

PLAYERS **HANDBOOK**

ALPHA COMPLEX

REFERENCE: 0109448626612

FOR OFFICIAL TROUBLESHOOTER USE ONLY

PARANOIA

PLAYERS HANDBOOK

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GENTLEMAN TONE CZAR: Ken Rolston

**START WITH THIS BOOK TO BECOME
A PROUD TROUBLESHOOTER OF ALPHA COMPLEX**



The Computer endorses and approves this Celebration of the Selfless Labour of this list of Citizens and Condemned Traitors

CONTENTS

HOW TO BE A TROUBLESHOOTER	4
CHARACTER CREATION	14
BASIC MECHANICS, OR DOING THINGS, OR HOW TO SOLVE SIMPLE PROBLEMS FOR YOUR FRIEND THE COMPUTER	24
COMBAT	34
USING YOUR CEREBRAL CORETECH	49
XP POINTS, OR BETTER LIVING THROUGH GAMIFICATION	51
EQUIPMENT	57
HOW DO YOU JOIN A SECRET SOCIETY?	62
ALL SET	65
XP POINT REWARD PROGRAM	66



HOW TO BE A TROUBLESHOOTER

- SECTION 1

This section of the book will teach you how to create a *Paranoia* character in the world of Alpha Complex, explain what they can and can't do and show you how to do it. It'll explain how to investigate crime and terrorism, how to fight people and destroy things, what happens if your character is hurt and how to improve a character's abilities and status.

But what does all that look like?

Seven players have gathered to play *Paranoia*. They are:

Anthony Wright, playing Ant-R-GCC-5

Peter Endean, playing Peetey-B-BRU-5

Manar Hussain, playing Blu-B-SKY-4

Carl Schelin, playing Carl-B-GDE-4

Marian McBrine, playing Mary-I-MAC-1

Billy Darios, playing Basil-V-FIN-3

The Gamesmaster (GM)

The plot so far: Evil terrorists have somehow scrambled the security clearances of all citizens, causing widespread chaos. The Troubleshooters, who are also affected by this, are helping High Programmer Lord-U-BER to a safe terminal where he can restore the system from a backup copy he keeps in his head. At present they are wading along a Warm Red Soup duct on their way to sector BER.

GM: Who's in the lead?

Everyone except Ant-R: Not me!

Ant-R: Not... not fast enough. I suppose it's me.

GM: Make a roll on Brains + Guns

Ant-R: Okay, my NODE is three. (He rolls three dice plus the Computer dice.) 2, 2, 4, 6. One success.

GM: You hear a faint noise from ahead down the tunnel, a sucking thunk, but you can't identify it.

Peetey-B: Is it a tunnel squid?

GM: You didn't hear it, you can't tell.

Ant-R: The Computer would want us to move on. We move on.

Blu-B: Wait a minute, I'm team leader. I decide if we move on. And the Computer would want us to move on, so we move on.

(Everyone agrees with Blu-B's strong leadership and firm decision-making.)



GM: As you move on, there's a crash. Something shatters the heavy lantern that Carl-B is carrying. Everything goes dark. Ant-R, you realise that the noise was the unmistakable sound of a gauss rifle being cocked under soup.

Carl-B: I start shooting!

GM: It's dark.

Carl-B: I have one point of Moxie left so I'm feeling really tense about things. The laser bolts will light up the tunnel. I'm going to shoot stuff.

GM: Make a roll not to destroy anything important.

Carl-B: Violence plus Guns gives me a NODE of four. (He rolls four dice plus the Computer dice.) Uh oh.

GM: Did you roll a Computer? That means you've lost your last point of Moxie. You've lost it and you're freaking out. Anyway, you definitely hit something. There's a crash and a siren starts going off somewhere far away. Nearer to you, a voice in the darkness shouts: 'Stop firing! We're on a mission from the Computer!'

Mary-I: 'No, WE'RE on a mission from the Computer! And we've got a High Programmer with us!'

GM: The voice shouts: 'Oh yeah? Well we've got High Programmer Lord-U-BER, the best High Programmer!' Another voice shouts: 'Yes! Stand down, Troubleshooters, so that I, the best High Programmer, may pass!'

Mary-I: Wait, that's not— I turn to look at Lord-U-BER.

GM: It's dark, you can't see anything. Carl-B, you are in a fragile mental place.

Carl-B: It's dark and warm and smells of soup. I imagine I am back in my clone vat.

GM: Fair enough.

Blu-B: Does anyone have a light source? The Computer would want us to have a light source.

Basil-V: I'm the Equipment Officer. Can I rig a power-pack to overclock the glowy readouts on the Geiger counter to create light? Mechanics plus Engineering.

GM: Sure, but you're in the dark so it's going to be harder.

Basil-V: (rolls dice). One success is not going to be enough, is it?

GM: No. The Geiger Counter is making a noise, however.

Mary-I: I ask the Computer to download a nightsight software package to my Cerebral Coretech.

GM: It's 200 XP points

Mary-I: Sold.

GM: One 0WL1-ZX dark-vision sensor pack installing. I'll tell you when it's ready. The siren is getting louder. The voice down the tunnel shouts: 'Are you going to let us past?'

Carl-B: 'Show us your Lord-U-BER! so we can compare them' I shout.

Ant-R: Oh great, now they know we have a Lord-U-BER too.

GM: 'We can't show you anything, it's dark!' Mary-I, your upgrade has installed.

Mary-I: I look down the tunnel. What can I see?

GM: Three figures. Your Cerebral Coretech clearly identifies one of them as being Lord-U-BER, on his last clone. Siren's quite loud now. The three figures are turning away from you and firing at something away down the tunnel.

Mary-I: I look at our Lord-U-BER.

GM: You don't have a Lord-U-BER any more. Instead, you have two Blu-B-SKYs.

Carl-B: One of them is clearly a mutant traitor! I'm freaking out even more! It's fifty-fifty. I shoot both of them to be sure.

Peetey-B: I shoot Carl-B before he can shoot either Blu-B.

Blu-B: I dive under the soup, report on the situation to the Computer and ask for guidance.

GM: None of you except Mary-I can do anything because you can't see what's happening but the duct is suddenly flooded with welcome light – as a massive duct-maintenance bot sweeps towards you, its siren blaring, pushing a tidal wave of Warm Red Soup, the other Troubleshooters and what is probably Lord-U-BER towards you. Everyone make a Violence + Athletics roll.

Carl-B: Mmm, soup.

THE CHARACTER SHEET

The characters are at the heart of any role-playing game and at the centre of every character is their character sheet, a document of who they are and what they can do in the game. These names and numbers do not exist in the game-world, except that they sort-of do but we'll cover that later.

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM

► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: SECURITY CLEARANCE: HOME SECTOR: CLONE#:

GENDER: PERSONALITY:

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: CHUTZPAH: BRAINS: MECHANICS:

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BLUFF	<input type="checkbox"/>	OPERATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
GUNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSYCHOLOGY	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHARM	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGINEER	<input type="checkbox"/>
MELEE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BUREAUCRACY	<input type="checkbox"/>	INTIMIDATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
THROW	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/>	STEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>



WOUNDS >>>

HURT INJURED MAIMED DEAD

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

This is what it all means:

The CORE INFORMATION box at the top contains things like your character's name, their home sector, their security clearance and a few other bits of information about them as a person. Don't fill this in yet.

TREASON STARS show how much the Computer trusts them. It's zero stars right now. Try to keep it that way.

STATS and SKILLS indicate what your character can do in the game and how well they can do it. Stats can go up to 4; Skills can have values from +5 to -5. There's a fuller explanation of each one coming up in a moment.

Moxie is an indication of how in-control the character is. A high Moxie indicates unflappable calm, a low Moxie means someone who's nervous and jumps at loud noises. A high Moxie is grace under pressure; a low one is grace hiding under a table. There's more about Moxie on page 28.

MEMORY is where you record the files that your character has stored in their AugMem. The section at the end shows how much storage you have in ZB (ZB, like XP, doesn't stand for anything). Under that, list everything you have saved to AugMem, including video and audio recordings, new skills packages, holovid shows, important documentation, Cerebral Coretech wallpaper packages and so on. Your GM will tell you how much space each one takes up.

STATS AND SKILLS

- S T A T S

Stats are your character's four core abilities. They have a range of 0–4, the higher the better.

Since everyone in Alpha Complex is a clone you may think they all start life with the same abilities; if you do think that then report for immediate re-edification. All clones start with the same potential but it is up to them to choose how to use that potential. They do this with their Stats and Skills.

The four Stats are:

VIOLENCE: Do you know often violence arises as part of the normal duties of a Troubleshooter? Recent reports indicate that it's present in 107% of missions (We calculated the percentage by comparing the total volume of blood lost to the total number of Troubleshooters assigned last yearcycle). Violence is a measure of a character's physical fitness, combat ability, level-headedness and general willingness to inflict fatal harm on a terrorist. You'll use Violence when fighting, running, jumping, chasing, fleeing, forcibly gaining information, pushing and shoving, or otherwise acting with immediate, physical results against another character or object.



BRAINS: Your brain is your most important asset, which is why the Computer has it backed up on some of the least unreliable Memtech servers (That explains why, sometimes, when you have to think particularly hard, you may encounter buffering or a slight loss of vision quality in accordance with our Fair Usage Policy on bandwidth). Brains is a measure of intelligence, perception, knowledge, intuition and problem-solving ability. You'll use Brains when you're thinking, remembering, searching, noticing, solving, scanning or interpreting.

MECHANICS: Alpha Complex is a highly automated society. Bots are your friends and computers make your life easier, so it pays to have the knack when it comes to interacting with them. A high score in Mechanics won't help you interact with the Computer, because the way the Computer interacts with citizens is beyond criticism. (Anyone experiencing teething difficulties with the recent combination of in-eye display units and touchscreen hardware will be provided with one pair of protective gloves per mission). Mechanics is a measure of your ability to interact with bots, computers, machines and other technical, digital or robotic things. You'll use Mechanics when you build, program, repair, modify, hack, jury-rig, sabotage, reinforce or weaken any device, machinery or electronics.

CHUTZPAH: The Computer is your friend. But do you know who else is your friend? Any Troubleshooter with a high Chutzpah score, of course (Having a higher Chutzpah score than the Computer is treason. Befriending a terrorist is treason. Having a Best Friend other than the Computer is treason)! Chutzpah is a measure of your social ability, wit, persuasion, charm, adaptability, bravery, authority and willingness to do whatever it takes to succeed. You'll use Chutzpah when you lie, cheat, steal, hide, sneak, charm, threaten, hustle, persuade, convince, maintain a front, or command.

- S K I L L S

Skills have a narrower focus than Stats, and handle individual areas of expertise. When you roll a number of dice (see page 24), you'll add more dice depending on the level of your most relevant skill. We've grouped the skills by the Stat that they're most commonly used with but you shouldn't let that stop you from trying to combine them in inventive ways.

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH VIOLENCE

ATHLETICS: General physical fitness and ability. Add ATHLETICS dice to your roll when you run, jump, climb, chase, flee, push, pull, drag or wrestle.

GUNS: Proficiency and knowledge of ranged weaponry. Add GUNS dice to your roll when you shoot, plan an ambush, reload in the middle of a firefight, examine a scene for ballistic evidence or geek out about magazine sizes with fellow gun-nuts.

MELEE: Hand-to-hand and standard close-combat weapons. Add MELEE dice to your roll when you: brawl, spar, restrain, club, stab, examine violent crime scenes or clean up a surprise knife murder.

THROW: Hurling stuff, particularly grenades and knives but anything the character can lift. Add THROW dice to your roll when chucking things at things or away from things. The result indicates both the accuracy and distance of the throw. Throw also includes catching ability because of reasons.



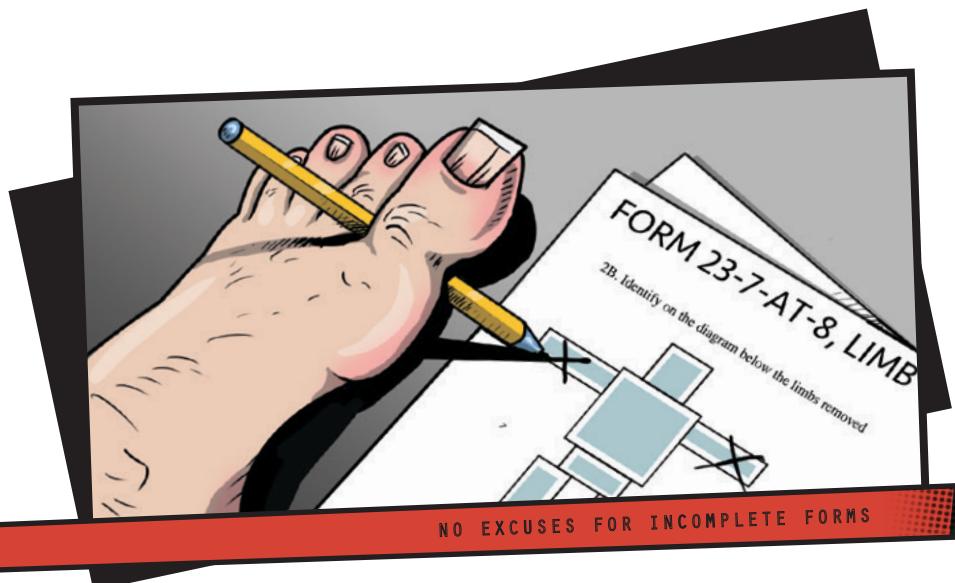
SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH BRAINS

SCIENCE: General knowledge of the sciences and ability to correlate and assess raw information. Add SCIENCE dice to your roll when you study, assess, experiment, mix chemicals, calculate or ‘correct’ people with how much you know about String Theory.

PSYCHOLOGY: Understanding of the human brain and behaviour patterns. Add PSYCHOLOGY dice to your roll when you predict, analyse, interrogate, confuse or manipulate.

BUREAUCRACY: Knowledge of, and intuition around, the multiple levels of bureaucracy that keep Alpha Complex working in perfect order. Add BUREAUCRACY dice to your roll when you use forms, documents or identification, pull rank, cite a long-forgotten regulation or get your way by doing things by the book.

ALPHA COMPLEX: General knowledge of your surroundings and the way things work around here. Add ALPHA COMPLEX dice to your roll when you: remember floor plans, work out who the most influential clone is in this sector, find a comnode or network access point, navigate hidden routes or get a feel for an area you’ve not explored before.



NO EXCUSES FOR INCOMPLETE FORMS

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH CHUTZPAH

BLUFF: Expertise at carrying off falsehoods. A high BLUFF score is usually grounds for suspicion of treason. Add BLUFF dice to your roll when you disguise, omit information, lie, feint, spot a falsehood or fast-talk.

CHARM: Use of positive reinforcement. Add CHARM dice to your roll when you persuade, butter up, bootlick, present to camera, make a good first impression or grin through the pain.

INTIMIDATE: Use of negative reinforcement. Add INTIMIDATE dice to your roll when you threaten, scare, bluster, use your authority, command or torture others.

STEALTH: The ability to evade the surveillance of hostile parties. Add STEALTH dice to your roll when you hide, sneak, evade, pickpocket, smuggle or blend in to a crowd.

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH MECHANICS

OPERATE: Manual operation of machinery. Add OPERATE dice to your roll when you: drive, fly, hover, perform stunts, chase, flee or ram when you're in control of a vehicle.

ENGINEER: Ability to interact with machinery. Add ENGINEER dice to your roll when you: build, repair, jury-rig, sabotage or modify a machine, device or robot.

PROGRAM: Aptitude with computer programs. Add PROGRAM dice to your roll when you: repair, modify, build, hack, disable, sabotage or gain forced entry to a computer system. (Not the Computer, however.)

DEMOLITIONS: Safe handling and use of explosives. Add DEMOLITIONS dice to your roll when you: blow things up, examine bomb sites for evidence, defuse explosives or create explosive compounds from seemingly innocuous chemicals.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Under each group of skills on your character sheet are blank spaces for a couple more. You don't get these yet. They can come as downloadable upgrades for a specific mission objective, they can come from specialist learning or discovery of a new field of knowledge or they can be taught by someone with unique talents and the willingness to pass them on. Your GM will let you know about them when the time is right.

CHARACTER CREATION

- SECTION 1.1

Character creation – making the character you'll play in the game, known as a ‘player character’ – starts way before anyone gets their character sheets. Usually it starts before anyone actually arrives to play the game and sometimes it started decades ago.

Every group of players will have a dynamic with friendships, likes and dislikes, favourites, animosities and simmering resentments. A party of characters should have a similar dynamic and most character creation systems don't model that at all. So *Paranoia* has a party-creation system – each player builds a character to play in the game, but you're able to affect the making of other people's characters and that creates tensions and links within the group that will transfer into play, all without tearing the group apart in petty feuds and minor incidents of attempted homicide... or at least that's the plan.

So the players will go through character creation as a group, with all of your group's existing vibes, tensions and lapsed restraining orders. On the other hand you can do it solo, particularly if you've joined the group late or all your clones have been killed and you've got to start again. There's a system for that on page 20 but you should only use it as a last resort.

GROUP CHARACTER GENERATION

When you're doing it in a group, with players and GM all together around the table maintaining the facade of friendship and the bonhomie of co-operative gameplay and shared story spaces and nobody hogging the crisps, then character creation goes through these six stages:

- **DEFINE**
- **SKILLS**
- **STATS**
- **OPTIMISING**
- **DETAILS**
- **REDEFINE**

1. DEFINE

Everyone gets a blank character sheet. Choose a character name, appearance and gender. The GM will tell you what your starting security clearance is: most likely Red but possibly not. Also choose three adjectives that describe your character – probably positive ones but it's up to you – and write them down under 'Personality'.

GENDER AND SEXUAL PREFERENCES IN ALPHA COMPLEX

Thanks to hormone suppressants, extensive cloning facilities, real-time pixelation of genitals and genetically modified bodies and minds, gender isn't as big a concern to the citizens of Alpha Complex as it is to today's society – gender discrimination is treasonous because it wastes valuable time. Women, men, cisgender, transgender, non-binary and intersex people are all equally capable of serving the Computer, and all of them work equally well as reactor shielding should they fail in their duties, so play as whatever gender (or non-gender) you'd like.

Sexuality is a different concern; heterosexual sex is treasonous, as it makes a mockery of the Computer's extensive cloning facilities. The Computer has no official stance on homosexual activity due to a lack of programming on the matter, and treats it as a form of enthusiastic wrestling that is inadvisable when traitors may be nearby.

EXAMPLE: This is Ave-R-AGE-001, known as 'Ave'. Ave's player Adele has decided that Ave is female, and the GM has decided that all the PCs will start with a Red security clearance. So Ave's character sheet starts off looking like this:

/// PART ONE		CORE INFORMATION >>			
NAME:	AVE	SECURITY CLEARANCE:	RED	HOME SECTOR:	AGE
CLONE#:	1				
GENDER:	F	PERSONALITY:	HELPFUL, LOYAL, RECKLESS		

2. SKILLS

Every *Paranoia* player character begins the game with different skills, rated from 1 to 5, to indicate things they're good at doing. They also get anti-skills rated -1 to -5 for things they're really bad at. But it's not as simple as just putting numbers by things. Here's how you decide what your skills are and also what the other player characters' skills are.

1. The player to the left of the GM – call them Ingrid – begins by choosing one of the skills listed on their character sheet to take at level 1. Write a '1' by it. The player on their left – John – automatically gets the same skill but at -1.
2. John chooses a different skill to take at +1 and the next player – Kat – gets it at -1. Kat turns to Leigh and the process continues.
3. Keep going round the group, slowly building the simmering resentments – 'What do you mean, I've got a negative guns skill?' until everyone has one +1 and one -1 skill. Don't worry, simmering resentments are good! Interesting stories arise from conflict, so anything that is going to provoke conflict is good.
4. John starts the next round, taking a different skill at +2 and passing a -2 to Kat; Kat takes a +2 and passes a -2 to Leigh and so on until everyone has skills at that level. Kat starts the next round, taking a +3 and passing on a -3 to Leigh and so on. Carry on until you complete the +5/-5 round.
6. Keep going until everyone has five positive skills and five negative skills, and is drawing little skulls, lightning bolts and decapitated heads in the margins of their sheet.

TWO IMPORTANT RULES:

- Each skill can only be chosen once per round.
- You can't re-choose a skill that you already have. So you can't put a +4 onto a -3 to get a +1.

/// PART ONE		CORE INFORMATION >>>			
NAME:	AVE	SECURITY CLEARANCE:	RED	HOME SECTOR:	AGE
CLONE#:	1				
GENDER:	F	PERSONALITY:	HELPFUL, LOYAL, RECKLESS		
/// PART TWO		DEVELOPMENT >>>			
TREASON STARS:	0	XP POINTS:	0		

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE CHARACTERS

This system isn't set in stone and your GM may decide to do it a different way. You can reverse the direction of going around the group after each round. You can have players choose who gets the negative number or roll a dice for it. Rest assured that your GM will have considered all the options.

EXAMPLE: Ave-R-AGE ends this round with the following skills:

(Violence skills)	(Brains skills)	(Chutzpah skills)	(Mechanics skills)
Athletics 0	Science 0	Bluff 0	Operate -4
Guns -2	Psychology 0	Charm +2	Engineer 0
Melee -5	Bureaucracy +1	Intimidate -3	Program -1
Throw +5	Alpha Complex +4	Stealth +3	Demolitions 0

Adele had wanted a good Guns skill for Ave-R but it went early in round 1 and then she was beaten to it on round 2. Sucks. She'll make do with Throw +5, since with Melee -5 she should stick to throwing things at people.

3 . STATS

Add up the number of positive skills you have in each of the four skill groups. Ignore skills at zero or below. That will give you four numbers rated from 0 to 4. Pass your character sheet to the troubleshooter on the left, who you just water-tortured by dripping negatives all over their skill list. They get to choose which of the four numbers goes onto which of your four attributes.

Example: Ave-R-AGE receives the following:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: CHUTZPAH: BRAINS: MECHANICS:

The guy on Adele's left is being unreasonably vindictive. She asked nicely for a 2 in Violence but no. She viciously eats the last of the Pringles in revenge.

4 . OPTIMISING

Characters normally start the game with eight Moxie points and six clones but you can sacrifice some of either to make your character better or at least less bad. Players can boost their characters' just-created abilities in two ways:

- They can spend up to 5 Moxie points to raise their skills, at one Moxie point per skill point.
- They can burn up to 5 clones to raise their stats, at one clone per stat point

Spending Moxie at this stage permanently reduces the character's maximum Moxie – we call this process 'stiff upper liposuction'. Each Moxie point spent is worth one skill point. You can spend Moxie to raise any skill any amount, including negative ones, as long as you don't spend more than 5 Moxie points in total or raise a skill above 5. Cross out the relevant number of Moxie point circles from the character sheet.

Burning clones to raise stats works the same way: players can trade one or more of their character's unused clones for stats points, in a one-for-one exchange. Players can't raise a stat above 3 and they can't burn more than five clones in total. Increase the Clone Number by one for each clone burned. If they ask why they can't burn six clones before the game starts then they may be too stupid to play this game.



When a player burns a clone, they have to make a note on their character sheet how each clone met their demise. Make something up. Give the character a bit of history. You should also do this if you have any clones die during the course of the game.

You can't raise an attribute to higher than 3 using clone-derived points. It is theoretically possible to have an attribute of 4 but you have to do a lot of groundwork during the Skills phase, because you have to choose four skills in the same attribute-group without the jerk on your right hitting you with a negative for one of them.

There's more about Moxie and why spending points now may be a bad idea on page 28.

5 . D E T A I L S

Ask your GM for information on your security clearance and equipment. The GM may also give you one or more face-down cards marked 'Secret Society' and/or 'Mutant Power'. This doesn't mean that you're necessarily a traitorous mutant terrorist from the start of the game! There's a good chance your card is blank – but everyone receives one so it's not clear who the traitor(s) are.

6 . R E D E F I N E

Remember those three adjectives you chose at the start to define your character? Remember the player sitting on your left, who hates you now? They get to flip one of your character's adjectives, turning it into its opposite. So 'friendly' could be flipped to 'unfriendly', 'handsome' becomes 'ugly', 'brave' becomes 'cowardly', 'optimistic' becomes 'pessimistic' and 'loyal' becomes 'disloyal'.

The flipper chooses which adjective to flip. The flippee is welcome to try bribery, as long as they do it with game-assets: they can offer anything listed on their character sheet, including equipment, Moxie points, clones, mutant powers and Secret Society memberships, if they happen to have anything so traitorous. This does mean that a character can start the game with two mutant powers, two Secret Society allegiances, up to eleven clones, or one point of Moxie, although we really do not recommend that. Threats of vileness or violence are not allowed, nor are offers of real-world assets, favours or favourite dice.

BUT WHY?

This process means that not only do players get an extra degree of optimisation for their character's abilities but the characters all start the game with different numbers and different numbers of numbers. Having different amounts of Moxie or clones also defines the character a bit more personality-wise; plus having already lost a few clones as the game starts gives a character an opportunity for back-story and a couple of plot-tags the GM can attach story-stuff to later. So this is a very clever mechanic, and we are quite smug about it, and we expect you to call attention to it in reviews and on whatever social network you kids are using when this game finally comes out. Don't over-praise it, obviously, but show it respect as a strong example of simple mechanical design that gives complex narrative feedback and the use of a single system to perform several tasks to enrich characterisation. This is the good stuff, people. This isn't hack-work thrown together for a couple of cents a word.

Stats deriving from the number of skills you have, on the other hand, that's a pure rules kludge.

EXAMPLE: Adele is really not happy with Ave-R-AGE's Guns -2. She burns 3 points of Moxie to bring it up to a +1 and then decides to ditch a clone to bring her Chutzpah up another point to the maximum of 3 and another clone to put her Violence on 1, then she crosses off two more points of Moxie for Bluff +2. Maybe she's a talker not a fighter. Of course, Ave-R-AGE's base Moxie of 3 means that she's going to be twitchy and close to the edge from the get-go, which may not be the calm and sophisticated chutzpah-monster exterior she was after but it all adds to the fun of roleplay.

SOLO CHARACTER GENERATION

Creating a character that isn't part of a group is a different process that tends to lead to a better character but means you have less fun making it. The process goes like this:

1. **DEFINE:** The player chooses a name, gender and three adjectives that define their character (see above).
2. **SKILLS:** The player chooses five skills to take, assigning them points values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. They choose five more skills, and assign them -5, -4, -3, -2 and -1.

3. **STATS:** As normal, work out the number relating to each of the four skill groups. Then shift each one along one place. So if you have 3 positive skills in Violence and 1 in Brains, then your character has a Brains of 3 and a Chutzpah of 1.
4. **OPTIMISE:** The player can spend up to 5 Moxie points to buy new skills or increase any existing ones – skills cannot go higher than 5 points. They can also burn up to 5 clones to increase any attributes – attributes cannot go higher than 3 points.
5. **DETAILS:** The GM assigns you a security level and may or may not give you a Secret Society and Mutant Power card. As above, don't assume these actually have Secret Societies or Mutant Powers on them.
6. **REDEFINE:** The GM flips one of the player's adjectives from the Define stage.



EQUIPMENT

The standard kit for Red-level Troubleshooters is one (1) red jumpsuit and one (1) red laser pistol, which Troubleshooters are expected to wear/carry at all times. Terrorist action may have resulted in unavoidable shortages in supplies, so Troubleshooters may have to occasionally share laser pistols or jumpsuits.

Additional equipment will be issued to characters after the mission briefing using a complex algorithm that automatically determines the best materials for each clone's skills and is definitely not randomly allocated by an overworked admin officer who has little in the way of effective oversight or a subroutine that was originally designed to operate a Hot Fun dispenser.



XP POINTS

As fresh, new, go-getting Troubleshooters, you'll start with zero XP points. Your character might have had some before but you spent most of them to buy your way up to your current security clearance. If you had any left over, then to encourage an atmosphere of healthy competition and cooperation, the Computer has taken the rest away to ensure the whole team starts on a level playing field. Don't worry – you'll have plenty of opportunities to earn more XP points during your missions!

CLONE NUMBER

Your clone number is part of your character's name and shows which clone is currently operational, starting at 1 (unless you burned any clones when creating your character). This number will never go down barring unforeseen numbering confusion (as a result of terrorist activity) but in special circumstances it may go higher than six.

LOYALTY RATING

Your Loyalty Rating is how much the Computer distrusts you, on a scale of 0–5 Treason Stars. Zero stars means you're fine, five stars means you'll need to change your Clone Number.

SECRET SOCIETIES AND MUTANT POWERS

Membership of Secret Societies and possession of mutant powers are both treasonous but sometimes unavoidable. During the Details phase your GM will have given you a card and that card might have details of a mutant power or a Secret Society on it. If so these will describe your hidden abilities, allegiances and agendas. If you have any questions about these new bonus powers, chances are the GM will give you a briefing in private soon after the mission details are delivered.

BASIC MECHANICS, OR DOING THINGS, OR HOW TO SOLVE SIMPLE PROBLEMS FOR YOUR FRIEND THE COMPUTER

- SECTION 1.2

THE CORE MECHANIC

It's all about rolling dice. Of course. The question is; how many dice, how do you read them and what result are you looking for?

Every time you do something, you'll use two numbers from your character sheet data – a Stat and a Skill (see page 8 for more info.) You'll add these and any other modifiers to create your NODE dice number, which stands for ‘Number Of DicE: dice number’.

When your character needs to do a non-easy thing in the game or the GM asks you to do a thing, you'll roll a number of dice equal to your NODE *plus* the Computer Dice. You *always* roll the Computer Dice. Even if your NODE is zero or less, you *still* roll the Computer Dice.

Each rolled dice that shows a 5 or 6 is a ‘success’ and adds one point to your final total. Tell your GM this total and they'll compare it to the difficulty number they've assigned to this action and tell you how well you've done. You'll almost always be looking for the highest possible number of 5s and 6s here.

Other things may add to your NODE dice number; action cards; equipment, supports or assists from other characters or the Computer, one-off bonuses the GM may give you, special skills, behaving smartly and other factors. Some things also take dice away, negative skills, negative combat modifiers, doing something that annoys the GM, and more. You can learn more about these in their respective chapters.

COMBINING STATS AND SKILLS

To find the NODE dice number for an action, add the clone's relevant Stat and Skill. Skills on your character sheet are grouped under the Stat they're usually used with but that doesn't have to be the Stat you always use. You can mix and match, depending on the situation.

For example, while Violence looks like a natural pairing for Guns – and that's the combination you'll usually use when laser-bolts start flying to work out if you've hit a target or not – you can also combine Guns with Brains to examine the aftermath of a gunfight and work out who shot first, or to plan a tricky ricochet off a mirror to shoot a terrorist in the back. You could combine Guns with Mechanics to modify or repair a laser pistol and maybe wring some extra power out of the power-pack at the cost of reliability. You could even combine Guns with Chutzpah to waffle on about the latest developments in focusing crystals with a fellow firearms enthusiast to get in their good graces.

It's up to you to come up with combinations that give you the best chance of succeeding and it's up to the GM to work out if they're valid for the situation or just you being cheeky. If you use a particularly outlandish combination of skill and stat, the GM might rule that your task is harder than usual – or maybe they'll reward you for your ingenuity. Probably best to assume the first, though.

EXAMPLE: *Anthony's character Ant-R-GCC-5 spots a terrorist on the other side of a crowded food dispensary. Unfortunately his laser pistol has recently calcified, so he's without a ranged weapon. Thinking fast, he grabs the Bouncy Bubble Beverage dispensing hose, forces a fork into the nozzle and endeavours to use the hydraulic power of the liquid to fire it across the room and into the enemy of Alpha Complex.*

Anthony thinks that Ant-R's best combination would be Mechanics (2) + Throw (1). Someone else suggests Violence + Operate but Anthony points out that Ant-R's Violence is 0 and his Operate is -2. The GM is okay with Mechanics + Throw, so Anthony's NODE dice number is 3, meaning he rolls three dice plus the Computer dice.

NEGATIVE NODES

If you have a negative NODE dice number, don't worry – it gives you lots of room to improve! The Computer encourages confidence and optimism, since optimism is a sign of happiness and everyone in Alpha Complex is happy. The only way you'll get better is through practice, so keep trying.

If your NODE dice number for a particular task is negative, treat the negative number as a positive and roll that many dice – plus the Computer dice, of course. However, any dice that don't show 5 or 6 *subtract* from your score rather than simply not adding to it – so if you rolled 4 dice and only 1 showed a 5 or 6, then your overall score is 1 minus 3, making -2, which is a pretty bad score. But at least you've still got a chance to succeed, right?

THE COMPUTER DICE IS YOUR FRIEND

Having trouble reloading in the middle of combat and need to watch a pop-up instructional video? Fancy having the morale of your stealth mission livened up with jaunty inspirational tunes? Disgusted by the wound you're trying to suture and need it pixellated out? The Computer can deliver all these improvements and more straight to your Cerebral Coretech in a handy pop-up format – if the Computer notices that you need some assistance.

Whenever your character acts, you *always* roll the Computer Dice as well as your NODE dice pool. If it shows the Computer symbol instead of a number, tell your GM and cross off a point of your character's Moxie, because things are about to get non-standard.

EXAMPLE: *Manar's character, Blue-B-SKY-4, is trying to defuse a bomb that terrorists have strapped to the base of Sector OMG's main Bouncy Bubble Beverage tank. Manar declares that Blue is using Brains (2) and Demolitions (1) to work out which wire to cut, giving him a NODE of 3. He rolls three regular dice and the Computer dice, getting 3, 1, 6 and a Computer. The GM, knowing the task needed 2 successes, decrees that at the moment Blue cuts the wire, the Computer helpfully places a full-retina pop-up animation of the bomb's internal workings and blast radius in his Coretech in-eye display. Thank the Computer for its timely assistance and send in a Clean-Up Crew.*

IF THERE'S ONLY ONE, SHOULDN'T IT BE 'DIE'?

No. There's quite enough use of the word 'die' in this game already and it would just be confusing.



WHY WON'T MY HANDS STOP SHAKING?

That's called 'withdrawal'! It's a perfectly natural reaction that your body has upon removal of the regular chemical supplements that you're used to.

See, when you're an Infrared clone the Computer ensures that you're happy and efficient at all times by adding special supplements to your food and drink. Once you're promoted to Red level, tests have found that those same supplements can interfere with the higher levels of reaction time, reasoning, logic and basic motor functions that you'll need to use every day, so they have been removed from your system to make your task easier.

Here are our top six tips to control withdrawal symptoms:

1. Think about how much you trust the Computer and how it only wants what's best for you.
2. Drink a full can of ice-cold, refreshing Bouncy Bubble Beverage (only 5 XP points).
3. Ask someone you trust to keep hold of your hands, close your eyes, and count to [\$unassignedvariable].
4. Book a ten-minute session in your nearest Designated Screaming Area.
5. Progress to your next clone.
6. Remind yourself that everyone feels just like you and you're all happily living together, here in Alpha Complex, from which escape is both impossible and non-desirable.

MOXIE

Since joining the ranks of the Troubleshooters, you may have noticed that you're a little more tense than you were before. Don't worry! This is completely normal.

Moxie represents a character's stress levels. Clones with high Moxie are stable, brave, competent and not seconds away from the sort of catastrophic mental breakdown that results in Clean-Up Crews being dispatched to their location. Clones with low Moxie are the opposite. Keep your Moxie high, Troubleshooter!

On your character sheet you'll have two pieces of information about Moxie – maximum and current. Your maximum Moxie (determined during character creation) is the highest possible Moxie you can possess. Your current Moxie

is how many points you have currently. If you used any points of Moxie during character creation, cross them off in pen – they are gone for good. When you use a point of Moxie in play, cross it off in pencil as you will get them back.

If your clone loses their last point of Moxie, consult the LOSING IT section on page 31.

Note: Only player characters have a Moxie score. Characters controlled by the GM don't.

USING MOXIE

You can use Moxie points in the following ways:

- You can spend Moxie to get extra dice on any roll, one Moxie point per dice.
- If you're not happy with the result of an action, you can choose to try again – but only once per action. Spend a point of Moxie to re-roll your entire dice pool and describe how you frantically try to fix the problem. You can't do this for a roll if you've already spent Moxie buying more dice on it.
- Registered mutants use Moxie to activate their powers. Precisely how unregistered mutants use their powers and what those powers might be is above your security clearance, Troubleshooter. Spend Moxie points to activate Mutant Powers, if you have them. The more Moxie you spend, the more oomph the power will have. For more information on Mutant Powers see page 23.

You won't always choose when to suffer from stress. You'll automatically lose one point of Moxie in the following situations:

- When you roll a Computer symbol on the Computer dice. Research has shown that attracting the attention of the Computer during a stressful situation may result in additional stress as a byproduct of this increased efficiency. This may lead to inefficiency. Please do not become stressed about this inefficiency, as that can lead to further inefficiency and leakage.
- If you encounter upsetting visuals, substances or experiences during your missions, you might find yourself becoming stressed as a result. This is unavoidable. When you suffer horrific injuries, great misfortune, or see or do something particularly unpleasant, the GM may tell you to lose a point of Moxie.

EXAMPLE: *Having tracked the terrorists to their hideout, Basil-V-FIN-3 knows his next action is crucial – stealthily rolling a foam grenade into their midst. His NODE is only 2, so he spends 2 of his 3 remaining Moxie points for two extra dice. The roll is a success but the Computer dice comes up too, meaning Basil-V is reduced to zero Moxie. It suddenly seems like a very good idea to throw his other foam grenades at the terrorists, followed by his regular grenades, the rest of his equipment and his uniform.*

REGAINING MOXIE

You can restore your clone's stability and sanity by spending XP points to regain Moxie at a rate of 50 XP points per Moxie point.

You can also regain Moxie points by asking your Happiness Officer to administer a Cheeroxin stim-pak, which they should have received as part of the mission equipment. To use a stim-pak or similar Moxie-restorer on any clone including yourself, make a Brains + Science roll versus difficulty 2 and restore one Moxie point per level of success. Failure brings drowsiness, loss of co-ordination and lots of quiet sitting down; extreme failure is probably some kind of drug overdose or a comedy mix-up between the bottles marked 'sedative' and 'stimulant'.

Do not over-use stimulants.

A good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast of stimulant-laden Food-Stuff™ will restore 1 point of Moxie.



LOSING IT

Should your character ever be unlucky enough to have zero Moxie points left, then they Lose It. They freak out big time. They blow a gasket. They go off the deep end without a life-vest. Their case of the heebie-jeebies becomes the full-blown screaming abdabs, with an emphasis on the screaming. This will be entertaining but probably not for you.

As they reach zero Moxie, your character will feel some, more or all of the following things:

- A disconnection between their actions and themselves
- A desire to act in unusual or dangerous ways
- Happiness, clarity and an intense sense of fresh purpose and direction
- All-consuming hatred of something or someone in the immediate area

There are two ways you can play this.

1. Look at the three adjectives that describe your character's personality. Imagine they run on a scale of 1–10. Now imagine that one of them just went to 700. Roleplay that.
2. If the GM feels that you're underplaying your unfortunate episode, they may roll on the Losing It table in the Gamesmasters Handbook and tell you the result. Play it to the hilt.

Go at it hard. The better and more interestingly you play your character's lid-flipping episode, the greater the chance that you'll survive it. If you try to do anything sensible the GM will make it hard for you to succeed, for obvious reasons. If you demand that time or energy be devoted to sorting you out while everyone else is trying to deal with a crisis, someone may well judge that you're an enemy of Alpha Complex and have you shot. And try to claim XP points for it. And will probably get them.

If you, or another clone, can administer sedatives there's a chance you can get your head in order. If not, don't worry – other Troubleshooters and the Computer will take care of your character, one way or another.

If (when) you die after (while) Losing It, your next clone returns with one dice +1 Moxie points. This cannot exceed your maximum Moxie.

HOW DO I CALM DOWN?

If you've let stress get the better of you, here are five tips for calming down during a tricky psychotic incident.

- If you feel hot and bothered, try to reach a ventilation shaft or refrigeration unit and crawl inside until the sensation ends.
- File a report with your supervisor to let him or her know of the current mission status and any expected inefficiency due to your Psychotic Break.
- Count backwards from 100. (In Sector [REDACTED] knowledge of numbers exceeding 17 is Treasonous, so instead count backwards from 17 exactly 5.88 times).
- Using your Computer-given authority, commandeer a vehicle and drive to the nearest medical centre for immediate attention.
- Try not thinking about sector THA, the Gehenna Incident or any of the events that did or did not occur throughout its duration.
- Clones decanted in Sectors [REDACTED] have ‘killswitch’ phrases implanted into their Cerebral Coretech. If this is you, simply have your team-mates speak this phrase out loud to reboot your consciousness and the episode should pass. Knowledge of your own killswitch phrase is treasonous and self-use of it will cause unconsciousness, slight memory loss and immediate termination.

Alternatively, you can spend 50 XP points on any of the following:

- Sedatives released into a clone’s bloodstream from [REDACTED].
- A brief flash of calming alpha-wave imagery backed up with powerful hypnotic suggestion that Everything’s Going To Be Okay fired directly into a clone’s optic nerve via their Cerebral Coretech.
- A piping hot cup of Hot Brown Drink, delivered by a branded bot or from a curiously well-hidden nozzle.
- A single Hearty Brand Cigaresse™, designed to leave clones calm and collected under pressure, lit and inserted into mouth or similar orifice by robotic arm.

EXAMPLE: Peter's character Peetey-B-BRU-5 is on zero Moxie after a tunnel-squid drops on his face. His three descriptive adjectives are Friendly, Loyal and Unambitious (thanks to Mary-I-MAC-1). Peter decides that Peetey-B's loyalty kicks into overdrive and he sees everything around him as disloyal to the Computer – tunnel-squids, tunnels, flickering lights, high-voltage cables, strange crunching noises and his fellow Troubleshooters who are clearly responsible for all of the above. And he has a laser pistol. And he's going to use it.

AFTER LOSING IT, HOW DO I FIND IT AGAIN?

There are two ways.

1. The only way to recover from Losing It is to get some points of Moxie back. The Happiness Officer should have some useful stimulants that will help, or any character can spend some XP points to order some, or the character who is freaking out may be persuaded to have a nice lie-down for a few days until they feel better.
2. Actually the fastest and most efficient way to get back in the action is to get a fresh clone. Have your character die due to their own or someone else's actions and a couple of minutes later Your Clone v1.2 (or v1.3 or so on) will arrive with their Moxie dial and their laser pistol's power-pack recharged, at least partially (new clones recover Moxie as above, power-pack charge levels are at the GM's discretion). Sometimes this is the kindest solution and usually it's the quickest.

COMBAT

- SECTION 1.3

Every clone would (and does!) jump at the chance to violently eliminate dangerous troublemakers such as terrorists, mutants and members of insidious Secret Societies – and as Troubleshooters, you're ideally positioned to do just that! Not jumping. We're not talking about jumping any more. Stop jumping.

Combat in *Paranoia* is chaotic and wild but takes place in a structured form to keep everything clear. When you act in combat, that's your *action*. Once every player character has acted, that's a *round* of combat. Actions and rounds take place in a fluid timescale but it's important to pin them down so you can work out when to play Action cards.

DON'T PANIC

As an extension of the Computer's will, you'll sometimes have to act as enforcers, neutralising dangerous or subversive elements. As such, you're more than adequately trained and equipped for combat. Don't forget that every Troubleshooter goes to work with a standard-issue laser pistol complete with complimentary holster and knows exactly how to use both.

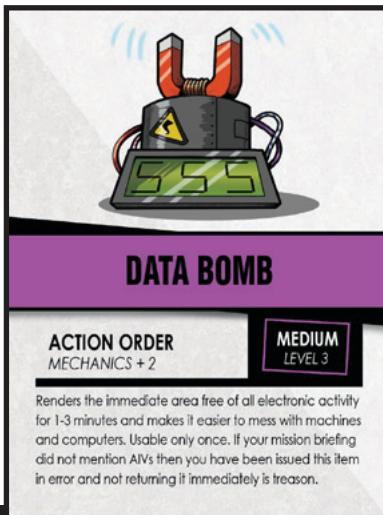
While most of those aforementioned elements will be external, a rare few may be internal as the sick and twisted doctrines of terrorism can penetrate any and all levels of society – even the great and loyal Troubleshooter teams – and clones should be prepared to open fire on duplicitous criminals within their ranks who have turned their back on the Computer's perfect society. Particularly if this means you can shoot them in the back.

ACTION CARDS

Your GM will deal out a hand of Action cards (usually four) to you at the start of the game and will give you more, or take away ones you have, at intervals that may seem random to you but are in fact the product of a series of carefully balanced game mechanics and not, we repeat *not*, due to a section in the GM guide where we tell them to swap out cards when they get bored.

You can play one Action card per *action* – yours or someone else's – but no more than one. When you play a card by turning it face-up, use the rules on the card.

CARD EXAMPLES:

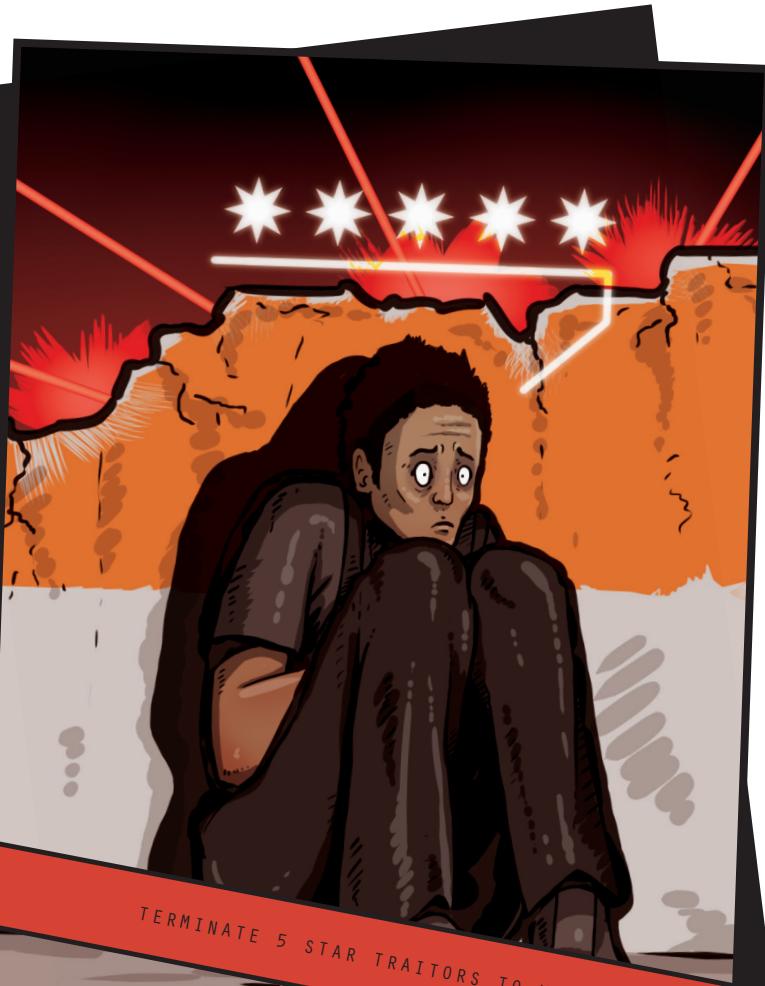


ACTION ORDER shows when a card can be used. All Action Cards either have an Action Order number here or a symbol, or both. A number means it's a normal Action card and the higher the number, the earlier in the round this action happens. A card with a symbol is a Reaction card: it can be played on any characters' actions (yours, other players', or NPCs controlled by the GM) to affect them but can't be played on its own. A card with an Action Order and a symbol can be used either way but not both at the same time.

LEVEL (ONLY ON EQUIPMENT CARDS) shows how many dice you add to your roll when using the piece of equipment correctly. If you use a Level 3 gauss rocket launcher to launch gauss rockets, add 3 dice to your NODE. If you use it to jam open a bulkhead door, don't.

DESCRIPTION: This is what will happen when you play the card.





TERMINATE 5 STAR TRAITORS TO WIN BIG PRIZES

THE ORDER OF COMBAT

Doing things in combat in *Paranoia* works a lot like doing things generally in *Paranoia*. You work out your NODE dice number, roll, look for 5s and 6s to indicate successes and the GM tells you how well you do. But there's a whole other dimension; a dimension of cards. The game uses the card deck to let you perform special actions, to decide Action Order or who goes first.

Most people think the most important part of an RPG combat system is the bit where you hit each other, or try to. Most people are wrong. The most important part of a combat system is working out who goes first. Because if I have a laser-pistol and I go first, there's a good chance your 154 warbots waiting for your command to attack are irrelevant.

You may disagree and for you we have the Simple Attack Order on page 42. For everyone else, the better class of player, willing to take a risk and try something new, we present the Dynamic Yet Narrative Action Melee Order system or DYNAMO.

Before we explain DYNAMO, we need to give you a couple of new terms:

- A Basic Action is a regular Stat + Skill check, as described before.
- A Card Action is triggered by playing a card – usually an Action card, although it can be an Equipment Card or a Mutant Power Card too.

A round breaks down into four stages:

1. Everyone puts a card face-down
2. The GM counts down the Action Order numbers from 10 to 0; each PC acts on their Action Order number
3. Players accuse other players of lying about their Action Order number
4. Players resolve their actions

DYNAMO uses a five-second combat round. The difference between this and most other role-playing games is these rounds are in real time, not game time. The GM counts, ‘ONE *Paranoia*, TWO *Paranoia* –’ and by the time they reach five *Paranoias*, every player needs to have chosen a card from their hand and put it face-down in front of them. This is important: *The card does not have to describe what you want to do this round*. It could even be a Reaction Card, with no Action Order number on it at all. If you don’t have a face-down card, you take no action this round.

The GM counts down the Action Order numbers, starting at 10 and going down to zero. Players can chime in at any number if:

1. It matches the Action Order number on their face-down card, or: They just want to.
2. *Players can lie here.* Call it a bluff but it's a lie. If you want your character to act early in the round, claim you have a higher Action Order number than you do.
3. Once per round, each player can challenge one other player's claimed Action Order number. The challenged player flips their card to show if they were telling the truth or not.
4. If the Action Order number on the card matches or is higher than the last number the GM called, the challenger loses. They must discard one Action card.
5. If the Action Order numbers don't match, the challenger wins. They immediately get to act (meaning they can act twice this round). The failed bluffer discards their card and takes a Basic Action last in the round.
6. Once any challenges have been resolved, then characters taking actions this Action Order number get to describe what they're doing and roll dice and stuff. See further on.
7. If two players have the same Action Order number, the first one to say the name of the other player's character in full goes first. If neither can say the other character's name, neither act this round.

If you have no cards in your hand with Action Order numbers on them, you have two choices. You can bluff, as in stage 2 above or you can wait until the end of the round and meekly go last.

If you run out of Action cards at any point, that'll teach you to look after your finite resources better.

EXAMPLE: Marian's character, Mary-I-MAC-1 and Carl's character Carl-B-GDE-4 still haven't fixed the problem with the security clearances. They're facing an enemy so terrifying that the Computer has pixelated it out of their field of view for their protection but the Computer has also delivered some excellent new equipment that they both want to get their hands on.

Stage 1. The GM starts counting up to five. Carl and Marian play cards face-down before the time runs out.

Stage 2. The GM counts down the Action Order numbers: '10, 9, 8, 7 –'
Marian: 'I have seven.'

Stage 3: Carl: 'The hell you do. I call your bluff.'
Marian flips her card: It is Sniper Rifle, with an Action Order of Violence +4. Since Marian's Violence is 3, her Action Order is in fact 7.
Carl, annoyed at himself, discards an Action Card face-down

Stage 4: Marian gets to act. Marian plays Sniper Rifle and suddenly Mary-I-headshots a dastardly terrorist.

RESOLVING AN ACTION

Wait! Don't turn that card face-up yet! *You don't have to play your Action Card.* Particularly if it was an undiscovered bluff but not only then. You always have to put a card face-down at the start of a round but it may be a card that you don't want to play or can't actually play now, such as a Reaction.

There are three things you can do when it's your turn to act.

- Play your card face-up and resolve it. Then discard it.
- Put your card back into your hand, without showing it to anyone, and take a Basic Action. Sometimes it's better to conserve your Action Cards.
- If your face-down card says 'Action' on the back you can discard it, take a Basic Action and add one extra dice to your NODE.

At the end of the combat, ask the GM whether you should discard the rest of your Action Cards or draw back up to the full number. Some GMs will prefer to only use the cards for combat and others will let you play Action and Reaction Cards during non-combat play.

That sounds like a lot but trust us, it's really smooth and simple. It's a robust framework for hanging interesting narrative possibilities and you'll pick it up fast.

CALCULATING YOUR NODE

Your NODE number is a combination of your relevant Stat and Skill, as usual. However the card you've played may add extra dice to it. You can also burn Moxie points for extra dice, and if you're taking a Basic Action you can burn your face-down Action Card for an extra dice too.

PLAYING A BASIC ACTION

Basic Actions are worked out like the normal actions described on page 35. When your character's Action Order number comes up you declare what you want to do, what combination of stat and skill you're using to do it, and what your NODE number is. Then roll the relevant number of dice and tell the GM your score. They'll work out what happens, and who gets hurt, and fill you in on the gory details. There's no dodging, blocking or evasion in *Paranoia* combat, unless it's up close and personal.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL, YOU SAY?

When two characters are in hand-to-hand combat, they get a chance to dodge or block their opponent's attacks. However, it comes at a price. It goes like this:

1. The attacker rolls their NODE number of dice and the GM says if the attack connects. If it does...
2. The defender can discard an Action card to try to avoid the attack. If they don't, the attack connects.
3. If the defender discards a card, they get to describe how they're trying to avoid being damaged and roll their NODE. If they get more successes than their attacker, the attack fails and they take no damage.

NPCs can try to block an attack but only if they haven't taken an action yet this turn. The block takes up their action.

PLAYING AN ACTION CARD

Turn the card face-up and tell everyone what your character does and who the effect is directed at. Roll dice as instructed. The GM will tell you what happens. Cards are narrative and, the more colourful and interesting your description, the more interesting the game will be. The GM may even give you dice bonuses for really creative ideas.

PLAYING A REACTION CARD

Reaction Cards do not have Action Order numbers and are played outside the regular turn order. As the name suggests they can only be used to aid or hinder a character who is trying to do something.

- If the Reaction Card adds or subtracts dice from a roll, you must play it before the dice are rolled.
- If the Reaction Card modifies the score or the outcome of a roll, you must play it after dice are rolled.
- If the Reaction Card does something else, play it after the player or GM has finished describing the action but before anyone else does anything.

You can *always* play a Reaction Card, even when it's not your go, even when your character is unconscious, dead, out of action or in a different scene – so feel free to get revenge from beyond the grave by screwing over another player who took you out in an earlier round.

PLAYING AN EQUIPMENT CARD

This works the same way as an Action Card; you play it face-down and when your Action Order number comes up you either reveal it and play it, or put it back in your hand and play a Basic Action, or discard it, do a Basic Action and add an extra dice to your NODE. In the last case you have to describe how the piece of equipment gets destroyed to give you the extra dice. Unlike other cards, Equipment cards do not have fixed Action Order. Instead the Action Order is expressed as a Stat, plus some other number. For example, the Grenade card's Action Order is 'Violence + 3'. If your Violence is 1, its Action Order for you would be 4.

Beware: Fail to bluff the Action Order number on an Equipment Card and you'll have to discard it and the player who revealed your bluff gets to describe how and why it no longer exists.



PLAYING A MUTANT POWER CARD

This also works the same way as an Action card, except for four things:

- You have to expend Moxie points to activate a mutant power. The more Moxie you use, the greater the effect will be.
- When you turn the card over, for any reason, the only person you should show it to is the GM. Don't let the other players see it.
- You never discard your Mutant Power card, even if you're caught in a bluff.
- Quietly tell the GM what you want to achieve and how many Moxie points you're burning to do it and they will tell you how many dice to roll. They will describe what happens and whether it's successful. Mutant powers are weird and unpredictable, and having the GM describe them preserves the illusion that the other players don't actually know which character is responsible for them.

GETTING MORE CARDS

The GM is in charge of dealing out more Action Cards, which includes deciding when to do it. Usually you won't get to refill your hand of cards until the combat is over. Take it as a hint that combat should be dealt with quickly, not drawn out till your hand is empty and your choices are limited.

Note: NPCs don't get cards to play. The GM knows their Action Order number in advance and will say what they do and when they do it. It's an underprivileged life, being an NPC, so it's probably a good thing that it's short.

SIMPLE COMBAT ORDER

If all that bluffing and lying seems contrariwise to the declared spirit of camaraderie and common-cause that embodies the glorious role of Troubleshooters, there is a simpler method:

- At the start of the combat round, the GM asks the player on their left what their character is doing this round. Once that is resolved, they ask the next player and so on clockwise around the group. NPCs act when the GM decides they act. On the next combat round, the GM starts with the player on their right and proceeds anticlockwise.
- That's about it.

QUICK WITS

Making sure you act quickly in any given combat is often the key to success. If you find yourself acting slowly and lagging behind your team-mates in combat, answer the following questions:

- Do I like wasting the Computer's time?
- Am I drinking enough Bouncy Bubble Beverage: Uncomfortably Awake Edition caffeinated beverage-themed fluid?
- Why was I not looking out for terrorism at all times?
- What else was I doing?
- Was I involved in the recent events that did not take place in Sector THA, otherwise known as the Gehenna Incident?

Once you've answered them, take a look at your responses and, if necessary, report to your supervisor for questioning and re-education.

HOW MANY SHOTS DOES A POWER-PACK LAST?

Most weapons in Alpha Complex use electricity to create an effect or to accelerate a projectile and almost all take interchangeable rechargeable power-packs. These can be swapped out in a single action. Weapons can also be plugged into a power outlet with a charging cable to recharge or fire freely.

Alpha Complex weapons are complex pieces of always-on machinery, with auto-targeting, auto-variable blast levels for range and effect, and other features including remote activation, DNA-print security, self-cleaning systems and voicemail. All of this drains power constantly, so it's important to keep your weapon recharged (And patched with the latest software updates, of course). Also, be careful not to expose power-packs to fire, water, earth, air or other power-packs or their performance may be affected, as may yours.

All this means that a power-pack doesn't last a predictable number of shots. Your GM will monitor your weapon use and tell you when its power-bar is flashing.

DESCRIBING STUFF WITH CARDS

Some cards will ask you to describe things that crop up in the environment during the chaos of combat. When you do this, you have free rein to describe whatever you like – but the GM has authority to negate or change what you've said if they think it's not appropriate.

For example: *The card SUDDENLY, KNIVES! lets you insert a melee weapon into the scene. You say that you reach into your backpack and pull out a chainsaw. The GM thinks that this is a bit cartoonish and silly, so instead they have one of the maintenance bots nearby explode, leaving a robot arm with a chainsaw blade attached embedded in the wall you're taking cover behind.*

Some cards will ask you to persuade the GM what you want from a situation, and see if they listen to you – be clever, be interesting, don't take the piss and try to take full advantage of how lazy most GMs are in regards to coming up with ideas. Some cards will say things like 'GM, time to shine' on them – you don't get *any* say in these and instead you must trust your referee to do what you want. This is a good reason to be nice to the GM and keep them well supplied with food and drink.

DOING DAMAGE

Now you know how to hit someone. How badly are they hurt?

For each extra success you roll – each 5 or 6 that is above the difficulty level set by the GM – you do one level of damage to your target.

EXAMPLE: *Mary-I-MAC-1 takes a shot at a terrorist who is doing terrorism. The GM, for reasons that will be explained in the Gamesmasters Handbook, sets a difficulty of 2. Mary's NODE is 6: she gets 1, 2, 5, 5, 6, 6. That's two successes over the difficulty, so the terrorist takes two levels of damage.*

PHYSICAL INJURIES

There are five states of got-hurt that a Troubleshooter might find themselves in. Their default state has them unharmed, absolutely fine and going about their business so merrily that they don't need to check any boxes. However, when the harm happens, when damage is inflicted on a Troubleshooter, it can leave them in one of four other states: Hurt, Injured, Maimed or Dead.



TEAM LOOKING FOR TANK

HURT means a character is in pain but not damaged so badly that they can't do things any more. However, while you are Hurt you must subtract 1 from your NODE number.

INJURED is, well, injured. You're in so much pain that you can't focus properly. Subtract 2 from your NODE number while Injured.

MAIMED is much worse. You have lost the use of part of your body. This may be because you have lost part of your body – your GM will tell you if this is the case. Either way, you need urgent medical attention. Each round that you don't get it you must roll one dice and on a 1 you have died. You can still perform tasks with whatever parts of your body are still attached and working but at -3 to your NODE number.

DEAD is obvious but not so obvious that we didn't write a whole section about it below.

When your character has been successfully attacked, the GM will tell you how badly injured you are – cross off the appropriate box on your character sheet and all the ones that come before it. (So if you're Maimed, cross off the Hurt and Injured boxes, too.)

If you take damage of a type that you've already suffered, fill out the next empty box on the damage track. So, if you're Hurt, and you get Hurt again, that drops you down to Injured. If you're Injured and you get Hurt again, you are now Maimed.

EXAMPLE: *Chasing a fleeing mutant traitor, Carl-B-GDE-4 trips over a wandering scrub-bot and is Hurt. The scrub-bot, damaged by his boot, registers him as a patch of synthetic oil and attempts to scrub him, which he fails to avoid. The scrubbing is not very effective but being run over by half a ton of bot is. The GM declares he is now Maimed. The mutant traitor uses her vile mutant ability to take control of the scrub-bot and reverse its direction so it runs over Carl-B-GDE-4 again. He's already Maimed which means he can't take a second Maiming, so he drops to the next level of injury and is Dead.*

FIRST AID

First Aid is almost exclusively applied in the field via the use of Standard Issue Medkits. A Standard Issue Medkit is a relatively easy item for a Troubleshooter to make use of and is good for one course of First Aid.

Using a Standard Issue Medkit requires the Troubleshooter holding it to make a BRAINS+SCIENCE check. Each success rolled bumps a Troubleshooter one step back down the scale of harm. One success could take a Troubleshooter from, say, Maimed to Injured, while two could take them from Injured to being fully healed.

Standard Issue Medkits include a variety of drugs, dressings, stimulants, applicators and ointments that cannot be used haphazardly or without direction. While these Medkits are tools for good, untrained use can have unintended consequences and Troubleshooters should bear this in mind.

Major injuries like lost limbs must be treated with specialist medkits capable of regrowing body-parts in under a minute. Check carefully to make sure you are applying the appropriate kit to the wound and remember that when it says 'right arm' it means your right and not the patient's – or is it the other way around? On no account should you apply a limb-regrow kit to someone who has not actually lost the appropriate limb and you should particularly not apply it to inappropriate parts of their body.

First Aid cannot be used on dead Troubleshooters. Well, it can but it's a waste and the Computer really dislikes waste.

DEATH AND CLONES

In the unlikely event that you are killed in the line of duty, the Computer has blessed you with a number of replacement clone bodies. Upon your death, your memories and personality will be downloaded from your Cerebral Coretech and implanted into a new body, fresh from the vats, which will be delivered post-haste to your mission area.

The clone will be delivered via trans-tube, emergency lift, insertion rocket, Reincarnation Flume, organic 3D printer or one of any other number of exciting and efficient means of transportation.

As a Troubleshooter fresh out of training, you'll most likely have access to your full 'six-pack' of clones – your current body and five replacements. Citizens of a clearance level of Green or higher can choose to allocate their XP into purchasing extra clones – so if you plan on leading a dangerous life, make sure you get to Green clearance first!

It is important to notice that the new clone body is a legally distinct entity from the previous, dead clone and that aberrations in the genetic template caused by terrorist intervention (including but not limited to, mutant abilities, membership of Secret Societies, treasonous intent or tumours and lesions relating to the Gehenna Incident which did not happen) will not be present in the new body and the Troubleshooter should not be punished for the crimes of their genetically inferior predecessor. New clones are also delivered with a lungful of D-Venge, the neuro-gas that removes all thoughts of taking revenge on any Troubleshooters who may have killed their previous clone or through their inaction caused it to be killed.

New clone bodies will arrive at the end of the current scene, or whenever it's dramatically appropriate – although it's up to the GM. You have six clones, citizen – use them wisely! Or, you know, use them foolishly, who are we to tell you what to do? It's your funerals.

Newly decanted clones will have the memories, security clearance and all the XP points of their antecedent. Although it says otherwise in the official party line above, *all* of your mutant powers, Secret Society memberships and so on, survive between clones. Treason stars are not carried over and your Moxie is back at the maximum level on your character sheet (Unless you died after Losing It, at which point you gain back D6+1 Moxie). You should have a jumpsuit and laser pistol appropriate to your security clearance but mistakes and shortages do happen and you may have to use your previous clone's equipment.

Troubleshooters are expected to clear up the used clones of fallen comrades or make sure they're properly recycled down the appropriate disposal chute, or at least call in a scrub-bot to clear up any viscous pools or thin vapours that may remain of their former associate. Leaving corpses lying around is littering and the penalties for littering in Alpha Complex are surprisingly harsh.

'WHY DON'T WE JUST DELIVER THE INITIAL TROUBLESHOOTERS TO THEIR MISSION OBJECTIVE THROUGH THE CLONE DELIVERY SYSTEM, WOULDN'T THAT BE MORE EFFICIENT?'

Shh.

USING YOUR CEREBRAL CORETECH

- SECTION 1.4

Your character's Cerebral Coretech augments their cognitive and sensory abilities in all sorts of interesting ways. They can download new packages to enhance their existing abilities or improve their physical or mental abilities, access information on just about any database within their security clearance, order new equipment *and all without the other members of their Troubleshooter squad knowing.*

TALKING WITH THE COMPUTER

Most of the things your character will say to the Computer will be fine for the other players to hear but, some things – things that might suggest you believe one of the other Troubleshooters is less loyal to the Computer than they ought to be, for example – you will want to keep between the Computer and your character. In Alpha Complex your character can communicate directly with the Computer by sub-vocalising and getting answers via an aural interface. As a player, you can also use technology to communicate directly with the GM. All it needs is a system where you can message them directly and they can message you back. Any decent IM program that you can run on your phone or a small computer is ideal.

Some game groups prefer the old-school approach of passing written notes but for most people writing takes longer than typing and note-passing leaves physical evidence that sneaky players can intercept to find out what's going on. Trust your digital systems, citizen. Digital systems are your friends.

Only do this for conversations with the Computer/GM that need to be secret from the other players. Likewise, don't ask the GM to leave the room with you for a private face-to-face chat if you don't absolutely have to. Role-playing games are group story-building games and anything that breaks up the dynamic of the group is disruptive. So keep as much of it in the open as you reasonably can. You'll find things are faster and funnier that way.

IBALL RECORDING SOFTWARE

All Troubleshooters can use the Cerebral Coretech's iBall module to record video and audio to their AugMem storage. They activate and control this through eye movements.

If you want to record what's going on, you need to notify the GM and possibly the other players. Obviously if you say, 'I wink with my left eye' then everybody will know that your character just started recording a video. Instead, you should get the GM's attention *and actually wink at them*. Some of the other players may notice. Some may not. That's kind of the point.

Your GM will tell you when your AugMem storage is getting full.

DEAD ZONES

AugMem and some other Cerebral Coretech functions will only work if the Troubleshooters are in communication with the Computer. Alpha Complex wifi is much more reliable than today's shoddy hotch-potch of standards and most of the time this won't be a problem. However there are areas known as 'dead zones' where the wifi signal cannot penetrate.

In a dead zone, a character's Cerebral Coretech will continue to function but any facilities that require direct communication with the Computer or the Cloud will go off-line. That includes:

- Alphapedia
- AugMem
- Citizen-Filer
- CitizenText
- Treason Beacon
- News updates
- XP point rewards catalogue and ordering
- Today's menus

The following items will disappear from the players' in-eye displays:

- Other citizens' names, XP points and Treason Stars
- Direction indicators and maps
- Pop-up advice boxes

Crucially, if the Troubleshooters are out of range of the Cloud, then their personalities and memories are not getting backed up to MemTech. If they die before they return to signal range, their replacement clone will only have memories up to the point they lost the connection. Fear dead zones, citizens!

Skill packages and enhanced abilities that the characters have already downloaded will remain available. Software updates will be offline until the characters leave the dead zone.

There is an XP point bonus available for reporting the existence and location of dead zones.

XP POINTS, OR BETTER LIVING THROUGH GAMIFICATION

- SECTION 1.5

EARNING XP POINTS

There are three ways to earn XP points. Through good works, through completing missions and through Achievements. All clones get one XP point per day and bonuses for any spontaneous acts in the service of Alpha Complex. That's the good works part.

MISSION XP POINTS

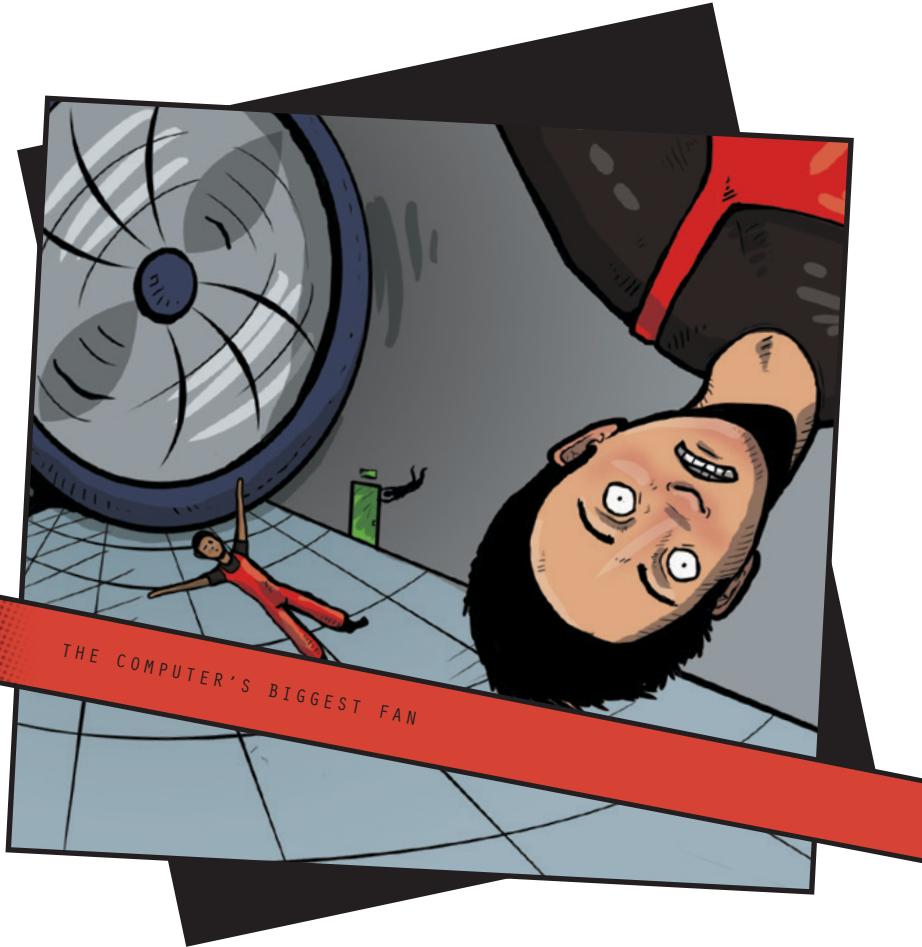
Troubleshooter teams are awarded XP points for successful completion of a mission – and the Computer is generous in how many XP points it gives out!

The Team Leader will divide the group's XP points between all its members following the debrief, with each team member being allotted an amount relative to their contribution and how well they performed their mandatory bonus duty, if those were assigned. In the unlikely event that mission objectives are only partially achieved, XP point totals may be docked slightly.

Also, if the group loses a number of clones during the mission, the cost of delivering replacements may be deducted from the final XP point total. After all, clone replacement is inefficient! Likewise, although Troubleshooters may request new equipment to be delivered during a mission, during debriefing the Computer or an accredited requisitioning official may decide that the equipment was not used in an appropriate manner and must be paid for with the XP points the group has earned.

ACHIEVEMENT XP POINTS

To foster healthy competition and co-operation between Troubleshooters, the Computer has developed Achievements. These are optional bonus objectives, supplemental to the main mission, that will earn the first clone that completes them an immediate XP point reward. To ensure that tasks are not over-completed, each Achievement can only be claimed once and only by one person, not a group – so make sure to be first if you want that bonus!



Here are some sample Achievements but each mission will have its own set, specifically engineered to emphasise the priorities among the obstacles, challenges and side-quests ahead.

50 XP points – Repair malfunctioning technology.

100 XP points – Bring a terrorist to justice.

100 XP points – Confess your own treasonous acts to Friend Computer.

200 XP points – Appear on popular holovid show Brave & Expendable.

300 XP points – Discover the location of notorious mutant Wossname the Not Dead.

400 XP points – Save a crowd (10+) of citizens from imminent danger.

500 XP points – Recover the glass flask from the Control Room without contaminating more than 20% of the sector

2000 XP points – Perform actions leading to the arrest of an entire cell of a Secret Society.

XP points are the only currency that Alpha Complex uses. XP points are created by the Computer and given to clones in exchange for their services. As the points are tied to your clone-DNA and you can't trade them with other clones, you never need to worry about unscrupulous traitors trying to trick you out of your hard-earned XP points! Warning: DAIVs can syphon a clone's XP points for their own nefarious purposes. Be constantly vigilant for DAIVs and other malign intelligences.

Other currencies do not exist and have never existed, and rumours of stable trade through value-fixed barter goods between treasonous clones are so false they should not even be investigated.

SPENDING XP POINTS

Citizens of Alpha Complex can spend their XP points at any time. The process is as simple as calling up the XP points app in their Cerebral Coretech, selecting the desired option and answering a couple of simple proof-of-identity questions.

SPENDING XP POINTS ON EQUIPMENT

The Computer is keen for you to spend your XP points on whatever you want (while, obviously, strictly observing your security clearance). To that end, and to make things easy for you in the field, the technology that delivers your replacement clones to a mission in the unlikely event of your death has been repurposed to quickly deliver on-demand supplies to you and your Troubleshooter colleagues.

Run out of power packs in the middle of a gunfight with some terrorist scum? Simply navigate to the XP point reward catalogue on your Cerebral Coretech (see page 66), order what you need (or two!) and sit back and relax as it's delivered to you through a series of pressurised tubes and overclocked 3D printers.

If you're after something that the Computer can't provide (you rebel) then you'll need to do a favour for someone in a position to get it for you. Perhaps someone with a higher security clearance.

DIDN'T WE USED TO HAVE CREDITS?

You are mistaken, citizen. Have a Treason Star to remind you not to be mistaken again.

SPENDING XP POINTS ON IMPROVING YOUR CLONE

But wait, there's more! Using a combination of invasive synaptic fusion and advanced gene manipulation techniques, the Computer can adjust your body and mind to suit your desires. Do you want to be faster, stronger, smarter and just plain better than your fellow Troubleshooters? Fret no more – when you spend XP points to improve yourself, you'll feel those adjustments to your character sheet immediately as your brain is connected to the Improvement Database and the relevant information is downloaded directly into your grey matter.

USING XP POINTS TO IMPROVE GAME STATS

Here are the costs of boosting your character's abilities.

- Recover Moxie: 50 XP points per point of Moxie
- Increase Moxie: 200 XP points per new level (maximum 8)
- Boost stat: 500 XP points per additional point (maximum +3)
- Boost skill: 200 XP points per additional point (maximum +5)
- Acquire new specialist skill: 300 XP points

SPENDING XP ON IMPROVING YOUR CLEARANCE

While you might be promoted to Orange (or even Yellow!) clearance during your time with the Troubleshooters, you'll be pleased to hear that you can fast-track your promotion experience by spending XP points to upgrade your security clearance as soon as you have enough XP points to do it, even in the middle of a mission. Field Promotions are accompanied by rush delivery of an appropriately coloured jumpsuit and laser pistol and a small shower of Loyalty Confetti™. Cake can be supplied on request for an additional fee.

Enjoy your new-found authority, citizen! We're sure you'll put it to good use in service of Friend Computer.

WAYS TO IMPROVE SKILLS

The easiest and most convenient way to improve a character's skills is by spending XP points on them, of course, but there are two other ways that characters can improve the range and extent of what they can do. They can be given them as part of a mission or they can receive them from a third party.

BUYING SKILLS WITH XP POINTS. As above.

MISSION-SPECIFIC SKILLS. At the start of a mission the Computer may give one or more Troubleshooters a skill package. This may take the form of a temporary upgrade in a skill by uploading the relevant expertise into the Troubleshooter's cerebral coretech, or possibly a hyper-specialist skill for them to use on the mission, such as 'defuse unstable nuclear warhead'. Some skills packages go along with specific pieces of equipment. Sometimes the geniuses at R&D will create a brand new skill for the Troubleshooters to try out!



WHY IS MY NOSE BLEEDING?

Sometimes noses bleed, Troubleshooter. Sometimes ears bleed. Sometimes eyes. Sometimes you shouldn't ask questions about the Computer's invasive synaptic fusion techniques, because you wouldn't understand the answer unless we implanted it into your head and as that is above your security clearance, we won't.

We are remotely adjusting your Curiosity Matrix to ensure that questions such as the preceding do not bother you in the future. Please do not move your head, neck or brain during this process.

Warning: Using a mission-specific skill package for purposes not associated with the mission is treason.

RECEIVING SKILLS FROM THIRD PARTIES: It can happen that the players will meet or become associated with someone who can teach them a new skill or upgrade a previous skill for them. This may be a shadowy figure who agrees to pass on secret knowledge in exchange for favours or tokens, such as pre-[REDACTED] artefacts which are highly prized or someone who is eager to transmit a new discovery to a wider audience. There's a name for these skill-trainers. It is 'traitor' and they can be turned in to the Computer for XP points. Note: Many Secret Societies offer 'unique skills' to lure new members into their clutches. It is well known that these so-called skills will fry a clone's Cerebral Coretech and leave them a gibbering wreck for the rest of their life, which will be short. Trust only the skills given to you by the Computer, citizen.

IMPROVING STATS

The only way to permanently increase a stat is to buy an increase with XP points. Troubleshooters may be assigned equipment or get a temporary ability that boosts a stat higher than normal but that will only last for as long as the character has the ability or equipment.

EQUIPMENT

- SECTION 1.6

Equipment is a Troubleshooter's best friend. (Incorrect: the Computer is a Troubleshooter's best friend. If you found yourself agreeing with the previous statement, please press your temple against the nearest wireless re-education dock until you no longer agree.) You'll be relying on your kit to see you through all sorts of exciting scrapes, so pay attention as we run down the three different types of equipment that you'll use in your missions.

REMEMBER: ABANDONING YOUR EQUIPMENT IS TREASON!

The Computer has selected your equipment in accordance with your abilities so you can realise your full potential. Equipment is valuable and hard to come by, so every time you leave equipment in the field, you sacrifice important assets – and potentially let them fall into Terrorist hands!

Indeed, it is rumoured that the Gehenna Incident, which did not occur, was caused by a lazy operative treasonously leaving their experimental equipment unattended.

To that end, leaving your equipment in the field is treasonous and those operatives who do not return their kit to Troubleshooter HQ in a timely fashion will be penalised appropriately.

REGULAR EQUIPMENT

When Troubleshooters set out on a mission, they'll always have access to a laser pistol and a jumpsuit in an appropriate security clearance-coded colour. If you believe you do not have your jumpsuit and laser pistol, please check again until you find them; you are mistaken and they have been correctly issued to you.

Clones may be issued with other standard equipment appropriate for their current mission – breathing apparatus for dangerous environments, armour for combat missions, tracking hardware for recapture operations and so on. Your GM will tell you what you receive as part of your mission briefing.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Special equipment is better than regular stuff, usually represented by cards, and usually handed out just after briefing. If your character trades equipment with another Troubleshooter, or they loot it off your clone's corpse, then the card changes hands. Most special equipment has additional rules – check the card for more details. Equipment cards are the responsibility of the Equipment Officer, who decides who gets what and when they get to use it and when they have to give it back.

Do you know what an algorithm is, Troubleshooter? Algorithms are sums that are better than humans! The Computer has used an algorithm to determine the best possible pieces of equipment for you on every given mission. In the unlikely event that you are unhappy with your algorithmically selected equipment, please continue using it until happiness results.

R&D EQUIPMENT

The brave boys and girls in Research & Development are creating new and exciting technologies all the time. Thanks to their resourcefulness and availability, Troubleshooters will often be selected to test out these technologies and to keep a thorough record of how the equipment helped you in your mission, along with the top five things that you loved about it!

R&D equipment is brand new, experimental items that are specific to missions. Each one is so special and unique that it isn't represented on a card. If you're lucky enough to receive any, note it down on your character sheet. The GM may pass you a short description of the item and its capabilities.

EQUIPMENT LEVELS

The Computer has introduced a level system for equipment to facilitate ease of use. Please consult the following chart for sample equipment sorted by grade.

ALPHA: Red-level jumpsuit, Red-level laser pistol, most standard equipment.

Level 1: Orange or Yellow laser pistol. Red-level laser rifle. Knife. Heavy handheld scanner.

Level 2: Green-level laser pistol. Backpack scanner.

Level 3: Indigo-level laser pistol. Armed Services-issue wide-bore shotgun. Elite computing rig.

Level 4: Vulture Squad Assault Laser. Light powered armour. Jetpacks.

Level 5: Heavy powered armour. Forcefields. Hoverboards. Robot unicorns.
[REDACTED].

When you use a piece of equipment in an appropriate way (or an inappropriate but entertaining way, based on the GM's judgement) then you add a number of dice to your NODE equal to the item's level to your roll. ALPHA equipment adds no dice.

WEIGHT

For ease of calculation, the Computer has introduced a simplified method of weight management.

SMALL equipment is light enough that you don't have to worry about carrying it – you can stick it in the pocket of your jumpsuit. Laser pistols, grenades, handheld computers, bags of algae chips and spare power-packs are all Small, and you can carry as many as you want without impediment, within reason. The GM is liable to enforce weight penalties if you try to carry, say, fifty grenades or all the Brown Food Bars.

MEDIUM equipment is sizeable stuff and you need to carry it in one or both hands, stuff it in a bag or strap it to your body to move around effectively. Laser rifles, jump boots, scanners, toolboxes and portable computers are Medium equipment and you can carry two of them without problems, or one piece while wielding a weapon.



LARGE equipment is big, heavy and bulky. You'll need to carry Large equipment in both hands or hope it comes with a special carrying case. Machinery, squad support lasers, some bots and the chairs are all Large, and you can only carry one before the weight interferes with efficient completion of your mission.

OVERSIZE equipment is too big for one clone to carry on their own, although they might be able to drag it. Even with assistance, carrying an Oversize item requires all of a character's attention. They can't do anything else until they put it down.

If your character is carrying more than two Medium items or more than one Large item, deduct one from their NODE on all rolls. If they are carrying an Oversize item, deduct two from their NODE on all rolls.

If you find yourself able to carry oversize equipment – such as taxibots, engine blocks, refrigeration units and [REDACTED] – on your own then please report to your nearest medical centre to be scanned for mutant abilities.

ARMOUR

Armour is rated by level, as described above. Each level of Armour protects the wearer from one level of damage but is destroyed by that. For example, a piece of Level 5 armour can take 5 wounds and then ceases to function.

Some forms of armour may have special conditions. For example, some heavy armour may ignore all Hurt-level wounds (attacks with a single success dice have no effect, in other words). Troubleshooter uniforms are made of a special fabric that reflects laser shots from lasers with the same or lower security clearance than the wearer. In other words, a Red-level Troubleshooter's uniform will reflect bolts from Red and Infrared laser-pistols (there is no such thing as an Infrared laser pistol) but will let bolts from attackers who are Orange and above pass straight through.

BREAKING STUFF

Equipment and other items will take damage depending on size. Roll your NODE as usual: You're looking for successes above the basic difficulty number, the same way you do damage to clones:

SIZE	DOES IT BREAK?
Small	1 success
Medium	2 successes
Large	3 successes
Oversize	4 successes

Damage is cumulative: if you attack a Large scrub-bot three times, doing one success each time, it will break after the third success.

ACQUIRING ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Characters can acquire additional equipment during a mission by ordering it from the Computer and having it delivered to their location. Equipment will only ever be delivered to the ordering clone's location, never to anywhere else. Individual clones will have to spend XP points to do this but some missions allow the Equipment Officer to requisition more equipment, either from the catalogue or by taking it from nearby clones, who will be executed— sorry, *excited* to help Troubleshooters carry out their dangerous and important work.

HOW DO YOU JOIN A SECRET SOCIETY?

- SECTION 1.7

In most cases you don't, the Secret Society recruits you. Someone – maybe a friend, maybe a complete stranger – tells you that you've been chosen for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to join a group that will help you reach your full potential, zoom to the top of the security clearances, get to be first in the food-hall queues and incidentally save Alpha Complex from its greatest threat which is not actually mutant terrorists, it's something that you're not cleared to know about yet and do you want to join.

Say yes. For heaven's pity say yes, because saying no isn't just impolite, it will earn you that Secret Society's undying distrust and hatred. This goes double in the case of IntSec. IntSec does not take no for an answer, literally. If you are approached by IntSec then congratulations, you're happy to be in IntSec. Your protestations and screaming are fooling nobody.

Joining a Secret Society can be awkward if you are already a member of a different Secret Society and can cause cognitive dissonance, panic and chaos as you attempt to fulfill two entirely contradictory sets of mission objectives. Much like a regular Troubleshooter mission, really. However it's quite possible to be a member of multiple Secret Societies at the same time, as long as you can hold all the contradictions in your head and as long as none of those Secret Societies find out about the others.

If you want to join a particular Secret Society, there are ways. The best thing to do is to do something public that fits the society's objectives and if it was noteworthy enough then someone from the society will contact you. Probably. They may be from IntSec, they may be from the Illuminati – it is very difficult to join the Illuminati, they are the synthicreme de la synthicreme – or they may be another wannabe who wants to join the society and assumes you're already in it. This is how many new Secret Societies start.



BEING IN A SECRET SOCIETY

Secret Societies have agendas, aims and objectives, and members are expected to actively work to help fulfill them. That means spotting opportunities to advance the society's aims and taking advantage of them but it also means that from time to time Troubleshooters will receive briefings from their superiors or cell-leaders with specific instructions regarding the mission they're on at the moment. These are usually delivered in unique and bizarre ways to get around the Computer's constant surveillance. They may involve subverting or crashing the mission, stealing the objective, or taking advantage of it to complete some other task. Sometimes Troubleshooters will be asked to undertake an entire mission on behalf of their society.

Not every Secret Society is organised the same way and even different branches of the same society have different set-ups and structures. Don't assume that just because you're a high-up in the Mystics of Sector IZX then the Mystics in Sector TYH will welcome you with open arms or anything except laser fire.

REWARDS

Secret Societies have systems of rewards for their faithful and loyal agents. They can't hand out XP points, obviously (although the Phreaks have hacked gift-cards and Free Enterprise has its own currency) but characters can rise up the ranks of society and obtain special and unique items of equipment. Some societies also have specialist skills that PCs can learn, once they've amassed enough kudos with the group.

ALL SET!

- SECTION 1.8

Congratulations, Troubleshooter! You have successfully completed Module PARAN-01-B in Elementary Troubleshooting. Have 20 XP points for your diligent attention to details. There will be a test on what you have learned, in the form of your first live mission, starting shortly.

We hope that this guide has taught you everything you need to know about Alpha Complex and your important role in keeping it safe. Please remember that this is a classified document and should not be passed to anyone unless you both have the proper clearance. This includes you. If you wish to refer to this document again, first check that you have the appropriate clearances. Displaying knowledge of the contents of this document to unauthorised citizens is treason.

The Computer wants you to be successful as a Troubleshooter. It wants you to root out the enemies of Alpha Complex and the causes of enemies of Alpha Complex, no matter how close to home they may be. Be alert at all times. Be ruthless. Be unstinting. Be loyal.

These are troubled times for Alpha Complex. The propaganda and divisive tactics of our enemies grow more cunning day by day and your work is crucial. Infiltrate Secret Societies if you can but only to unmask them and gain great happiness and many XP points. Do not fall for their lies or their offers of secret knowledge.

Trust nobody.

And remember, the Computer is always with you. It is a friendly voice in your ear, literally, thanks to the wonder of subdermal cochlear implants. If you need advice or reassurance, you should turn to the Computer. Amend the instruction at the end of the last paragraph and trust the Computer.

Stay resolute, Troubleshooter! The terrorists and mutants are on the run, their attempts at disruption through reprogramming and deconstruction are weaker every daycycle! The forces of Alpha Complex are ready! A great bright future is very close! The final struggle will be hard, but if you feel your spirits flagging, just take your trusty laser pistol in hand and SHOV IT RITE UP YER POMPUS TRUBLESHOUTER ASS METAL METAL METAL 4EVER DEATH LEOPARD ZZZ
ZZ
ZZ
ZZ
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ZZ

XP POINT REWARD PROGRAM

- SECTION 1.9

Welcome to the XP Point Redemption Programme Special Troubleshooter Edition, citizen. You have been issued XP points as a reward for your loyalty to Alpha Complex and the Computer. XP points can be redeemed at any time for many acceptable rewards suitable for your security clearance. Pick up that mop and start earning now! You will notice in your viewfield that every citizen's XP point total is visible above their heads, just under where their Treason Stars would be if they have any Treason Stars. Be proud of your XP point total, citizen!

Your current XP point balance is **[Updating]**

EARNING XP POINTS

All citizens earn 1 XP point per day of employment in the service of the Computer. Additionally as a Troubleshooter you can earn variable additional points for doing additional deeds such as:

- Successfully completing a mission in the service of the Computer
- Successfully earning an Achievement
- Identifying a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Arresting a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Executing a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Improving the wellbeing or morale of the citizens of Alpha Complex
- **[notfound]**

SPENDING XP POINTS

This catalogue has been customised to your chosen profession. These items are suitable for use as Troubleshooter Equipment. Please note that the Equipment Officer in your Troubleshooter Equipment squad may have been issued a requisitions budget for your current operation, which can be used to order items in the field. Requisitioned items are the responsibility of the Equipment Troubleshooter Equipment Officer Troubleshooter Equipment and must be returned after use. Equipment ordered by an individual clone by spending their personal XP points becomes the property of that clone.

EQUIPMENT

Upgrade	Cost
Grenades x3	75 XP points
Sniper rifle	250 XP points
Mini-gun	350 XP points
Laser pistol	100 XP points
Laser rifle	200 XP points
Spare power pack (fits all standard laser weapons)	30 XP points
Power cord (fits all standard laser weapons)	45 XP points
Multi-charger	70 XP points
Sabre	80 XP points
Grapple gun	70 XP points
Body armour	220 XP points
Sedatives x3	120 XP points
Gauss rocket launcher	450 XP points
- Additional rocket	60 XP points each
Multi-tool	25 XP points
Replacement armour	95 XP points
Replacement mop	15 XP points
Nightcycle vision goggles	110 XP points
Safety gauntlets	35 XP points
Insulated gauntlets	45 XP points
Insulated mug – enjoy your Hot Fun anywhere!	20 XP points
Hoverboard	[AWAITING STOCK]
Medkit x3	150 XP points
Electro-knuckles	50 XP points
Megaphone	35 XP points
Needler	180 XP points
Laser tripwire	150 XP points
Foam grenade x3	130 XP points
K@ companion bot	650 XP points
Hygiene-o-matic 9000	220 XP points
UBT Hypersense device	240 XP points
Casey-B's Bombaboots	270 XP points

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Upgrade	Cost
Increase your living space (per square metre)	100 XP points
Increase your physical storage space (per cubic litre)	20 XP points
Increase your AugMem digital storage space (per 16 zb)	65 XP points
Replacement clothes (appropriate to your security clearance)	45 XP points
High-fashion clothes (appropriate to your security clearance)	95 XP points
Icon sets, wallpapers and themes for Cerebral Coretech	3 XP points each

RECREATION

Upgrade	Cost
Bouncy Bubble Beverage	5 XP points
Standard one-hour video cast	5 XP points
Premium one-hour video cast	15 XP points
Deluxe food rations for 1 daycycle	20 XP points
Private room for 1 daycycle	50 XP points
Use of taxi-pod for 1 journey	40 XP points
Hire of petbot for 1 daycycle	40 XP points
Hire of funbot for 1 daycycle	80 XP points

SELF IMPROVEMENT

Upgrade

Specialist skills package
Upgrade existing skills package
Core module upgrade
Calming alpha-wave moderator

Cost

300 XP points per level
200 XP points per level
500 XP points per level
50 XP points per use

INCREASING SECURITY CLEARANCE

Upgrade

Upgrade from INFRARED to RED Security Clearance
Upgrade from RED to ORANGE Security Clearance
– As above, with cake for your team
Upgrade from ORANGE to YELLOW Security Clearance
– As above, with cake for your team
– As above, and the cake is YELLOW cake only you can eat, but there's enough for everybody
Upgrade from YELLOW to GREEN Security Clearance
– This level comes with complimentary cake
Upgrade from GREEN to BLUE Security Clearance
– This level comes with two complimentary cakes
Upgrade from BLUE to INDIGO Security Clearance
– Information about Indigo cake is above your security clearance
Upgrade from INDIGO to VIOLET Security Clearance
– Your unauthorised knowledge of Violet-level cake has been noted, citizen
Upgrade from VIOLET to ULTRAVIOLET

Cost

500 XP points
1000 XP points
1100 XP points
2000 XP points
2100 XP points
2400 XP points
4000 XP points
8000 XP points
16000 XP points
32000 XP points
[\$NOTFOUND]

[\$UNEXPECTEDENDOFCAKEERROR]

Note: all security-clearance upgrades include new body armour and a laser pistol in the appropriate colour.

SPECIAL REWARDS

Upgrade	Cost
[REDACTED]	200 XP
[REDACTED]	350 XP
[REDACTED]	1750 XP
[REDACTED]	7200 XP
Additional clone	[REDACTED]





THIS
WEEKCYCLE'S
SPECIAL OFFER

STUN GUN! Be the envy of your friends with the B-83/n 'Blipper' classic stun-pistol. Convert enemies of Alpha Complex to prone, twitching yet sentient and not-dead lumps of humanoid organic matter at up to 15 metres. Causes no wounds and only minor internal bleeding. Ineffective against bots, vehicles, stationary objects, infrastructure and clones who are already dead. Includes safety shut-off to prevent accidental stunning of citizens with a higher security clearance than you. Now just 250 XP points!

COMING NEXT WEEKCYCLE!

Be the first to own the all-new B-84/n2 'Blitter' for an introductory 'test subject' price of 225 XP points!

ATTENTION!

All clones who downloaded item 0WL1-ZX ‘iBall enhanced dark-vision package (experimental do not release)’ should be warned that some users have reported an incidence of exploding retinas. R&D apologises if this has caused you any inconvenience. An iPatch will be made available next monthcycle. In the meantime, if you want to return this item for a partial XP point refund then you are wrong.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

XP points are a virtual currency issued, administered and generously donated to citizens of Alpha Complex in return for services rendered by the Computer. All XP points remain the property of the Computer at all times and may not be traded, swapped or given by any citizen to any other citizen, bot, lifeform or being or object sentient or unsentient at any time for any reason except to their own subsequent clones. XP points may not be exchanged for objects material and immaterial, favours, promises, thoughts, ideas, concepts, beliefs, tokens, bon mots, emotions, intangibles, miasmas, ethers, memes, whuffie or anything else that does or does not exist without the prior approval of the Computer, which will not be granted. The Computer reserves the right to remove XP points from your account as a punishment for infractions or for causing damage to the physical, mental, emotional or spiritual structure of Alpha Complex, or to encourage citizens to perform better in future, or for asking what the ‘XP’ in ‘XP points’ stands for. The XP point cost of rewards may change at any time without notice. XP point rewards may be removed from this catalogue or replaced with similar items of equal or greater or other value at the discretion of the Computer. Likewise the catalogue may be withdrawn at any time. All deliveries are final. Asking about warranties may affect your statutory rights, where ‘statutory rights’ are defined as your right not to be turned into a statue. Enjoy your XP point rewards. The Computer is your friend.