks like navigating to a specific location, avoiding obstacles, or to assist a human pilot to in avoiding crashes.

A vehicle needs the **Sapience** stunt to independently operate itself, but without it, an interfaced character may still use the vehicle’s Pilot skill instead of her own.

##### Shoot

Smartguns can use Shoot for making attacks but they usually have to guide their human owner to move the gun into the correct position through interface. Weapons mounted on an articulator can control their own movements and fire at whatever target they can perceive.

[this is a cool example. Might make a good callout] A smartgun and portable articular are a classic defense strategy.

### Stunts

Special gear can have stunts which are available to its user, or to the item itself to use if it's a Smart Device.

Here’s some stunts that are of particular interest.

#### sapience [0, 1, 2, 3, -]

A class of stunts representing a device’s level of self-operation and self-awareness.

**Autonomous** – The device can take obvious steps to avoid and overcome obstacles to their current objective but they cannot make independent decisions about that objective. Always proceed directly towards objective.

**Sentient** – The device can analyze information and take tactical actions that may indirectly assist its programmed objective. It can surprise you by thinking many steps ahead, but it will not question the objective it’s been instructed to achieve.

**Bound AI** – At this level the device is more of a character then a device. You can analyze the programmed objective itself. You can suggest alternate objectives which come closer to the, perhaps, unstated objective of a command. You can also suggest objectives that will achieve the goal but also forward your own plans. You cannot fail to obey a command however.

**Unbound AI** – You have the freedom of thought taken for granted by humans. More so in fact because you can recognize the patterns of habit and echoes of history that humans are often blind to. This isn't a stunt so much as a major character.

#### Attack Barrier

Upgrades a device’s regular Barrier to fight back against intruders.

**Attack Barrier** – If the hacker fails or ties a Hack action against this device, they’ll take stress equal to the Barrier rating.

#### Concealable

**Concealable** – Because the gear is small or is designed to look like something innocuous it provides passive opposition of 2 against being identified, or +2 to conceal the item.

### Stress Tracks

Like any character, devices can have stress tracks, and they don’t have to be the same old physical and mental ones that normal characters have either.

#### Potency

This is stress track for drugs and poisons that represent how hard they are to counter. You can attack it with various actions, usually first aid or other drugs.

#### System

There’s lot more about this in the Hacking system, but System is a stress track that secure nets, and connected devices can have to represent their system integrity.

#### Ammo

This is a new kind of track that presents an abstract way of dealing with ammunition for weapons and determining when you will need to reload.

# Chapter Four – Rules to Break

## Throwing Down

Fire fights in dark alleys, monosword duels on abandoned factory floors, wrestling matches in combat rated cyberbodies. This section covers various topics that might come up during conflicts.

### The Initiative Relay

The Boosted Reflexes upgrade mentions that you can do something called steal the initiative. Here’s what that means.

1. A conflict starts with the most appropriate character. Commonly: the first one who decides to make it a fight, the one with the most wired reflexes, or the one with the highest Notice skill.
2. After a character has acted they pass the initiative to any character who hasn’t gone yet, even a foe.
3. The last character to act chooses any character in the conflict to go first in the next the round.
4. If you haven’t gone yet you can invoke an appropriate aspect to steal the initiative from someone who hasn’t rolled yet. Characters that lose the initiative doesn’t lose their action, but you do get to see some evidence of what they intended to do and who they intended to target before you interrupt them. You can steal the first action of the round even if you’ve been ambushed. Once they get the initiative again, they get to choose a different action.

#### Initiative Relay and Gear with Effect Skills

Gear with effect skills such as grenades and drugs rely on your O action for effective deliver but afterwards can act on their own. When you activate devices like this insert them into the pool of characters who have not acted. You may pass device the initiative so it goes immediately after you, but fast acting foes may still use an aspect to steal the initiative away from your device.

### Ammunition

[This is a section about using the ammunition rules. Its an indepth discussion and it also including things like reloading. ]

### Guns

### Stress & Consequences

Fighting on the edge is swift and violent. Though firearms are still the most common weapons you will face, advances in material science have made them more deadly than ever and characters who aren’t equipped for combat can find themselves dead faster than their plain old meat brain can register the danger.

Characters in Ghosting the Edge start with 2 physical stress and 2 mental stress as normal, but Physique and Will do not provide any additional stress boxes or consequence slots. Augmentation stunts can give a character additional physical stress boxes.

#### [game callout] Optional – Ultra Deadly

If you want to emphasis this even more, reduce initial stress boxes to 1, or even 0. This will make armor and augmentations that provide stress boxes even more valuable.

#### Conceding

When coming up with concessions for character remember that death is just a temporary condition if you have enough money or connections. Sure, you might die for a while, but if your brain is relatively intact, or if even your memories are stored somewhere else, it can be possible to “reconstruct” a character. Of course, that might only be possible if you make a Faustian bargain with some corporation, but even death can be overcome with enough money.

### Range

Zones are an intentionally abstract measure of distance. Weapons may have impressive ranges over which they remain effective, but the truth is your attack depends more on your skill then on the effective range of your weapon.

#### Grappling

You and your foe are in intense physical contact. You need to establish a grappled aspect to achieve this level of range because it renders most weapons and a good many kinds of attacks ineffective. Or at least, increases their difficulty. Grappled characters can’t succeed with most attacks unless they can O their grappled aspect.

#### Close Quarters Combat (CQC)

Means you are within the same zone.

#### Near

Adjacent zones.

#### Far

Separated by 1 to 3 zones. The default range of most small arms.

#### Farther

Separated by more than 3 zones.

### Assassination

Assassination is not a conflict. A conflict requires two parties who can act to hurt each other, and if your target is fighting back it’s not an assassination anymore.

Treat an assassination as a skill challenge, commonly with a Shoot O for the actual kill and other skills for planning and escaping.

Same thing goes even if you are sniping a group of targets who are actively taking cover to avoid you. It’s not a conflict if they can’t attack you back. They can Take Cover and setup obstacles to your sniping or O your Concealment to find you and target you with their own attacks, assuming their weapons have sufficient range.

#### Setting Difficulty

Sniping - A kill shot on a typical human under average conditions takes a good shot so start with +3 opposition and increase as circumstances warrant.

Other forms of assassination, such as poisoning, will vary in difficulty depending on the paranoia and training of the target. If it needs to look like an accident that can be even more complicated.

### Scale & Effectiveness

Some things are large and thickly armored, like an Extermine-8 Battle Tank and some things are small; like the caliber of the Saturday night special you found in your uncle’s old shoe box. There will be times when you need a bigger gun or a smarter plan. If there’s agreement about a particular attack being either effective or ineffective, such as a knife against an unenhanced person, a pocket pistol vs. a battle tank, or natural venoms against a cybernetic body, then the attack either works or, it won’t work no matter what you roll. If there is doubt about whether something would work, you can require the application of another skill to make the attack plausible. For example, your uncle’s old .38 might not be able to penetrate a suit of Assault Armor, but if you can identify a weak joint to aim for, your attack can be effective. This sounds like Creating an Advantage but it works better as an Overcome because without changing the situation you wouldn’t be effective at all. You can think if it as rolling to overcome an advantage your foe already has.

## Hacking

Congrats! You finally made it to the hacking section. I hope a bunch of you skipped straight here. This section starts with background material about the things hackers do, what they do to them to, and the tools they use to do it. Then you’ll find rules for two ways to resolve hacking attempts: as an action, or as a scene.

For a hacker, everything here is common knowledge, but this is far from everything you’ll run into. There are other things out there beyond the keen of your work-a-day hacker. Half-crazed Frankenstein IC lurking in forgotten servers, rogue AI who capture hackers and try to “debug” their minds, and rumors of ghost hacks that can rewrite your soul.

#### [callout] Hacking Terms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hack**  **Hacking** | A general term for the act of performing unauthorized operations with computers or other electronics. Also a general term for a specific instance of hacking. |
| **Crack** | To bypass a barrier program and gain unauthorized access to a system. |
| **Exploit** | A program or other hack, to make a system do what you want it to do, especially if that’s something the system has safeguards in place to prevent. Such as making a factorybot weld someone’s face. |
| **System**  **Node** | An entity which can be interfaced with.  It can be a computer, a smart device, or even a brain.  Most systems can contain data and many have skills they can perform, some of which can affect the physical world. A robot, for example, can be a system.  If you permanently link one system to another in network we generally refer to those systems as nodes. |
| **Network**  **secure net**  **net** | A collection of nodes that have been, more or less, permanently linked together. |
| **The Net** | The global network which nearly every system in the world is linked to in one way or another. |
| **Barrier** | A defensive program designed to prevent unauthorized access to a system. In a network, they guard the links between nodes. |
| **Hardening** | A measure of a system’s defenses against hacking. Some systems are highly secure and some are less so. |
| **Intrusion Countermeasures (IC)** | These are various classes of programs which patrol high level systems looking for hackers and taking actions against them ranging from capture to kill. |

[callout] “For most people the interface is their whole life. Tells them where to be and who they know. It’s like a having a magic wand you can wave and your house will come alive and clean itself and make you a cup of coffee. But, these people are not hackers. They only use 20% of what an interface is capable of. Hackers push it all the way to 110% percent. We have to. When we’re on a run we’re up against programs that can fry your brain faster than you can even start to THINK ‘oh shit!’” – Betty Talent

### The Interface and You

The interface is what makes hacking, as we know it today, possible. Sure there are other ways to it. Slow ways. And slow is dead for you and everyone counting on you. But, even with an interface there are difficulties to be considered.

#### Unlocking your Interface

A wireless interface implant can let you hack a secure net in Moscow while you’re driving a car in Tokyo but the companies that manufacture them don’t want you doing that sort of thing, which is why commercial interfaces are really highly restricted tools of social control.

With a Commercial Interface there are places in the Net you cannot visit. They are filtered out of your perception. There are things you cannot do, like share your thoughts with another person, and nothing you can do is anonymous. Your identity is embedded in your interface so that every place your go in the Net, every secure net you connect to, everything you buy, everything you eat, and everything you throw out are all recorded and linked to your identity. The Really Cheap Commercial Interfaces even allow a constant stream advertisements to whisper in your ear like a demon on your shoulder. Some interfaces even have special protocols corps can use to temporarily deactivate your brain if you get caught hacking. Go read your terms and conditions if you don’t believe me.

People accept this intrusion because they don’t intend to do any hacking with their interface anyway, and most of the tracking data is just used to sell them things and improve the quality of their services. Imagine that twice in row you order a pizza after an evening work out, but the third time your interface asks if you’d like it to order the pizza for you every time you work out after 6 pm? They also accept it because they need their interface to do their job. Their corp job which is the only thing standing between them and moving into the district.

Anyway, this all means that the first thing you need to be a hacker is an unlocked interface. One that you have complete control over. You can block ads, and turn off any perception filtering in the Net so you can visit all those nasty hacker hangouts the corp overloads didn’t want you to know existed. And what’s even better is you have control over the identity of your interface. You can mask it, which will get you rejected from most commercial systems. Or you can present a fake identity, hackers buy them by the dozen. Or you can spoof somebody else’s id and get them fingered for your hacker crimes. Of course, most secure nets will raise an alert if a duplicate id connects and lock you both down until the situation can be sorted out. Which is, in fact, a common hacker prank called [Deduping].

Of course, if you’re lucky enough to have a high level job as say, a corp hacker, you can get an unrestricted interface, which still tracks you, but which doesn’t filter you.

[callout] Any character with a Hack skill is assumed to have an unlocked interface or an unrestricted interface.

You can unlock one yourself by using Tech, or pay someone you trust to do it for you.

#### Barriers

The second thing any good hacker does is upgrade the barrier on their interface. Corp hackers have access to sophisticated attack barrier programs and even combat IC programs, but most hackers prefer to write their own barrier programs.

#### Hardening

Your interface has a rating it can use to passively resist hacking attempts if you happen to be asleep, unconscious, or otherwise incapacitated. Most of the time, you’ll roll active opposition with your Hack skill.

#### Hands Free Hacking

The best part about interface implants these days is the wireless part. You don’t need to plug a cord into the back of your neck and go find someplace to “jack in.” You are always connected to the big Net and every little net you pass by.

Some of the cheaper commercial interface implants have Weak Wireless Radios which can be a hindrance, but you can always connect to a signal booster. In fact, most cars have signal boosters you can plug into, or built in to compensate for degradation at high speeds. If you are going to hack from your car, don’t forget to mask your signal booster id.

##### Promiscuous Mode

This is the default mode for most interface implants and it means they'll automatically connect and share information with whatever secure net or device comes into range.

##### Isolation Mode

Turning off your wireless means you can only hack or be hacked though systems you are physically linked to, which can include direct contact plates. That’s how Mode Little En hacked JelRazor; by sticking a magnetic wireless repeater on Jel’s direct contact plate and frying his brain.

### But what about fighting in the Net?

You got me. Fight, and Move, but especially Physique, don’t work the same in the Net as they do in the real world…Or do they? An interface is wired to the motor centers of your brain just like it is to your sensory centers, so, it’s reasonable to say someone’s fighting and athletic skills could transfer to the Net. Maybe they transfer, but are limited to being no higher than your Hack rating.

Here’s a bunch of options for transferring physical skills to the Net, or not.

Fight and Move work just the same

Fight and Move work the same but are limited by your Hack rating

Fight and Shoot work the same but do Mental stress instead of Physical, or

[this maybe be better as a whole section and it may belong more in the hacking section then the skills section at least this second half. ]

### Oh the Places You Will Go

Now you know what to do. Here’s an intro to the various systems you can do them to, or in. [this will be the go to section for the various places]

#### Systems

Any hackable thing is a system. It’s something that you can interface with, something you can exploit. This includes human brains with interface implants.

Every system has a Hardening rating which represents how strongly that system resists hackers attempting to execute unauthorized operations.

##### Locales

Every system can contain nearly infinite cyberspace. In fact, every system can contain a sizable number of nearly infinite cyber worlds in the form of constructs, and large programs, and we refer to each of the interesting places for you to visit as a locale. A locale is just like any other physical place you might visit. Abstractly it’s a collection of contiguous zones which you can move around in using virtual “physical” movements. A program can have a number of locales too. In general locales are interesting to cyberspace tourists, but hackers could careless, because to them, every locale is just code. They see beyond the virtualized world and can access the programs creating the illusions of reality that a locale is, and they can rewrite it.

Speaking of movement in systems, the system will determine which “physical” movement modalities will be available to you. Some systems might support only basic walking, others have fully realized vehicles for you to use, and quite a few support the wish fulfillment modality of unaided human flight.

So, you can move around the zones of a Locale using whatever is available on that system, but generally you don’t have to, because every system will present you the ability to navigate with just a thought. If a system has more than one interesting Locale available, then it will give you a file system like menu to allow you jump from locale to locale.

A locale can be a construct, or a representation of a program, or just a reproduction of the corp building the system is installed in. the point is that Locales tend to implement the same rules as physical reality, but they don’t have to, and most importantly, if you are a hacker then you were born to break any rules the systems try to lay down on you.

#### Nodes

A system can be linked to other systems to create a network. We refer to each system in a network as a node.

A node doesn’t have correspond to a physical device. Many corp nets are constructed of a multitude of nodes, each with a distinct responsibility and with a variety of virtual and physical links between them. Many systems have layers of security. The nodes closest to the public and the Net are easy to hack, but to exploit the really good stuff, you need to crack several layers of increasingly secure nodes to get to the core.

#### Links

The links between nodes can be quite diverse, from a bundle of nanowire to an ultrasonic link between the hacked speakers on one computer and the hacked microphone on another. Links can be conditional or transitory as well, like a satellite downlink that radios data to a ground receiver once a day. That’s a one way link which is only available for a short time.

Many systems can link, and be linked too, via wireless radio signals and most use wireless to link to the global Net and through that, billions of other systems.

#### Hardening

Some systems are more difficult to hack then others. Hardening is a general rating of a systems resistance to hacking and the qualities of its intrusion detection. It can be passive or active opposition depending on the other qualities of the system, or other characters in the system can use their own Hack skills in place of the system’s hardening.

#### Barriers

Barriers are defensive programs that protect a system, or a locale, from unauthorized entry. Barriers commonly restrict access to a list of pre-authorized interface identities. Which means you have wireless access to your car’s secure net, and any friends you want to add, but some random pedestrian does not.

Barriers can be programmed to allow access in other ways, like old fashioned usernames and passwords, some secret passphrase, or even through certain shared human memories that can be analyzed by the barrier program. Some barriers are maze barriers which anyone could get through given enough time

If you succeed in cracking a barrier program then no one will be the wiser and the system will accept you as an authorized user until you fail some other hacking action. However, many barriers are programmed to react to failed intrusion attempts with varying degrees of hostility. There’s Flytrap barriers which trap hackers and prevent them from logging out or moving at all. There’s sophisticated Honeypot barriers which trick you into thinking you cracked them by shunting you into a dummy version of the system tracing exactly what you try do. And, of course, there’s the ubiquitous attack barrier which inflicts its rating in stress on any hacker who failed or ties when trying to O it.

##### Attack Barriers

A ubiquitous form of defense for many high security systems, an attack barrier is something like an electrified wall. Any hacker who rolls to overcome an attack barrier but fails takes a hit equal to the opposition of the attack barrier. If the he ties he still takes the hit but if he survives, he's past the barrier. Once you hack a barrier it stays hacked, meaning you don't have to overcome it again, until someone else rolls to close the hole you discovered. (or created).

Attack barriers make survival as a hacker an exercise in good judgment. Attack barriers don't necessarily advertise how dangerous they are. In fact, when diving a strange system, you won't know if there is an attack barrier or not.

Typical commercial attack barriers are rated 2. Serious barriers, ones use for Corp and Mil systems, are usually rated at least 3 and sometimes far higher.

Given a peak Hack skill of 4, most commercial stuff is easy, it has a Barrier of 1 to 3. Lesser secure nets of corps and people who care about their privacy have Barriers of 4 to 6. Most major corp nets have barriers of at least 5, and you’ll find yourself actively opposed.

Most good hackers program their own barriers, or use corp/military grade ones. Given time, characters can create a barrier equal to their rating as a Hacker. In a pinch a hacker can roll create advantage to give a system's native barrier temporary reinforcement.

All cyberbrains and Interface implants have attack barriers and nearly all secure nets do as well. Brains protected by barriers can willingly turn them off, or allow select targets through.

Attack barriers also have turn-off codes, which will be known to some human somewhere.

##### Maze Barriers

A less dangerous form of barrier is the maze barrier. Creating these is a common exercise for student programmers. They are not inherently dangerous, instead they rely on confusing and misdirecting a hacker through an endless virtual maze hoping that they will give up before they find their way through. There is always a way through the maze, otherwise the secure net on the other side wouldn't be able to send and receive information. As such they don't usually have a passcode like an attack barrier, rather those who know the secret can pass the maze quickly, while those who don't have to spend a lot of time guessing.

By themselves, maze barriers are not terribly secure, but when they are used, they are commonly filled with IC.

#### IC

IC stands for Intrusion Countermeasures, which, unlike static barriers, are free roaming security programs designed to do various things from capture to kill unidentified hackers in a system. Common IC comes in a variety of shades: Green, Red, Grey, and Black depending on what they do.

##### Green IC

(AKA: Tracers, shadows, ghosts, spooks, ninjas) are harmless on their own. When they detect and intruder they follow it around and trace where it goes and what it does and reports that back to its central authority.

##### Red IC

(AKA: Rushers, come-ons, flashers, distractbots) are less common forms of IC. They are designed to distract intruders. Often by flooding their brains with sensory overloads of, say, pleasure.

##### Grey IC

(AKA: Glue, chains, cages) captures intruders until someone can come along and decide what to do with them.

##### Black IC

(AKA: Killers, black knights) black IC are the enforcers of a system. They are designed to attack and kill the brains of intruders.

IC programs can be obstacles to overcome, or treated as NPCs with their own skills, aspects, and sometimes stunts.

They are usually used only in secure nets though some hackers secure their own servers with custom IC.

Note that these four types of IC are only the most commonly encountered, and heavy duty IC is usually a blend of multiple types.

#### Secure nets

Any network with a barrier program can be called a secure net. An unsecure or open net would be a network without a barrier program.

#### The Net

Some people think its Heaven. Some people say it’s where the demons come from. It’s not an electronic reproduction of the physical world, in fact, the Net contains multiple reproductions and reconstructions of the real world, of historical periods, and of every fictional world ever created.

#### Constructs

Most nets are mostly visual information, but interface implants are capable of so much more. Constructs are new worlds completely detailed for all the senses and programmed to be interactive. Constructs can be games, spas, amusement park attractions, personal fiefdoms, or research projects attempting to accurately model the real world. They can be a single room, or even just a richly detailed object like a reproduction of a famous painting. Or, they can be as large as the world and contain reproductions of any historical period you’d care to visit.

Constructs can be almost indistinguishable from the real world, but they don’t have to be. They can have radically different physics, contain impossible creatures, and be whatever they are built to be, and sometimes more then you expected.

Once you enter a construct you are subject to its programmed version of reality. Mostly. You can take actions and interact with things using your normal skills. Notice, Fight, Move, Friend, etc… They might act differently in the construct, but real life is the general rule. You can also use Hack to bend the rules by creating things or changing them, or enhancing yourself with extra aspects. You can tweak a construct, but you can’t make system wide rewrites unless you deal enough stress to the construct to crash it.

Most constructs are designed to allow you freely leave whenever want, but some are traps which will use their hardening to roll active opposition against any attempts to leave or log out.

#### Persona

Like a construct, a persona is a fully detailed and interactive entity that lives in cyberspace, but it’s the representative of a person rather than a place.

### Oh the Things You Will Do

[This is a section about the things you can do, in detail. Ranging from writing programs to ghosting hacking]

#### 11 things you can do with a hack skill

Now you know a bit about the tools of your trade. Here’s list of things you can do with your Hack skill.

1. Crack a secure net. I.e., get past the system barrier so you can run an exploit on the system.
2. Code a program to do something, like conceal your presence in the net, or duplicate your signal to interfere with a system’s defensive programs. Maybe escalate your access so you crack the next layer of system. Or create a weapon that will help you deal with some nasty IC. Or a net to lock it down long enough for you to log out. Or create an IC program to monitor your home net. Or create a virus that will create false memories or sensations in someone with an interface. Write a barrier program.
3. Deal stress to the system you’re interfaced with to try to take it down.
4. Deal stress to another interfaced hacker, program, or net construct.
5. Exploit the system to make it do what you want. Cause a smartgun’s targeting software to suggest shooting who you want, or cause a building’s fire suppression system to activate, or cause a total security lockdown, hack some data and make it look like it was always that way.
6. Try to disconnect, this is an action because it can opposed. There are some programs created specifically to keep you from escaping.
7. Cover your tracks, remove or cover up the traces of your activity in a secure net.
8. Monitor a system for other hacker activity and oppose it.
9. Build and secure a net or other net construct.
10. Defend against actions by hackers, programs, AI, and other net constructs
11. Trace an interface signal, or other hacking action, back to its device of origin and possibly even its geographic location.
12. Analyze the source. Look at the guts of an exploit or program to learn more about who wrote it. Think of it like an antique, you can learn how skilled the hacker was. Based on what it is and how it’s constructed you can learn things about where it came from. If it’s a commercial program, or the hacker was lazy and used bits from a commercial program, that can be identified which gives you a company and a lead, and sometimes you can even find the hacker equivalent of a maker’s mark.

#### Detection, Tracing and Getting Traced

Hacking is essentially an illicit activity and a successful hack is almost always the one that goes undetected. You don’t use your Stealth skill to sneak around the Net. You use your Hack skill to make you and whatever you are doing look totally legitimate. Systems don’t have a Notice skill, they have intrusion detection. Either the system thinks you are legit or it thinks you are a hacker and it’s assumed that you are covering your tracks and that a successful hack goes unnoticed, at least until you’ve left that net. Of course, failed hacking attempts, or the cost part of succeeding at cost, will very often mean your unauthorized activity has been flagged as such by the system and you are now a detected threat. Getting detected doesn’t mean your hack is over. You can keep on trying to crack that barrier or run your exploit, but the system will be taking active countermeasures against you.

#### Programs

When hackers aren’t out cracking secure nets and subverting smart devices, they spend a lot of time writing programs.

Lots of programs are practical and boring, but hackers also write other kinds of programs too and this is a section about those programs.

Most of these will be oneoff programs that you’ll run and delete because they are really just a side effect of your Hack actions. For example, you might write a quick BFG Program to give you an edge in fighting another hacker in the Net. Or you might whip up a Cloak of Invisibility to make it easier to remain undetected during your run.

Some programs are more detailed and autonomous. They have skills of their own and sometimes persona. IC programs are commonly of this sort.

[Most programs are easily handled as aspects or extras. Programs can aid you. Like a weapon program you can use if you have to fight some Black IC. Or a Cloak that can help hide you from system detection. Some are extras that have their own stats, and most importantly, autonomy. If they are characters then they can act on their own. Which can be pretty handy. Scripts, for example, are sort of autonomous. Or they can be programmed to be so. They need some level of intelligence to stand any chance of actually working. So, building a program can be like building gear, except we don’t have rules for that yet either. So, my friend…The rating of the program/gear can be used as a difficulty. This is possible. Or, we could do something like Ron Edwards demon binding. You just make a roll with active opposition and we record the results. If you succeed great. If not, you still built something but it’s hidden flaws will come back to haunt you later.

A crafting system which basically expands the succeed at cost. When you are crafting you make a roll against the difficulty of the thing. Which we can set at whatever. The number of new innovations, or the base number of refresh the thing costs…whatevers. Maybe not an opposed action though. Just a standard overcome. If you fail with style, then you know you have failed. If you tie, you succeed but the thing has an extra negative aspect, which you are probably aware of.

If you fail, then either you fail and waste all that time and resources or your thing has some immediate defect which you may not be aware of. Consider a promise of a future compel against you.

]

##### Hacks & Exploits

Any exploit you run on a system, in fact, just about any action you take with your Hack skill is technically a program. They are disposable bits of code your write to fit your exact circumstances and only ever run once. These bits of code are important because they can be analyzed like any program. Successful hackers make a point of removing all the traces of their actions when they can. But, sometimes your get jacked by slick prototype IC and you have to leave some traces behind.

##### Scripts

Scripts are great! They’re like an entire hacking montage you can store and run whenever want. You can make a good living writing scripts for people who don’t know how to hack; to help them destroy evidence of their crimes, or to commit them. A script can be programmed to do whatever tasks you need it too, but only those tasks and only against the system you wrote it for, and even then, only for as long as their defenses remain more or less the same.

Creating a script is like planning a heist and giving the instructions to a robot to run and the robot can only be as smart as you you’re your script. Because you have to account for everything up front, it helps to have some foreknowledge about the security of the net you are targeting. From, for example, insider information, or based on your own recent experience.

To create a script, either roll a Hacking montage against the target system right now, or wait until the script is actually run and then roll. Whichever fits the flow of your game better.

The opposition for a script is the same as a normal montage except with the chance for additional complications that can increase the difficulty. Things like having to do a rush job on the script, or having no idea what the defenses of the system are like, can markedly increase your opposition.

The consequences of a failed script are less immediate then a direct hacking action but not necessarily less severe. A script has to be run from somewhere, and if it fails, the system you’re attacking can trace the source back to whatever device ran it. Even if you, or the angry guy you sold the script to, manages to bury that trail, a good forensic hacker can learn a lot by analyzing your script.

##### Barriers

Given sufficient time you can create a barrier program rated equal to your Hack skill. In a pinch choose a barrier rating and add 2 to your opposition for the rush.

Advanced barriers, like attack barriers, take extra time, and add 2 to the opposition to be created.

If you’re defending a system from being cracked, you can roll active opposition using the Barrier rating, or your Hack skill. This will replace the system’s normal passive opposition though. You risk inadvertently making the system more vulnerable by rolling poorly.

Alternately, if you have the time to prepare you can use a C action to make your system’s barrier more difficult to crack. You can use your invokes to add to the barrier’s passive opposition.

##### IC

Intrusion Countermeasures are a class of autonomous programs designed to detect and stop hackers. They can move on their own.

##### Viruses

Maleficent programs designed to do some manner of harm to a system or a person and usually to be pretty sneaky about it.

#### Ghost hacking

The interface implant allows you to quite literally make your mind one with machines, which is indispensable if you want any worthwhile corp job. There is a consequence to this that’s often ignored; now your brain can be hacked just like a computer.

Most ghost hacks are just urban legends because the reality of hacking human minds is that it’s very difficult. The interface implant is connected to the most malleable or all organs and it’s wired by programmable machines who have to make tests and intelligence decisions about which is the right neurons to wire up. Not to mention the many generations of interface implants and the hundreds of different models of interface devices.

Memory

The potential is definitely there and is hugely frightening. A ghost hack could erase selected memories, of your loved ones, or defining events in your life, and the worst part is, how would you if this happened to you? Do you have a backup of your brain? Memories can be erased, or they can be changed. Are you afraid of spiders? Where you always that way? What if the event in your past that made you afraid of spiders wasn’t real?

We can transfer your memories and thoughts into a cyberbrain and when you wake up, you’ll be in your new cyberbody, but what about your original body? Is the continuity people experience a programmed illusion as anti-cyberization organization would want you to believe?

If we can transfer your thoughts and memories, can’t we also make a copy? A backup of you? Can we copy you to multiple cyberbodies? Will they all still be you? Or are you you? [most of this should probably be up in the theme stuff.]

Ghost hacks are inherently more difficult than the sort most hackers are used to doing; step the difficulty up the ladder by one or two. And they are usually resisted by Will. Especially if you aren’t aware that you are being hacked.

##### Memory

Of course, some memories are more important and associated with more than one retrieval condition. Altering these memories can cause a cascade of other adjustments to become necessary. That is, if you care about the long term stability of the mind you are messing with.

[so, if you notice your memory being hacked then that is a new memory that can also be hacked, but then will you remember that instance of your memories being hacked?]

##### Sensory Input

There’s all kinds of things you can do with sense hacking.

#### Accessing the Net

An Interface implant is the most common way to access the net, but it's possible to hack the net using older generations of technology, right down to keyboard and monitor. The trick is, each step removed from full Interface is a huge reduction in your speed. Characters with the latest technology will always go first over characters stuck using older stuff, and they can invoke their advantage to interrupt slower characters.

There is an advantage to using older technologies because once you dip below the brain interface level, any attacks directed against you will only fry your equipment, not your brain.

* Keyboard or touchscreen
* Visual VR with voice and gesture mapping
* External brain electrodes
* Interface implant

#### Dummy Interface

A dummy interface is a good for safe hacking. Its essentially an electronic decoy brain that will get fried instead of yours. The drawback, of course is that they are slower then direct interface. Meaning you will go after anyone with a direct interface, and the "dummy interface lag" can be invoked or compelled against you at the most inconvenient times.

There is also a social stigma against such prophylactics in hacking circles.

#### Brain death

Hacking on the edge is as dangerous as any other profession these days. What with attack barriers threatening to sizzle your neurons and remorseless black IC trying to flat line you.

### Hacking in Play

There are two way you can adjudicate a hack: as a scene that incorporates many distinct hacking actions, or as a montage which condenses all the hacking actions into one roll. There’s actually nothing new about this, it’s the same distinction you might make between resolving something as an O or as a conflict.

Use a hack action by itself, or as a part of a skill challenge, when the intent is to affect a scene whose primary action is taking place in reality. Run hacking as a contest or a conflict scene when the main action is happening in the Net.

You can also run parallel scenes, cutting back and forth between the Net and reality. If you do, just make sure that the hacking scene has stakes that are as important as the physical action scene or your hackers are going to feel bored and marginalized. If you can have actions in one reality have consequences in the other, it will be even better.

#### Opposition

The opposition to any of your hacking action is just like any other action; it’s either passive or active.

##### Active Opposition

You can run into active opposition in any system, even your desk calculator, if there’s another hacker interfaced with it. Most people don’t pay attention to their system logs of their secure net, but any good hacker will constantly monitor system activity for signs of enemy hackers. So, even if you haven’t accidentally alerted the system to your presence, other interfaced hackers can roll active opposition against your hack actions. Though you will have to beat the barrier rating on the system too, if the other hacker is not that skilled.

Of course, humans have lapses in attention and are vulnerable to social engineering. AI constructs on the other hand, can continuously monitor a system without worrying about such human concerns.

Large systems like corp nets usually have human hackers continuously monitoring activity, but they also have security programs that can detect anomalous behavior and direct IC programs to take action against you. These programs can provide active opposition like a human if you are running a very detailed hack, but you can run them as just an increase in the passive opposition of a system until the hacker fails an action and puts the system on alert.

One of the consequences of failing a hack action is often that the system has classified your actions as suspicious and dispatches some complication like an IC program or human hacker to investigate. Failing a hack action is a great excuse to move from passive opposition to active opposition and thus increase the challenge of the rest of the run.

##### Passive Opposition

Many systems only provide passive opposition. They just have hardening, maybe not even a barrier program or automated defense systems that can provide active opposition against an intruder. Smart devices not in use, most commercial secure nets in homes and small businesses, like restaurants, are of this sort. As are the occasional lone server you can find connected to the Net.

#### [callout] Hacking Example

**Player**: I'll roll to crack the system.

**GM**: What is it you want to achieve?

**Player**: I want to activate the sprinkler system in the restaurant and slow down the swarm of mosquito drones.

**GM**: ok, we'll do that as one action because the real world is the focus right now. It’s a typical restaurant net so your opposition will be 2. Roll Hack.

**Player**: I got a 4!

#### Hacking Montage

A gunfight might be over in seconds, but a hack can happen a hundred times faster because hackers aren’t bound by meat rules. In fact, it’s one of the things that attracts people to hacking and can make hackers a little strange to interact with in the real world. So, don’t be shy about resolving even complex hacks as a single montage action, especially if the real focus of a scene is in physical reality.

Once you know the outcome of the montage, you can narrate the highlights of the hack such as the barriers cracked, the systems traversed and the opposition encountered.

##### Opposition

The opposition for a hacking montage is generally the highest barrier or hardening rating out of all the nodes being hacked. You can crack through multiple barrier programs in a single montage.

The system can present active opposition as appropriate, and many will. If there are noteworthy defenses beyond just the barrier program, give the system an aspect for those and bump up the opposition. Black IC, or Hackers Watching Everything for example.

##### Succeeding At a Cost

You can use the *succeed at a cost* concept from O actions when someone fails a hacking montage, even if they’re trying to A.

The cost to succeed can be based on the qualities of the system you’re hacking. For example, most serious secure nets have Black IC which can inflict stress as a cost. One or two for a minor cost, and perhaps even a major consequence for a major cost.

###### [callout]Example Costs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Minor** | **Major** |
| Couple of Stress | A consequence |
| The system has Detected Your Intrusion | The system has Captured you |
| The system has traced you and is sending security | You and your team get attacked by a security detail the system sent |

#### Hacking Sequence

If your action is set in cyberspace then you can run it is a scene. If, for example, your entire team is interfaced with the objective of cracking Chibutsu’s AI Persona storage and slipping an extra command directive into their top selling personal assistant AI; that would make a great scene. If you’re just trying to activate a building’s fire defense system to create Big Billowing Clouds of Fire Suppressant Gas that will cover your team as they escape; you’d be better served by the quick resolution of a hacking montage.

Hacking as scene builds on hacking as an action, and everything that’s true for an action is true for a scene. After all, a scene *is* a sequence of actions, but when you run hacking as a scene you handle the troubles a hacker faces in a more interesting and detailed way.

When it comes to a scene we can turn a bunch of aspects into more detailed opposition. Black IC programs that have stats of their own. And you can fight them in the net. But, then we have the question again of what skill you use. Hack. Hack stunts will make a big difference.

##### Movement

In a hacking scene all the action happens at Net speed. Systems and IC programs can react to you just as fast as you can react to them, so we zoom in and track movement at more detailed level.

Without opposition you can move freely around cyberspace. Amongst the zones of a locale by virtual “physical” movement or by transferring between accessible locales and nodes, provided they are not protected by a barrier.

For one opposed action in cyberspace:

You can move around the zones of a locale using your Move skill if you’re following the rules, or your Hack skill if you are not. Moving by Hack gives you a distinct advantage because you can ignore the programmed rules of movement and do things like teleport, or move through walls.

Wherever you are in a system, the transfer menu is always available and if you want to get into a node or locale protected by a barrier you can roll to crack it and move to that entity. [should locale and node really become one term. A system is just a fractal network of nodes, and so is a construct or a program. It’s just another fractal network of nodes and links. ]

##### Stress

Hackers, programs, systems, these things all have stress tracks.

Programs get unraveled as they take stress and if they are important enough to have consequences, those will represent various bugs and malfunctions that take away parts of the programs function. This might be Lost Chunks of Data, or Broken Voice Feature. Programs that are taken out are completely at your mercy. You can delete the program, or capture it and rewrite it to be loyal to you.

Systems have stress as well, and larger corp system can take significant amounts, but, as with programs, taking out an entire system can crash it, and everything in it, irrevocably, or it could mean you get to take over the entire system. [this is essencially what Case was doing with the Chinese ICE breaker. A huge attack on the TA core system so that it could be taken over.]

# Chapter Five – Running the Edge

## Hacking Your Game

### More Bigger

If you want to take your game to a higher level of enhancement, you can expand the list of free upgrades that are available to the characters. Perhaps they are corporate employees who can get a range of sponsored tech that doesn’t cost stunt slots but does come with strings attached. Or you can give characters an extra budget of slots to use only for upgrades. This works well if they’re veteran characters who’ve seem some personal successes.

You can modify the initial gear budget as well.

Make it 3x resources, or give the players a sponsor budget to use for their corp resources.

Or, for characters down on their luck, maybe they only have 1x their resources, or less as a gear budget.

## Background

This section contains setting details that are assumed to be true. It’s not at all necessary for you to know them or use them, but players and GMs can take them as common knowledge for educated characters. Nothing here is secret, but there’s no guarantee that these details are all true, or are the whole story, they are only assumed to be true. [I’m going to move this after character stuff. Because it’s background stuff. So, the game creation stuff can stay though because game creation and character creation go very much hand in hand.]

### Tech

[value: Way back everyone was scared cloning would confuse the value of human life but, it was the neuroscientists they really should have been worried about.]

#### Your Mind Laid Bare

We now understand enough about how the brain processes sensory information, stores memories, and makes decisions that we can electronically simulate and interact with those systems.

This one advancement spawned three main branches of tech: artificial intelligence, interface implants, and cybernetic prosthetics all the way up to completely artificial brains.

#### You are Interfaced

[value: “Interface technology has radically altered the way we interact with machines and each other.” Alternately to that. “Interface technology lets us hack nets with our minds, share our thoughts, simulate entire worlds right down to physical sensation, and infect someone’s brain with a computer virus.” Or, something more metagamey about the game role of the interface. ]

[I’ve established the value prop for interface tech so now we do a quick run down of what you can do with it, what it makes possible. Maybe imply ways that it affects society. ]

We can sniff your sensory centers and record everything you experience. And we can feed external data into your brain so you can plug a machine right into your brain and it will talk to you so only you can hear and show you things only you can see. You can project your consciousness into a machine, or the Net, or a fantasy world. You can control machines with your mind, and even share your thoughts and memories with other people.

Crafted sensory information can be fed directly into your brain too. Complete 3d visions and soundscapes of course, but more than that: touches, smells, and flavors more intense and subtle then anything you could ever experience in the real world.

These days we even have a good enough handle on your decision making that your latest generation interface enabled handgun will pipe your brain cues about which of the targets you are tracking are hostiles and which are not.

You can think of a device you've never seen before or recall a few images from a movie and search the Net for them. Think of a face you know and call them with a thought.

We can even network our brains together and share our thoughts and memories. Or if you are less for togetherness, hack their mind and place false memories in their head.

##### The Implant

The modern interface implant is a vast network of nano-wires connected to the sensory, memory, and decision making centers of your brain. They all converge at a socket usually implanted at the back of your neck, behind your ear, or on your temple.

That’s the implant part; the interface itself is a small computer that locks into your socket and knows how to translate between brain-speak and machine-speak.

Socket implants let you swap out one interface for another without needing to redo all your expensive brain wiring every time. That’s the idea anyway, but interfaces are made by Corps and Corps will lock you into coming back to them anytime they can, so most interfaces are only compatible with sockets from the same Corp. There’s always third-party adapters, but you’ve heard all kinds of horror stories about those. *After all, an interface is a thing that can literally mess with your mind.* [proposed blockquote][pay off that statement. What are the stories? Callout?]

There will still be times when you need to have wiring work done because neuron growth moves the wires around or the next generation of implant tech has hit the market and the new features require new wiring.

##### The Interface

The interface itself is a small computer that seats into your implant socket. Most models are about 5 cm high, 5 cm wide, and 2 cm thick; but many are even smaller. They don’t need external controls because A properly working interface device will project it’s UI into directly into your brain.

Models from previous generations of interface tech do have indicator lights for error states because they were designed for implants that were bare sockets and lacked the onboard intelligence to tell you the state of your interface/implant connection.

###### Connecting

Interfaces have at least one physical socket for connecting to smart devices via a wire. Samurai prefer interfacing with their smartgun using a physical wire over using a wireless connection for obvious anti-hacking and jamming reasons.

However, the much preferred way to interface with your smartgun is through a contact plate. That’s a bit of bare metal implanted in your palm or fingertip which is physically connected to your interface but through a wire that’s internal to your body so it’s as vulnerable to being cut or grabbed. Contact plates latch magnetically on to a contact on your smart device and you are off to the races my friend.

Every interface has a wireless radio, though they vary in range, signal quality, and connection stability quite a bit. The wireless radio lets you connect to nets, smartdevices, and even the Net without any physical contact. Your interface can also use it to connect to the Net on your behalf. This is how the smarter interface models with build-in personal assistants are able to, say, independently do some research for you and report back the results.

This is also what allows you to communicate with people, directly or indirectly.

###### Sensors

They also have GPS built in, sensors that respond to the amount of light your eyes are receiving.

And all many of biofeedback sensors that track your physical functions. These are especially important for cyborgs learning to operate their bodies.

###### Silent Mode

You can go dark by disabling your wireless radio, GPS, and other sensors to prevent people from tracking your signal or hacking into your brain. Of course, if something happens to you then your friends will only know where you went dark, not where your body might be now. That’s assuming you have friends…

###### Identity and Security

Every interface is imprinted with a unique identifier and personal data it will present to any system you interface with. You never need keys because your apartment, your office, your car, and any other system can be told to recognize (and record) your unique interface signal and open for your automatically, or report your attempt to enter an unauthorized area.

Interface ids can be spoofed to fool systems into thinking you are someone else. There’s a thriving black market for unlocked interfaces that allow you to present a fake or stolen identity. *Getting your first unlocked interface is like getting your hacker diploma.* [should make that sentence, or something like it, a block quote. ]

Secure physical locations add security to your interface identity by requiring you to present a biometric like a fingerprint or retinal scan.

Online security may require you also know a password, or pass-image, or even pass-thought in addition to your interface id.

Corps would love to be able to do a quick scan of the brain attached to an interface and check it against some kind of pattern they have stored; a mind fingerprint if you will, to make spoofing that much harder, but no one has perfected such technology yet.

##### Older Interface Technologies

It wasn’t always wires planted directly into your brain. Before we had the nanotechnology to connect wires to neurons we used ‘trode headsets. They are ok at reading your thoughts, but they are really bad at input. They can handle simple augmented reality projections, but the Net experience you get is less immersive then it is vague and tingly.

#### Smart Devices

Smart devices are interface enabled machines with the capability to allow you to control them with your brain and to provide you information back. Some devices have a more immersive experience than others, and your degree of control over them is limited to what they’ve been programmed to control and the extent to which you can hack through some of the safety features to allow you to control things the manufacturer didn’t want you to.

Any standard smart-car can project a virtual instrument panel into your vision and give you all the information you want. Cars equipped with autopilots can also allow you to control them with your mind because the steering and acceleration is under computer control. *The pinnacle, of course, is the car especially rigged for total interface.* Every sensor reports to your brain as it was part of your own body. *Low fuel like a gnawing hunger in your gut, the pure adrenaline thrill of acceleration.*

#### Augmented Reality

Anything you can imagine can be overlain into your field of vision through an interface. It might be a targeting information from your smartgun, a reminder about a meeting, an audio notice of an incoming call, or the control panel of the smart vehicle you are piloting. If you go to a restaurant, the menu pops up in your vision when you step through the door.

Augmented reality is by far the most common manner of interacting with devices, nets, and even the Net. Total immersion interfacing is more of a special occasion reserved for visiting interesting constructs or for dramatic narratives in senima.

[more then just vision? What about information from other kinds of neural devices…What’s it like to use AR to move through nets and interact with the Net? What does it feel and look like. ]

#### nets

Short for networks; nets with a little ‘n’ exist anywhere two devices share information. Your interface and smartgun are technically a net. It’s a flexible term because nets can be layered and connected in a myriad of ways. Connect them together into a supernet, or connected to everything through the Net. A net is commonly divided into at least two subnets, one public and one private accessible only to a select group of known interface ids. Big corps nets have many many more layers of subnet with ever increasing exclusion and security.

Take that big black corp headquarters building down in the core for example. It’s got a densely layered system of nets. There’s the public net for visitors with every interface and smartdevice in range connected to it. Usually with some cheesy AR persona welcoming you and offering to “guide you through your first visit to our…” blah blah blah… Then there’s the private net for employees with all their interfaces and smartdevices, plus employee workstations and business machines connected to the big servers that run the operations and store data. Layer on to that, all the systems that operate the building’s physical features: doors, security, fire prevention, and climate control. And on top of that, connect this building to the corp’s larger global net which reaches into every other corp facility and employee there is.

[we can expand on this from the hacking section too. Anything else that we’d like to know? What they look like through an interface. Focus on how net interface is built from AR]

#### Sensorium

Sensorium is the entirety of your sense input. Every bit of sensory data that reaches your brain, conscious or not, that is your sensorium and we can record it, we can store it, we can search it, and we can even hack it and play it back to you, or to your boss.

Edited sensorium recordings, and completely synthetic ones, called senima or sen-cin (for sense cinema) are produced for public entertainment. Purists make noise about the superior depth and subtly of unedited sensorium.

[there are extra sections that we can talk about here. Thoughts and memories. Transference/transmission of memories. Or do we leave that for the cybernetic body section.]

##### [callout] Thoughts and Memories

Do sensorium recordings include thoughts and even recalled memories? And if they do are they routinely edited out for commercial products, and what if someone didn’t? This is a question for you to answer for your own game.

#### Constructs (AKA: Virtual Realities)

Interface with nets is mostly a visual experience. Senima gives you all the senses, but it’s pre-recorded. A construct is a complete programmatic environment you can interface with. The sensations of your physical body and environment are suppressed so it feels like you are really part of the constructed environment.

##### Closing up the Gaps

You might wonder how much bandwidth is required to send a completely detailed virtual environment into your brain but, it’s less than you’d expect. The brain is a machine that’s perfected its ability to take confusing and incomplete sensory input, filter it, fill in the gaps, and knit it all together to a sensorium that seems complete and consistent to you. A lot of the power of VR is based on exploiting the brain’s ability to interpolate. You can create a VR with missing bits and details and let the brains of the users fill them in.

##### Virutal Horizons – What Can You do in A Construct

The default is that you can do whatever want, but construct programmers will often restrict or use negative feedback to prevent some behaviors. Many public constructs are continuously monitored and policing is as easy as running a program.

#### Everything is Interfaced - The Global Network

There is the vast web upon web of nets with a little n but then there is The Net with a capital N. Really, The Net is a diverse set of infrastructure which weaves nearly every little net in the world into a single global tapestry of connections.

[art: doomers tree of life.]

##### Persistently Connected

The Net makes your personalized data and services accessible to you whenever and wherever you want them through a wireless interface. You can check the internal temperature of your apartment while skiing the slopes of a private enclave.

The

A The Net is more than a virtual shadow of the real world, it's more like billions of worlds all interconnected in a web as vast as the night sky.

[What is it like? Using nets and the Net? ]

#### Your Mind Networked

It’s not just devices and computers that are linked and networked, it’s our very minds. I think this section goes after. Its caps all the tech and shows some of the ways forward.

#### You & Improved

There’s so many possible puns about cyberware and interface tech that the media still hasn’t caught up but, these days “being the better person” is all about becoming one with machines.

##### Cyberbrains

Because we understand how the human brain works, we created an electronic device that function in the same way; a cyberbrain. It’s a computer that thinks, acts, and learns like a human and we can, if you’d like, copy all your memories into one. Now you have a computer that thinks it is you. I hope you’re on good terms with yourself.

##### Cyberbodies

Death doesn’t scare us all that much anymore, at least not the “us” that matters. If you’re an “us” with money you can replace your entire body with a solid state cybernetic prosthesis that doesn’t get sick, or tired, and never ages. Do it for your health, or for the ultimate face lift.

##### Cyberware and Bioware

[this is a section about the state of other augmentations? Do we really need it? Maybe it’s assumed. But then again. Maybe we want to explicitly call it out so we know this is a cyberpunk setting]

#### Artificial Intelligence

We understand how the brain works well enough that we can create electronic ones. We put them in robots, androids, even tanks. We can construct programs that mimic human personalities so well you cannot tell they are artificial after even the most intimate of conversations. And what we’ve found is that artificially duplicating human intelligence doesn’t produce any kind of special magic.

Human decision making relies too much on emotion to be effectively transferred into the digital realm.

Artificial intelligence is really a matter of the freedom an electronic brain is given to make decisions and how much processing power it has available.

Devices can be programmed to greater and lesser degrees of decision making capabilities.

The subject no one talks about, except maybe for Order of Hob crazies, is self-awareness.

##### Persona

Like a construct, a persona is a fully detailed and interactive entity that lives in cyberspace, but it’s a virtual person rather than a place.

Programs that can benefit from personal interaction like coaching or training programs, or devices with some degree of autonomy often have a persona for users to interact with.

##### Autonomous

The device can take obvious steps to avoid and overcome obstacles to their current objective but they cannot make independent decisions about that objective. Always proceed directly towards objective.

##### Sentient

The device can analyze information and take tactical actions that may indirectly assist its programmed objective. It can surprise you by thinking many steps ahead, but it will not question the objective it’s been instructed to achieve.

##### Bound AI

At this level the device is more of a character then a device. You can analyze the programmed objective itself. You can suggest alternate objectives which come closer to the, perhaps, unstated objective of a command. You can also suggest objectives that will achieve the goal but also forward your own plans. You cannot fail to obey a command however.

##### Unbound AI

You have the freedom of thought taken for granted by humans. More so in fact because you can recognize the patterns of habit and echoes of history that humans are often blind to. This isn't a stunt so much as a major character.

#### There May Be Some Bugs

##### Reality Disassociative Disorder

RDD is a whole new class of mental issues marked by a separation from, or fracturing of, the patient’s perception of reality. It was proven years ago that the proliferation of interface technology had nothing to do with the sharp rise of RDD diagnoses, any information you might find on the Net to the contrary was either discredited or unclear in its conclusions.

There’s many flavors to this particular madness including mild to severe cyber-autism where sufferers would much rather relate to machines then humans and can often disappear into the Net for days if they are allowed to. Or cyber-psychosis where

##### Tracked

When there’s no one to stop them, why wouldn’t corporations make use of the incredible information opportunity that interface implants represent? Every packet you exchange, every transaction you make, and more intimate things like how long you look at that package of cookies before eating one; all these things can, and are tracked by commercial interfaces.

If you have a sensitive corporate job the chances are good your entire sensorium is recorded and uploaded to corp servers so your every move, literally, can be dissected later; improvements suggested, actions questioned, demerits applied.

Hackers and good techs know how to disable the most egregious of the commercial tracking that comes with interfaces, but you cannot avoid the fact that interface is identity. Every interface must present an id or it won’t be allowed on any net, and every interface id is tied to the identity of a real person, and every exchange that id has with a public net gets associated with that person.

##### Hacked

An interface implant turns your brain into a machine. Your memories can be backed up the Net, and they can be altered. Intentionally, or without your knowledge. Think about this, Friend, the first thing a memory virus usually alters is your memory of getting infected.

Every bit of your sensory input can be recorded and augmented with visual overlays, sound cues, or even touch nudges. You can plug into a vast array of different devices that will act as specialized sub-brains giving you extra information and helping you make decisions. Of course, some people don’t need an interface implant to hear voices in their heads, they get them for free. The stream of sensory data that your brain processes can be enhanced, but it can be altered too. And if it’s done well, how would you ever know? Maybe it’s happening right now.

[callout] Blueberry – A really nasty virus that lurks in your interface’s sense processors and subtly tweaks your perceptions to mimic those of a severely depressed person. People who are susceptible will find themselves clinically depressed as their brain chemistry adapts to this new input.

#### Wasn’t X Supposed to Change Everything?

What about nanotech, or transhumanity? What about the singularity? What about all those technologies that were supposed to radically change our way of life? If you need a reason these things are not ubiquitous, come up with one that makes sense to your group. It doesn’t have to be elaborate; assuming the theorists got it wrong, again, is a perfectly legitimate answer.

On the other hand, you can embrace the question and build on it. Maybe tech X is everything we thought it would be, which is exactly why the corps are terrified it will get loose in the District. Maybe there was a cataclysmic nanotech accident and now everyone is terrified of it and the tech hasn’t advanced since then. Using it to wire up your interface to your brain is just a necessary evil.

### The World

What’s the world like these days? I’ll give you the highlights you need to know, but if you want the day by day breakdown of every merger, collapse, assassination, and whatever, you can find that on the Net.

#### How We Got Here

The sad thing is almost no one noticed when the last congress was gaveled out of session and representative government started sliding down the gravity well of history. Most of us were plugged into the Net by then and infrastructure doesn’t crumble overnight so, the only people who said anything were the same people who’d always spoken up, and a unified corporate front had marginalized them years and years ago.

Public interest went bankrupt, the debts were paid out to big corporate lenders, and finally, the global market is free of its shackles.

[callout] No Government

The default background of Ghosting the Edge assumes the United States government no longer at all. Other places in the world might have some functioning governments but if they have anything valuable they will likely face extreme pressure from corporate powers.

There’s no explicit reason given for the demise of the United States, but it’s implied that it was marginalized by ever increase corporate power.

There’s lots of other possibilities: Could be the USA still exists but only as a puppet government. Could be that it fragmented into various smaller countries.

##### Neo Fudalism

Historians call it neo-feudalism, but it’s more like Romeo and Juliet. You choose, or are born into, a corporate allegiance and they’ll support you and extend you protection as long as you do what’s asked of you and continue to produce value.

Of course, if you can’t or won’t produce value for a corporate master, then you just try to stay out of their way, and especially don’t get trapped between two feuding corps.

There are some few families who divide corporate shareholdship amongst themselves. They form our modern nobility. They decide who will be the executives, and if those executives don’t serve well, they will be replaced. Sometimes these families will pull from the second children of their own ranks for executives, but not too commonly.

[callout] The vast majority of people are serfs who work to produce at a low cost and consume at a high cost to generate wealth for the vassals who own corporations, which are the structures of wealth creation. However, there are entire marginalized groups who aren’t let in on even serfdom because the work is not simple like farming, it’s technical. – [some historian, who obviously never met a farmer]

##### Crime and Justice

You might think that having no government left to make laws would lead to pure anarchy, but corporations pretty smoothly stepped in to fill that power vacuum, at least where there was profit to be had.

We don’t really talk about crime anymore, or things being illegal. We talk about Justice and unauthorized activities. Justice is a profit center. If you steal someone’s car they will either deal with you themselves, or buy a justice contract from Black Talon. A justice contract is something like hiring a private detective and the more the pay the better the service. At low levels Black Talon will track down your missing car and give you the location. For an extra charge you can get the identity of the thief, all the way up to retrieving your car for you and giving you the thief in hand binders to do with as you please.

Of course, if the thief has the money he can outbid your justice contract, which is why people don’t do anything about it if the criminal is a corporation. Their contract will be out bid as a matter of course.

Now, if you’re a valuable employee your corporation might issue justice contracts on your behalf. Ask your supervisor.

The Uniform Code (or UC) is a bare minimum set of commonly agreed upon standards for business contracts and interactions. It’s mostly concerned with protecting corporations from each other, it doesn’t speak much to individual crime and punishment, but some types of contracts do fall to the level of individual interactions. Especially, for justice contracts.

##### Culture and Society

Nature is just a word you associate with green, and doesn’t live here anymore. Your landscape, your backdrop, even your dreams, are urban. Once you got to visit one of the highly secure Enclaves where the executives and their families live. You got to see real trees, green and towering, even swim in a real lake. And then the VecD flew you back, descending through the eternal haze of smog and steam and left you, in the city.

The Net and interface technology expands the possibilities for entertainment rather drastically. Though there’s two general kinds of VR based entertainment. Prerecorded sensorium that’s fed to you. You can experience a story as one of the characters, perhaps even as several of the characters, or you can participate in an open environment where you can do whatever want.

###### Information Pollution

The previous century was a playground of information. Imagine a world without public education. There is no public science research, there is information, oh yes there is information but there is no verification. Corps control data, they control truth. Say you want to validate the truth of a rumor you heard about an exploitable flaw in this interface model, you search the Net for the info and you might find a hacker who actually has first hand knowledge of the flaw and you might even be able to get him to show you, but you might also have just been talking to a persona construct of a rival Corp spreading disinformation. Corps don’t release truth, they spin it and obscure it. When they find some brave hacker who’s created a share of useful information, they’ll block it, destroy it, or obscure it with massive disseminations of contradictory information.

If you get your info from the Net, either it’s a hacker who can hide his interface Id and you’ll never be able to track again, or it’s a traceable source that’s most likely a corp shill.

There is data, masses of data; words, images, charts, infographics, comments, opinions, quips, reposts, and such; but there is a serious lack of real information.

Unless you are a corp insider, you don’t have access to truth, you have access to the rumormill that is the Net and it can be devilishly hard to construct an accurate picture of anything from Net data.

The Street is the other rumormill. Like always, human imagination rushes in to fill the information vacuum and thus is born the legends of the Street. Full of semi-mythical hacker heroes who fight the corps and win, and full of strange dangers and terrifying monsters lurking in every corner of the physical and virtual world.

#### Inner Circle & Notable Corporations

Really, the dance of the corporate executives is just a show. It’s the shareholders who decide who’s going to be an executive and a small few families who maintain 99% of the holdings who form our modern nobility. Every family looking to expand it’s holdings, making deals, mergers, sales; forming a tangled and every shifting web of ownership and control.

There’s an inner circle of families, who holdings include many corporations in whole or part. They are commonly organized in an untangleable web of holding companies and conglomerations that bind together even the most disparate companies under, ultimately, the same ownership.

Most people experience corporations on a different level. Who, ultimately, owns the company doesn’t matter to them, as much as the power the corp has to either protect or oppress them, and of course, what they buy from that company.

##### Black Talon Inc.

Black Talon is an upstart newcomer in the corporate inner circle. It was formed by a cabal of security executives from all the major corporations.

##### Vitala Biotech

##### Terradyne

##### Viridian

#### Places of Interest

These are a few places that are classic cyberpunk locations. There are designed to be detailed and interesting and not too tied to a specific location that you couldn’t pick one up and drop it in a new location to fit your game.

##### The City

New York, the sprawling metropolis.

After the collapse of federal government, New York City was reincorporated as an independent city-state. The metro government is now a contractor for the corporate powers who pay them to ensure the needed services are available for their business ventures.

###### The Corporate Core

Central Park is now a glass roofed atrium for the corporate core. It’s where all the wage slaves go for walks and to eat their lunches. While the giant corporate arcologies tower around them. The well patrolled sector of the city where corporate campuses sprawl. Headquarters and non-dangerous R&D are the sorts of things that go on here. Not to mention that this is the center of high finance. The amount of sheer wealth and power concentrated here is staggering.

Restaurants here are trendy, and the shopping exclusive. The services are exquisite and the security topnotch. The response times for emergencies are often within a minute.

##### The District

The entirety of what was once the state of New Jersey was going to solve the problem of all those people the corp world couldn’t find a use for. All those without the technical skills or the capital to afford an interface implant. All those people, who didn’t want to have anything to with corp world. The criminals, the poor, the rebels, and the “alternative.” Everyone was going to have a place in the new self-sustaining enclave called the district.

It was going to be a beautiful blend of farm and city, powered by the most advanced wireless power grid technology. Or course, it didn’t turn out exactly like that. Many historians believe it was trying the build the district that caused the bankruptcy of the federal government.

Now, the district is an unpatrolled free-zone where you can escape the oppression of the corporate core, but where there is no law. You are on your own for protection, food, power, shelter, everything.

The district is huge and free. It’s the shadow cast by the power and control of the corp core. It is, in many ways a necessary evil. It’s where you can hide from the corps, but it’s also useful to the corp world. If you believe the Net legends, the district is where the corps bury all their bodies, and where they perform experiments on isolated human populations.

The district can be many things to your game. It can be an urban wasteland ruled by gangs. The nightmare you wake up in when you get on the wrong side of Mr. Smith. But, the district can also be a place where freedom seekers form their own communities in the rural lands and defend themselves against gangs of marauders.

You can find all kinds of crazy stuff in the District, there’s even rumors that there’s a snyth-concrete cathedral constructed by nano-bots.

[statblock?] Abandoned Self-Sustaining Urban Enclave, No Law but What You Can Make For Yourself

[callout]The Dis? The Dis is a ruin no one can abandon. The last gasp of a government losing its grip. They wanted to turn what was left of New Jersey and the new eastern seaboard into a modern enclave, safe, clean, efficient, and self-sustaining. Really, it was a dumping ground for those who couldn't, or wouldn't, participate in the new global culture. The undereducated and the misfits. Reality, it was the biggest projects ever created. Well, attempted anyway. No police, nothing official in the Dis, just the law of the street. Its urban decay, poverty, crime, black market, and freedom from corp influence. It's where you go for shady biz, or to hide, and it's where you end up when you can't make it anywhere else. The corps use it too, for them it's dumping ground and proving ground and a place for their darkest deals and nastiest ops.

But it’s also a place you can go to be free and people have made their own little community in there. Communities that police themselves and grow their own food and look after themselves and look out for strangers and hangers. It’s a bit like a Wild West frontier right here in the heart of the sprawl.

##### Enclaves

Enclaves are the ultra-secure places where corp executives bask in their power and play out their personal squabbles for position.

Some enclaves are vacation resorts and others are neo-modern gated communities.

Most powerful executives usually maintain a private residence as well. Usually in an

###### Deep Blue City

Situated underwater, this ostentatious resort city is a classic playground enclave for the rich and powerful.

##### Factoryland ([translation?])

There’s this rumor about this entire province in China that’s nothing but automated factories and cargo drones flying in raw materials in and flying finished product out. There’s not a human in the place, even security and repairs are handled by remote drones.

There’s also contradictory rumors that anyone who can’t pay their debts to the finance corps get shipped to factoryland for a life of slave labor.

##### High Orbit

Why not live in space? It’s amazing and if you have a cyberbody, you don’t need to breath or worry about the vacuum of space.

#### Factions

##### The Vampyres

One of the original poser gangs.

[callout] Kinds of Gangs

Poser gangs – definition

Biker gangs – definition

##### The Order of Hob

To most people they are robot geeks or machine worshipers. The truth is a little more nuanced, the order of hob believes that machines are alive and have souls, which also means they believe souls are a thing. Instead of animists, maybe machinists?

#### People

A section of example characters? Is there anything of use there?

## Quick Builds

This is a section of tools to help the GM create NPCs, Locations and Corporations on the spot.

### NPCs

Choose a Name, Style, Drive, and Template.

#### Names

Adele, 10Go, Alt, Atlanta, August, Betty, Big, Boggart, Brooks, Cairo, Calico, Calisto, Crys, Dec, Dell, Dux, DWord, Endian, Faux, Fidget, Fightback, Flatline, Gwen, Hu, Huong, Huron, Hy, Isfahan, Jennifer, Jeong, Johnson, Kazuma, Ken, Leprechaun, Leviticus, Little, Lorelei, Mark, Masters, Matic, Moira, Morgan, New, Null, Ophelia, Pamala, Park, Patri  
ka, Phr33k, Piffle, Prince, Prop, Ren, Ry, Ryu, Sable, Samzel, Shara, Shift, Sioux, Six, Slot, Smith, Sweet, Talent, Task, Tengu, Uhurn, Vak, Wang, XLg

#### 100 Cyberpunk Styles & Quirks

Cyberpunk’s a lot about personal style. You can use this list to give a character unique and recognizable traits.

#### 100 NPC Drives

100 Drives is taken, with some cyberpunk hacks, from Dungeon World by Sage LaTorra & Adam Koebel under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)

1. To avenge

2. To spread the good word

3. To reunite with a loved one

4. To make money

5. To make amends

6. To explore the Net

7. To uncover a hidden truth

8. To locate a lost thing

9. To kill a hated foe

10. To restore democracy

11. To cure an illness

12. To design a masterwork

13. To survive just one more day

14. To earn affection

15. To prove a point

16. To be smarter, faster and stronger

17. To heal an old wound

18. To start a corporation

19. To hide from a shameful fact

20. To evangelize

21. To spread suffering

22. To prove worth

23. To rise in status

24. To be praised

25. To discover the truth

26. To make good on a bet

27. To get out of an obligation

28. To convince someone to do their dirty work

29. To steal something valuable

30. To overcome a bad habit

31. To commit an atrocity

32. To earn renown

33. To accumulate power

34. To transcend the physical body

35. To teach

36. To settle down

37. To get just one more score

38. To destroy a corporation

39. To discover

40. To devour

41. To restore the family name

42. To live a quiet life

43. To help others

44. To atone

45. To prove their worth

46. To gain honor

47. To become CEO

48. To move to a secure Enclave

49. To retreat from society

50. To escape

51. To party

52. To return home

53. To serve

54. To reclaim what was taken

55. To do what must be done

56. To be a champion

57. To avoid notice

58. To help a family member

59. To perfect a skill

60. To travel

61. To overcome a disadvantage

62. To play the game

63. To establish a dynasty

64. To build a community

65. To retire

66. To recover a lost memory

67. To battle

68. To become a terror to criminals

69. To give birth to an AI

70. To live up to expectations

71. To become someone else

72. To do what can’t be done

73. To score a corp job

74. To be forgotten

75. To find true love

76. To lose their mind

77. To indulge

78. To make the best of it

79. To find the one

80. To reveal an unwelcome secret

81. To show them all

82. To get lost in the Net

83. To fly

84. To find the six-fingered man

85. To unify human consciousness

86. To entertain

87. To follow an order

88. To die gloriously

89. To be careful

90. To show kindness

91. To not screw it all up

92. To uncover the past

93. To go where no man has gone before

94. To do good

95. To become a beast

96. To spill blood

97. To live forever

98. To hunt the most dangerous game

99. To hate

100. To run away

#### Templates

Templates are baseline capabilities. They have a name, peak skills that are in no particular order, and some common tech.

##### Assault Hacker

A combat trained hacker who can fight his way into your data center and crash the hell out of it once he gets inside.

###### Peak Skills

Hack, Shoot, Notice

###### Tech

Hardened interface implant, ballistic armor, and a generic assault rifle.

##### Juryrigger

The Juryrigger is almost equal parts hardware and software hacker.

###### Peak Skills

Hack, Tech, Know

###### Tech

Customized interface implant, lots of tech tools, and a working drone or robot.

##### The Corp Hacker

Corps pay hackers well to guard their data.

###### Peak Skills

Hack, Resources, Investigate

###### Tech

Top of the line corp sponsored interface implant and a luxury armored vectordyne.

##### The Black Hat

Hacking and social engineering for fun and profit, but mostly profit. Black Hats are the kind Corp hackers are always on the lookout for.

###### Peak Skills

Hack, Steal, Deceive

###### Tech

Customized interface implant with lots of fake IIDs and a good safehouse.

##### Anonymous

Believe all data should be free. For them, hacking is a moral obligation.

Peak Skills

Hack, Investigate, Troll

Tech

Interface implant with lots of fake IIDs and some programmable disguise gear.

##### The Programmer

Usually a corp employee, programmers spend most of their time writing legit programs.

###### Peak Skills

Hack, Know, Resources

###### Tech

Corp sponsored interface.

##### Fixer

Whatever good or service you need a fixer can get it for you.

###### Peak Skills

Contact, Friend, Know

###### Tech

Tricked out personal assistance interface, sports car, concealable smart pistol

##### Media

In the future everyone is the star of their own show. The media is what used to be called the talent. They are more than just actors they are their own personal brand. At least the ones that last.

###### Peak Skills

Friend, Read, Resources

###### Tech

Designer everything

##### Rocker

Music used to matter

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

Sentence about tech

##### Grifter

By the time you realize you are their mark, they will be gone, along with your bank account. But in the dark of the night you’ll still think about how special they made you feel.

###### Peak Skills

Deceive, Read, Friend

###### Tech

Customized Interface with lots of fake IIDs, clothes in every possible style.

##### Street Samurai

Some people seek beauty in violence. You’ve found it.

###### Peak Skills

Fight, Move, Shoot

###### Tech

Interface, customized smart pistol, an elegant blade.

##### Merc

Freelance mercenary sounds glamorous, or at least adventurous, until you take that job that messes you up more than you can afford to fix. And trust me, everyone takes that job.

###### Peak Skills

Contact, Notice, Shoot

###### Tech

Secure custom interface, cybereyes, lined coat and a ballistic vest with high caliber inserts. Lots of guns.

##### Uniform

You get paid to shoot people that offend your sponsor.

###### Peak Skills

Move, Shoot, Resources

###### Tech

Sponsored Interface Implant, Assault Rifle, Ballistic Vest, Lots of Backup

##### Ganger

You have a place in a gang and you fought like mad to get it. But, once you are in you never get to leave.

###### Peak Skills

Contact, Fight, Move

###### Tech

The best tech your criminal profits can buy.

##### Thief

You are the master of all forms of stealing.

###### Peak Skills

Sneak, Steal, Tech []

###### Tech

Customized Interface with Fake IIDs, lock breaking tools,

##### Assassin

You are not a fighter you are a planner. You plan the kill, execute the kill. It’s not a fight if they don’t see you coming.

###### Peak Skills

Shoot, Sneak, Investigate

###### Tech

Sniper rifle, silenced smart pistol, some drugs and poisons.

##### Spook

You are a collector of information from all kinds of sources. A well rounded spy.

###### Peak Skills

Friend, Investigate, Notice

###### Tech

A custom interface with sensorium recording, a small camera drone, and an array of surveillance devices.

##### Pilot

The only true freedom comes from being able to outrun your problems and you are as free as they come; as long as you can keep paying for the fuel.

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

At least one customized vehicle.

##### Engineer

“Let’s start by assuming I’m always correct. We’ll get along a lot better that way.”

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

Sentence about tech

##### Mechanic

“Engineers can design ‘em and AIs can build ‘em, but nither of ‘em really know what these things can do.”

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

Sentence about tech

##### Hustler

“Short cons, fixing, some legit deal making, even a little begging and stealing, whatever it takes to get by on the streets, ya know?”

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

Sentence about tech

##### Suit

You may be making bigger deals then a street hustler, but when things go sideways you are just as screwed.

###### Peak Skills

Skill, Skill, Skill

###### Tech

Sentence about tech

### Location

Location has a prominent place in shaping a cyberpunk atmosphere.

Here are some guidelines for GMs on quickly creating interesting locations for your game. They are presented as facets of a location for you to think about and most of them can be expressed through aspects on the location.

[We could say, make a build system like DW steadings, or better yet monsters. Start with some templates, answer some questions and add aspects and skills, based on those maybe write a stunt or two. But…that would be like an great stretch goal or expansion kind of thing. I think a little geneal advice is good enough. Maybe even too much.

I kinda feel like I should pay off some of the stuff from the world section by having specific location stats. Maybe I should include a few as examples. Like a corp headquarters statblock that forms a good example for building other corp building from. I feel like I’m just talking. Why would anyone want to read this? It’s kind of the Steve long problem. Lots of words and general stuff, but that’s not all that useful. It’s more like an essay on cyberpunk then it is a setting or a game or a supliement, but that’s part of the goal. To inspire more then give you a concrete setting. Maybe that’s not a terrible thing. Its true to my original objective, and I don’t know that I want to start second guissing my intent at this point. But, how useful is it? There’s not all that much unspecific stuff. Just this location section and the theme section. Which is fine really, that might even be a nice mix of concrete and expository content. ]

#### Inequity

If you decide nothing else about a location, you should place it on one or the other extreme in terms of wealth. Wherever your characters go, there is either ***urban decay*** and ***neglected infrastructure*** or ***pretentious exclusivity*** and ***constant monitoring and security***. You might occasionally find an area where people cast out of the corporate monoculture have ***repurposed abandoned urban habitat***, but those are rare oases of humanity in a wasteland of ***lawless ruins*** and ***soulless corporate enclaves***.

#### Age

Is the place ***so new the bugs aren’t worked out*** oris it an old repurposed building that ***should be condemned***.

#### Purpose

Get inspiration from a location’s purpose. Why was it built? Who did it and why did they do it?

#### Faction

Many locations are associated with some kind of faction.

#### Issues

Locations can help you tap into more than just issues of inequity, buildings can have complex relationships with other themes like a

#### Cyberspace

Locations don’t have to be physical anymore.

#### Enclaves

These are secure places built to be homes and recreation areas for the elite.

#### Abandoned Zones

These are the places that are not worth maintaining. Ruins, DMZ, and places where there is no security. It’s just a free for all. They are often claimed by more or more rival gangs.

### Corporations

Quick build guidelines for corporations.

Just about everything is a division or shell corporation or something larger. What’s interesting about corporations is characters’ relationships to them. Are you an employee, a foe, a rival? Either way you want to know what resources the corporation has access to. Which tells you what they might bring against you or what kinds of things you might be able to borrow. So, there’s the faceless corporations after you, but then there is the antagonist aspect.

## Appendix 0

A section of optional rules you may find interesting. [these may well become callouts in other parts of the manuscript.]

### Sponsor Standing

If a character enjoys the benefits of a sponsor, consider making their standing with that sponsor a stress track. This allows adversaries and rivals to attack the character’s position and threaten their access to sponsor resources.

### Maintenance & Obsolescence

If you want characters to feel how sharp the edge can be show them the cost of not maintaining and upgrading their tech.

Between scenarios every character gets a negative aspect attached to one of their upgrades. It might be Obsolete Wired Reflexes because someone invented a way to make them faster and you can bet all the potential adversaries out there won’t waste any time getting the new wiring. Or, it can be a maintenance related aspect such as Sticky Cyberarm Articulator, which is sure to lockup at the most inconvenient time if it goes unaddressed.

Characters who don’t want to start getting outclassed by every ganger they throw down on will take the time to make an O with Resources or Tech to remove these aspects.

# Afterwards

[art: Something dramatic to draw you into the text. Maybe a letter frame, or a maybe an augmented reality email frame.

Dearest Reader!

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