



**THE FINAL FRONTIER** is a role-playing game set in a version of the original *Star Trek* universe, where the players run the senior officers on a Star Fleet vessel. It includes an original set of rule mechanics, as well as a fair amount of source material - some condensed and extrapolated from various source material, and some created out of whole cloth.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction



### Space – the Final Frontier.

**These are the voyages of the starship, *Enterprise*. Its five year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, ... to boldly go where no man has gone before. } }**

At the heart of *Star Trek* is a vision of a future which is about exploring and learning rather than fighting aliens or surviving the hazards of space. Perhaps more than any other television series, it has sparked the imagination of its viewers, spawning four more series (the animated series, *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, and *Voyager*), seven feature films, and countless novels and other books.

This game is about adding your own chapters to the saga. It is a fairly serious game about role-played action in the universe of original *Star Trek* TV series and feature films.

If you are not familiar with table-top role-playing games, just keep reading to get some of the ideas, and the next chapter will explain more. In short, it is a game of imagination where one person (the Game Moderator, or GM) sets up challenges within the context of a story. The players, then, interact with that by controlling the main characters. The purpose is simply to have fun: whether by overcoming the challenges, creating an interesting story, or simply exploring your character.

### To Experienced Role-Players

Role-playing a *Star Trek* series is unusual in many respects compared to other role-playing games. *Star Trek* officers have an *enormous* amount of power and responsibility. They command hundreds of subordinates, on a ship which could (theoretically) devastate planets.

The characters are also in a strict command structure patterned after the modern navy. This makes the interaction of PC's very different from a group of companions or equals. The players need to be more aware of their interactions and how group decisions get made.

The rules try to emphasize the importance of skill and role-playing over die rolls.

### To *Star Trek* Fans

Compared to writing *Star Trek* fiction, role-playing is much more demanding in terms of consistency. The usual *Star Trek* guides seek only to define what is “canon”. This way, an author can avoid violating



established facts, but is free to make up as much else as possible. However, in an RPG, the participants must rely on an in-depth *shared* understanding.

Thus, the game defines in detail many things which are simplistic plot devices – like how a phaser works, the exact chain of command, and so forth. This is done in order to create a logical, consistent framework in which to play.

First of all, these details give the players background information with which to understand their characters. A good role-player is expected to play his character from the inside – to know *why* she does what she does. The player should know what she had to go through to join Star Fleet? What was her life like before? What can she expect when she retires? Etc.

Second, these details prevent *assumption clash* between the GM and the players – where they have different understandings of how things work. For example, the characters might be trapped on a planet with only a handful of phasers – now they must

It doesn't matter who is *\*right\** in this case – the problem is that their understanding differs. The player is not privy to information her character would know, and thus she made decisions which simply didn't make sense in the game world.

## Basic Rules

On the simplest level, role-playing works by the players and GM simply agreeing on what should happen. i.e. The player describes walking over to the desk and picking up the papers, and the GM describes what is written on them.

For more questionable situations where the outcome is in doubt, there are game *mechanics* which describe how things work in a more abstract way. After all, we can't expect GM and players to understand whether Scotty can “really” fix the engines in time, or whether Kirk can “really” knock out the Orion assassin. Instead, we rely on mechanics to come up with a quick, consistent answer.

The details of the rules are covered in a later chapter. However, there are some basic concepts which you should be familiar with before you get started.

## Stats and Skills

Your character will have various skills rated on a numerical scale from 1 to 10 or more. Your skill indicates the difficulty of task which you can *automatically* succeed at – everyone has a 100% chance of success at some level.

For more difficult tasks or when the exact quality of success is important, you need to roll dice (described below). The dice will tell you how much above your minimum competence you did.

## Quality Rolls

When called upon to roll for an action, you should roll two six-sided dice which are read together for a result from 0 to 5 which is added to skill. This is known as a *quality roll*). If the numbers on the dice are different, take the *lower* of the two dice as your result. If the numbers are equal, then the result is *zero* - you succeed only at your minimum level of competence.

## Quality Rolls

### Examples of Play

Throughout this book, you can find boxed sections with italic texts. These are hypothetical examples of how a real game might progress. They center on Captain Hernandez...

## Chapter 2

# What is Role-playing?

If you are not familiar with table-top role-playing games, just keep reading to get some of the ideas, and the next chapter will explain more. In short, it is a game of imagination where one person (the Game Moderator, or GM) sets up challenges within the context of a story. The players, then, interact with that by controlling the main characters. The purpose is simply to have fun: whether by overcoming the challenges, creating an interesting story, or simply exploring your character.

## Adapting Star Trek

### What's in Here

## Chapter 3

# The United Federation of Planets

The year is 2275 A.D. by the Terran Christian calendar, or Y165 by Federation reckoning of “standard years”, with Y0 being the time of the original summit conference which established the concept of a peaceful alliance.

The United Federation of Planets, or UFP, is a loose alliance of a great many member states, spread across a volume of space some 800 light-years across, near the edge of the local spiral arm of the Milky Way galaxy.

### Territory

Within this area, there are a large number of planets with related environments and species. This is apparently due to earlier galactic civilizations, which, over thousands of years, terraformed planets, genetically altered some species, and transplanted some species to other systems. In particular, several sentient, anthropoid species were seeded to numerous systems.

Over five species served as base stock - including humans and Vulcans. Species derived from these are referred to as humanoid or vulcanoid. Thus, within Federation boundaries, you can find humanoid species with related or identical genetics. You can also find genetically matched vulcanoid species (Vulcan, Romulan), saurian species (Gorn, ...), and feline species (Caitian, Lyran, Kzinti).

Currently, the UFP is one of the dominant interstellar powers in the region, together with the Klingon Empire, Romulan Star Empire, and Gorn Confederation. The Federation is maintained by hundreds of faster-than-light ships which move using antimatter-powered warp drives, including a fleet of over 150 armed warships.

Besides the interstellar powers, there are other advanced civilizations which are less territorial. There are several, perhaps related, groups of ‘energy beings’ who have apparently transcended material existence. While they are not nearly as common as conspiracy theorists suggest, their existence is indisputable.

In addition, there are many advanced civilizations which simply show no interest in interstellar colonization or exploration. With the advance of technology, they develop into leisure societies, with computers and other automation supplying all their needs. In contrast, the starfaring races inevitably put a high premium on personal achievement, and shun computer control, robots, and similar easy outs. This is universally true among the handful of starfaring races known: Klingons, Romulans, Gorns, Kzinti, Humans, Vulcans, Andorians, and Orions.

## Galactic Structure

Due to the nature of subspace (see *Science and Technology* below), the “terrain” of galactic space is much more complex than was once thought. There are numerous subspace anomalies, producing radiation zones, ion storms, and more. The effects of these anomalies cannot be exactly predicted due to the chaotic nature of the subspace phenomena.

The structure of the galaxy also produces systematic subspace effects: There is an energy barrier at the edge of the local spiral arm, beyond which navigation is virtually impossible. In theory, there will also be similar energy barriers as one approaches the galactic center. Further, local subspace is polarized along the axis of galactic spin. Thus, warp travel within a galactic plane is over 8 times easier than warp travel ‘up’ or ‘down’ with respect to the galactic plane.

## Politics

The original Articles of Federation were signed 161 years ago by various nations on Vulcan, Alpha-Centauri, Terra, Tellar, and Cygnus. This joined their various political entities as a loose confederation, whose laws and principles have roughly remained the same.

Any society which qualifies for membership can easily join, providing it pays minor dues, which are proportionate to its gross economic product. Each member state sends one representative to occasional conferences, known as Babel conferences, where alterations of policy are voted upon.

The assembled representatives will elect a standing Federation council, but this is an advisory board rather than a ruling body. The handful of absolute laws of the Federation relate solely to interstellar relations, and the strongest punitive measure is revoking of Federation membership. The primary laws are simply that members cannot start or encourage violent conflict with other members or with external powers, and they cannot build or maintain warp-capable ships of war.

Thus, the Federation operates mainly by cooperation of members and the independent action of federally funded agencies, such as Star Fleet. Still, it does have a variety of techniques to control its members. In the past, it has influenced members by controlling economic agreements. It even established its own unit of credit, but these never really caught on. Today, most trade is still done by barter or by state credits (notably Terran, Lunar, and Orion credits). Currently, the Federation’s primary method of controlling its members centers around *Star Fleet*.

## Star Fleet

Star Fleet is an independent branch of the Federation government, whose central and exclusive function is to defend members of the Federation. This includes defense against foreign powers, and defense of member states in violent conflict. While inter-state violence will remove a state from the Federation, Star Fleet is a much more effective deterrent.

Star Fleet also provides many other services: exploration of new territory, colonizing expeditions, convoy escorts, customs regulation, and humanitarian efforts. They support a wide variety of scientific and technical projects as well.

## Current Status

Currently, there are over 500 member states within the UFP, representing over 200 distinct species. There are certain states, however, which due to population, economics, or technology dominate the rest of the Federation.

The ‘Big Four’ would be *Terrans*, *Alpha-centaurans*, *Vulcans*, and *Orions*. These groups have an influence

almost everywhere that there is Federation activity. For example, Terran humans dominate Star Fleet, and aggressive colonization has spread them over an enormous number of worlds. The genetically similar Alpha-centaurans show a parallel expansionism. Vulcans dominate the Federation scientific community, and are widespread as diplomats and observers. The Orions are currently the most powerful economic block, and maintain a technological head start over most other members.

Beyond these four, it is hard to say. Some members represent themselves in various fashions, while many remain passive and relatively isolationist. The more active members would include Andorians, Tellarites, and Cygnans. Some members are represented, but for various reasons are not especially influential. These might include the Betazoids, Brecon, Caitians, Deltans, Edoans, Skoleans, Withiki, and Y'prrg.

The more passive members include most of the non-anthropoid races, such as the Hortas, P'Igli, and Medusans – with the notable exception of the ‘new’ Milieni. Other passive members include leisure societies like the Argelians, and isolationist societies like the Antosians.

More complete descriptions of these races is available in other documents.

## Federation Science and Technology

Current science bears little resemblance to the predictions of early space exploration. The most notable advance was the discovery of *subspace*, which overturned the original Theory of Relativity. What follows is a fairly incomplete and inexact description of the consequences of subspace theory, intended solely to introduce concepts which may be unfamiliar.

### Subspace

Subspace is a continuum that exists in conjunction with our own space-time continuum. Every point in our universe has a corresponding point in subspace. Also, at every point in our universe, subspace has a particular frame of reference, or “velocity”. This forms a preferred frame of reference, which overturns the original formulation of Relativity. Relativistic effects are still present, of course, but they are applied with respect to a preferred frame - that of local subspace.

One could imagine subspace to be an intangible, viscous fluid that pervades the known universe. In one area, the fluid might be moving at a particular velocity, while in another area the fluid might be moving at another velocity. The velocity roughly matches the local distribution of mass - so that subspace will follow the motion of large gravitational objects, such as planets and stars. The fact that subspace matches the motion of planets caused it to be overlooked by early scientists - but continued experimentation showed various spatial anomalies.

As it turns out, subspace also has its own interactions and behavior, and will form eddies and currents independent of mass-energy in our own universe. In fact, subspace extends into dimensions far beyond those our universe. As an analogy, if our universe were two dimensional, we would simply be a thin film on the surface of a vast lake of subspace. In practical terms, this means that there are many points in subspace which do not correspond to points in our space. As a consequence, there are paths in subspace which only intersect with distant points in our universe (a wormhole being a classic example).

### Subspace Fields

Certain particle interactions will produce anomalous subspace reactions, resulting in subspace waves and fields. Notably, matter- antimatter annihilation, besides producing gamma rays in our universe, also produces an *inherent* subspace displacement. Some nuclear reactions can produce a similar effect, but on a much smaller scale.

The subspace field which is produced by these reactions will have various effects, both on subspace, and

on mass-energy in our universe. A subspace field will alter the effective mass of objects contained within them. Further, the gradient within this field will allow for momentum transfer between matter and subspace. A changing subspace field will resonate with certain distributions of mass (corresponding to the frequency of the oscillation). This interaction allows time-varying subspace fields to be focussed and directed under certain conditions.

As an example, we can consider an incoherent pattern of subspace waves, oscillating at an exact frequency. Since they will interact with a particular pattern of matter, a crystal of a specific structure might disperse or focus the waves.

Further, we can imagine a coherent beam of subspace waves, oscillating with certain phases and frequencies. As this beam passes through matter, energy will be deposited in a dispersed pattern which depends on the frequency and phase of the oscillation. This effect is known today as a phaser.

## Warp Fields

A warp field is a special configuration of the subspace field, with a flat central region (i.e. a region with no field gradient). This region behaves locally exactly the same as normal space. Outside the central region, there is a high field gradient, which brings the warp field into contact with normal space. As an analogy, a warp field could be imagined as a bump on the two-dimensional plane of space - but the bump has a flat surface on its top.

To the outside universe, matter within the central region of a warp field appears to have a lower effective mass than usual. Further, matter and energy which pass through the subspace gradient (known as the interaction region) will experience a distortion force from interaction with the warp field.

A warp field can be created by maintaining a set of subspace-affecting reactions over an area in a specific pattern. The most commonly used is a helical, or coil, pattern - which with properly distributed reactions produced an oblong spheroid-shaped warp field.

## Warp Propulsion

Modern starships can travel faster than light by constructing an asymmetrical warp field, and using it to transfer momentum into subspace. To again use the 2D analogy, the starship could be imagined as 'skating' on the surface of space: it is displaced from the surface, and propelling itself by expending energy into the 'friction' between its own surface and the surface of normal space.

Producing a warp propulsion field causes subspace to act as both an energy and a momentum reservoir. The ship within the warp field will have a lower effective mass, and it will gain a momentum opposite and proportional to the momentum placed into subspace. The apparent velocity is faster than light, but because of the coupling to subspace, the relativistic effects of travelling through ordinary space at that speed are suppressed.

One of the consequences of warp propulsion is that, given the post-Relativistic view of spacetime, one can construct a warp path which violates causality. That is, it contacts a universe of an earlier time, which in a quantum mechanical sense, is consistent with the past of the original universe.

Unfortunately, these trips can create large loops of disturbance to the surface of subspace, which due to the chaotic nature of subspace interactions can have far-reaching consequences. Even if the time travel does not directly affect our timeline, the propagated effects could impact on our timeline indirectly. Until an accurate way of gauging these effects is found the Federation has put a moratorium on time travel experiments.

## Chapter 4

# Star Fleet

Star Fleet was conceived in the Year Y71, and by Year Y117 it was complete. At that time, the Federation adopted the policy that no members were to maintain warp-capable warships, which was endorsed by a vast majority of members who were incapable of producing starships anyway.

Star Fleet's central and exclusive function is to defend members of the Federation. This includes defense against foreign powers, and defense of member states in violent conflict. While inter-state violence will remove a state from the Federation, Star Fleet is a much more effective deterrent.

Star Fleet also provides many other services: exploration of new territory, colonizing expeditions, convoy escorts, customs regulation, and humanitarian efforts. They support a wide variety of scientific and technical projects as well.

Originally, the overwhelming majority of support for Star Fleet came from Earth and Mars, who had the largest national fleet prior to its formation. These Terran-built ships became the center of the new Star Fleet, strongly supported by Andor and Alpha-Centauri. Soon various smaller member states, unable to produce their own ships, provided aid to the growing Star Fleet.

However, despite the economic and technical assistance from other states, Star Fleet remains dominated by Terran humans. Around 60% of Star Fleet personnel are descended from Earth. The closest second is Andorians, who account for only 17%. Alpha-Centaurians account for 11%, and Vulcans 4%. The remainder is a highly varied mix. In addition, the races remain largely segregated. Bases and ships are generally dominated by a single race, with only 10% or less of the personnel being 'aliens'.

Despite appearances, though, prejudice is not especially prevalent or tolerated in Star Fleet. The racial makeup is largely a holdover from the origins of Star Fleet in the national fleets of Terra and Mars. In order to qualify for Star Fleet Academy, you need a sponsor from within the ranks - which means that many officers are connected through relations or friends to previous officers. In addition, recruitment and training for both officers and enlisted personnel is done locally near established Star Fleet bases. Once candidates are within the system, however, bias against them is strongly discouraged.

The policy of segregation is the result Star Fleet efficiency studies, which suggested that radically different species had trouble operating together, such as Terrans and Vulcans. All efforts are made to ensure that equal resources are allocated to all ships.



# Characters

## Chapter 5

# Starting a Series

A *series* is simply a number of play sessions which revolve around a core set of characters. Breathing life into these characters is the most challenging part of a role-playing game. Players need time to turn their characters from cardboard cut-outs to interesting individuals – either by preparing in advance or by playing them. It is possible to play single sessions not part of a series, but most often either the characters will be dull or you will spend far more time creating them than actually playing.

Before starting, you should set a time to get together as a group to plan the series. If you haven't decided on a Game Moderator, you should either find someone or arrange a rotating GM (see below). Ask people what they like in a game – and what their goals might be. Role-playing is a group activity, after all, and different players will want different things out of the game.

Below are a bunch of different issues and possibilities to

## Genre and Mood

This game assumes that you will be playing the senior officers on a Federation starship in the era of the original series. One player will take on the role of captain, the others will take senior branch officers. However, there is still a lot of leeway within these parameters. Most importantly, you need to decide about the tone of the campaign, which can be anything from fast-paced action to deep moral dilemmas to complex tactical challenges.

### **Seriousness** (Serious versus Light-hearted):

This game assumes that things will be taken fairly seriously, more like *Balance of Terror* than *Trouble with Tribbles*. The basic question is about how nasty the consequences can be to the player's actions: a more light-hearted game will endeavor to soften the blow of any unfortunate incidents, while a more serious game will explore these more thoroughly.

### **Continuity** (Episodic versus Interwoven):

A more episodic game can draw on a vast variety of science-fiction allegories and puzzles, a new set each week. The problem is that play can seem disjointed and it is an enormous amount of work to come up with new dilemmas every session. A more interwoven game increasingly uses the same characters over again, allowing familiarity possibly at the expense of diversity.

### **Drama** (Directed versus Natural):

In real life, scientific puzzles and diplomatic tensions rarely resolve themselves to everyone's satisfaction. A mysterious phenomena may remain unexplained for years, and mutual understanding grows slowly (if at all). However, in a game, the GM may opt to try to “direct” play towards a closed ending where everything is explained and events are more-or-less resolved.

**Fairness** (Fair-Play versus Stuff-Happens):

In “Fair-Play”, the challenges the PC’s face will be roughly equal to their abilities. If they act intelligently and put in a good effort, things will come out well for them.

**Script Immunity** ():

In general, most source material is to be taken as media which would appear in the game-world. Thus, the original series is pulp-style media. *The Final Reflection* is a controversial novel which was officially a work of fiction, even though the history does correspond with publicly known facts. *Star Fleet Battles* could be an accurate military simulation useful for training recruits (like *Harpoon* to 20th century naval students).

## Time and Place

Once you have agreed on a style, then you can get down to the more specifics of the campaign: when, where, what, and why. Especially for a heavily interwoven campaign, the GM may want to require particular choices to fit with his plans for background or plot hooks. On the other hand, as a group you might want to make these decisions communally.

In practical terms, the specifics of the campaign determine what you will be spending your time on. If you are in the middle of war with the Klingons, then there is less chance for peaceful exploration of unknown worlds.

In literary terms, the backdrop of what is going on in the larger picture will have an effect on the flavor of the campaign as a whole.

**Time:** (Pre-Series, Series, Post-Series, Film Era)

**Place:** (Interior, Hostile Border, Unexplored Territory)

**Ship:** (Cruiser, Frigate)

**Mission:** (Patrol, Exploration, Diplomacy)

## An Ensemble of Characters

In *Star Trek*, the relationships between characters is much more codified than it is in many other games or fiction. One player is handling the captain: authority and responsibility rest with her. The other officers will advise the captain and each other on the nature of the situation, and actively solve problems towards the objectives which the captain sets. Done correctly, this can be a very balanced and enjoyable arrangement.

The advantage is that the characters are not tied up in endless debates. The captain defines the goals in a strategic sense, but should mainly let the officers go about their jobs as they see best.

The captain’s player has to be someone whom everyone trusts to make critical decisions; while at the same time trusts the others enough to step back from what they do. On the one hand, a passive captain can ruin a game by failing to make necessary decisions in time. On the other hand, a very pro-active captain might micro-manage to the point of interfering with the other players.

A good captain has to be decisive, who implicitly trusts officers.

## Chapter 6

# Character Creation

As any Star Fleet recruiter will tell you, good officers are hard to find. Ideally, a character design will build up momentum. Some core concept will blossom into a full-fledged creation which sits in your mind like an entity unto itself. You and the GM will agree upon his basic traits in a quantitative way, and play will follow smoothly.

Of course, not everything works out ideally, but the best advice I can give is to talk a lot with your GM, and take it step by step:

1. Develop a working *concept*
2. Choose a *position* on the ship
3. Decide on a *species* for your character
4. Choose the inherent *traits* of your character
5. With the GM's help, outline your character's *history*
6. Allocate points to *skills* (above the minimum levels)

Obviously, feel free to violate this ordering if you feel like it. The idea above is to decide on the basics and then fill in the details about the character.

## The Concept

Characters rarely spring from your head fully grown and armed. Rather, you define a hook – something special about the character – and develop out from there. Of course, the end result often bears little resemblance to the initial concept.

In *Star Trek*, characters are often defined by coming from a particular species, race, or culture (i.e. a Vulcan, or a Russian, or a Scotsman). A culturally diverse set of officers is both a part of the genre, and fitting with the nature of Star Fleet. You are encouraged to draw on background material for ideas (i.e. episodes, novels, movies, handouts, etc.).

Other concept hooks could be a particular personality trait (i.e. daring, or cerebral, or friendly). You might start with the particular role or position for the character - either his position on the ship, or his dramatic role (i.e. a hero, or a rogue, or comic relief).

Don't get too attached to your hook, however, since the concept may very well mutate into something else along the way.

## Position and Rank

An officer's *rank* is a service distinction based on experience, ability, and responsibility, which he bears regardless of his current duties. An officer's *position* is his specific duties and responsibilities on his current assignment. As an officer carries out his duties, his rank is only important with respect to his place in the chain of command, and his fitness in being assigned to those duties.

Within Star Fleet, there are two forms of rank which an officer can bear: rank as a Line Officer, and rank as a Staff Officer. A *Line Officer* is trained to lead his crew into danger and to be prepared to sacrifice both his life and their lives to accomplish his mission. A *Staff Officer*, while respected, is not expected to do this. Thus, a Staff Officer is behind all Line Officers in the Chain of Command, regardless of rank. Usually, only Administrative and Medical officers are considered Staff, but sometimes technical specialists in other fields are promoted as Staff.

## Notes on Play

The following are some notes on the various officer positions, including the skills and responsibilities of the character, and the demands upon you as a player.

- **The Captain** is the commanding officer of the vessel, and as such is in command of and responsible for everyone and everything on board.

Playing the commanding officer is a tricky role, and to some degree the whole group should be involved in deciding who should be captain. A good captain must be decisive under pressure, firm in maintaining order and providing direction, and good at delegating authority.

This last part is key. Both on a starship, and in play, it is vital to morale that the captain not be constantly looking over people's shoulders. A good captain will tell his officers *what* they must accomplish, but rely upon their skill and judgement to decide *how* to do so.

- **The First Officer**

The role of the first officer is surprisingly different from that of the captain. As executive, you must be the one to coordinate all the lesser tasks, monitor progress, and so forth. This position requires an active player, one who is interested in talking a lot to the other characters.

- **The Science Officer** is responsible for all scientific and tactical intelligence gathering. This includes maintenance, repair, and operation of active and sublight sensors, and scientific analysis of all gathered information.

Playing the Chief Science Officer is a fairly straightforward role, but it is still demanding. You must serve as an information conduit to the rest of the group: reading all the technical handouts, taking notes in play, and asking the GM questions between sessions. Thus, when technical problems comes up, you should sound informed and can think of reasonable solutions.

This position is best suited for a meticulous player who can communicate well with the GM. Ideally, the GM should brief you in advance about weird science fiction concepts you will encounter, but in practice this is often hard to keep up.

- **The Helm Officer** is responsible for operation and maintenance of all ordnance (weapons and potential weapons). This includes operation and maintenance of all weapons (photons, phasers, drones, and drone racks) plus operation of shuttlecraft and tractor beams. It is also responsible for the manual piloting of the engines. While an automated course is usually laid in by the navigator, the helmsman will engage the engines and may make manual adjustments. (Note that the term "helmsman" refers to the current Helm officer on bridge duty, as opposed to the permanent head of the Helm Department).

Playing the Chief Helm Officer is a somewhat limited role, because the duties involved are often not very interesting to role-play. Thus, this position is probably best for a player who is creative and

adaptable, who can make himself a part of things even though it is not his direct duty. Alternatively, it can be a good place for a player who does not want to be very active.

- **The Navigation Officer** is responsible for all strategic and tactical maneuvering and analysis. This includes: laying courses, monitoring ship's bearing and position, tracking and predicting bearing and position of all external tactical and strategic objects (other ships and astronomical hazards).

The Chief Navigation Officer has a variety of duties. He will act much like the science officer regarding astrophysics, subspace effects, and computing. Further, he is vital to starship tactics, tracking enemy ships and hazards. This is less specialized than other positions, and can take a variety of players.

- **The Communications Officer** is responsible for the secure handling of all information: external transmission and receiving as well as shipboard storage and security. This includes: maintenance and operation of subspace communicators and auto-translators, cryptography, translation, and maintenance of the central computing systems.

This is a tricky role, which needs some effort to be active. The Communications Officer is an expert in codes, language, and culture — but it is the Captain or First Officer who will be the talking in important negotiations. Thus, this part takes some patience on the player's part. You need to act mainly by listening and advising rather than directly affecting things.

- **The Engineering Officer** is responsible for maintenance and repair of all non-weapon systems except for medical equipment, sensors, and computers. This includes warp, impulse, life support, transporters, tractor beams, shuttlecraft, etc.

Playing the engineering officer is a fairly straightforward role. Like the science officer, you must keep up with technical information. But whereas the science officer is studying external puzzles, you are more often modifying and jury-rigging standard equipment. Thus, this position is best with an inventive player. Ideally, you have a list of ideas for modifying equipment for various functions. From time to time you should add ideas and talk to the GM about how feasible they are.

- **The Medical Officer**

This is a somewhat tricky role. While there is often call for a doctor to be on hand, your duties may not be very involving. You will act like the Science Officer regarding medical and biological matters, but when these do not come up, you need to get creative. Like the Helm Officer, this position needs a player with enough initiative to get involved even though it is not his direct duty.

- **The Chief Security Officer**

This is a fairly straightforward role, which is concerned with protecting the other officers and crew against various threats. This usually means having exacting procedures which cover as many contingencies as possible. Thus, this role is best for players who are interested in that sort of plotting and planning.

## Species

By default, characters are assumed to be of the human species – although not necessarily Terran humans. Non-human characters, such as Vulcans, require special attention. A separate section [??] will detail the background and rules necessary for each species. You should determine the species of your character early on, as this will affect a number of other factors.

“Human” here simply means that the character is genetically compatible with Terran humans – i.e. could theoretically interbreed with them. As every viewer of *Star Trek* is aware, there are human species scattered on many planets throughout this corner of the galaxy. Those that are near-identical with Terran humans are referred to as “human”; those that are closely related are called “humanoid”.

The primary spread of species occurred due to the actions of a culture known as the Preservers, who in the time period from 140 millenia to perhaps 2 or 3 millenia ago “seeded” various species to worlds beyond

their home system. There are only a handful of base genetic strains for intelligent species – from which all other species are derived.

- Human
- Vulcan / Romulan
- Andorian
- Klingon
- Felinoid: Caitian, Kzinti, Lyran
- Saurian: Skolean, Gorn(Alpha, Beta, and Gamma),

I am holding here that different species can produce offspring, but only through artificial genetic manipulation – which is easy for advanced Federation technology. A human mother, for example, has radically incompatible blood with a vulcan child – thus necessitating other measure. Earth mastered the genetic technology over two centuries ago, but now has strict controls over any sort of genetic manipulation. On Earth now, manipulation is allowed solely in the case of parents who are unable to naturally conceive a child.

Approximately 70% of Star Fleet personnel are humanoid. In addition, the non-humanoids are usually segregated into their own units. This is not out of ideological discrimination, but rather a proven fact that efficiency drops in mixed units due to culture clash and impractical environments. In practice, over 90% of the personnel on a given starship will be the same species.

## Traits

In essence, traits represent any inherent quality of your character. For the game, some traits are formalized into simple numbers (such as “Reflexes: 6”), but others are purely descriptive. You can get a good start on traits by writing down line by line features of the character as you picture him (i.e. “tall”, “aggressive”, “smart”, etc.).

The details of allocating traits are in the next chapter. There are several options, but for all of them you have to prioritize which traits you want to excel in. There are no strict limits on traits, but you should remember that as a senior officer, your character is part of an elite. In order to get to this position, he must have passed tests with very strict standards.

## Fortune Points

One additional feature to play your character is *Fortune Points*, which represent a certain amount of blind luck on your character’s side. Strictly speaking, these are not a trait of your character. Rather, they are an resource for you *as a player*, to give you some concrete input on the resolution of the game.

Thus, if you take a new character during a campaign, you keep the same number of fortune points as you had when you left you last character. The purpose of Fortune Points (or FP’s for short) is to keep up a fast pace and fun in the game. After all, Star Fleet officers are expected to risk their lives if necessary, but the death of a player character hampers the enjoyment and playability of the game.

The specifics of using and acquiring FP’s is explained in the Campaign section. You can take back foolish actions, or introduce coincidences in favor of your character. The primary rule is simply to be reasonable in what you wish for. You start the game with 3 FP’s, and will gain more as play continues. You should expect an average of about 1 additional FP per session.

## History

Prior to the start of the campaign, you should spend some time talking to the GM, and outline the history of your character from his homeworld to his career in Star Fleet.

**Homeworld:** The variety of worlds within the Federation is truly staggering, and for many the spaceways are fairly open.

**Admission:** To gain admission to the Academy, you must pass a series of qualifying tests, and you must have a sponsor within the ranks. The sponsor may be a relative or friend of the family, or it may be someone whom you contacted by Star Fleet referral. Either way, it is probably someone important in your career.

**Academy:** Beyond the skills learned, an important part of the Academy is how you get along with your fellow officers, both on and off duty.

**Service:** Experience teaches you more lessons than can be imagined in a classroom, and this is one of them. With the GM, you should put together a service record of your character's tours of duty.

Your character will, of course, have a history with a great many people: friends, relatives, acquaintances, rivals, enemies, and so forth. Being hated by someone may help you out with that person's enemies, and being friendly with someone may get you assaulted to get at your friend. Having friends in high places can be very useful at times, but it may also involve you in their politics and struggles, or earn resentment over favoritism (whether it is real or imagined).

## Skills

The mechanics of buying skills are covered in a later chapter. Essentially, you are given a certain number of *Skill Points* to buy levels of skill to reflect your character's expertise.

The allocated skills are broken up into four groups. The first group is the minimum skill requirements which you must fulfill to be a senior officer in Star Fleet. For simplicity, these minimums are automatic — you only have to allocate points for skills above the minimum level.

The three groups of allocated skill points are: *Background* skill points; *Fleet* skill points, and *Free* skill points. *Background* points are for skills developed previous to or outside of Star Fleet. *Fleet* points are for skills acquired on the job. *Free* points are for interests pursued in your free time since entering the service.

The important thing is to keep in mind your character's history, interests, and duties as you are allocating skills. For example, if you spend all your free points on ship-related skills, then it would imply that you have been spending most of your free time tinkering around the ship.



# Chapter 7

## Traits

*Traits* are inherent qualities of your character — they are not unchanging, but they do not develop linearly like skills do. Traits might be things like physical fitness and personality, while skills might be scholastic knowledge and social graces. Sometimes traits can fluctuate, perhaps even radically. However, at least part of them are unchangeable, representing permanent parts of your character’s make-up.

This game has two sorts of traits: numerical and descriptive. *Numerical* traits have a number rating on an arbitrary scale, designed to be used in the game mechanics. These are thus divided up into strict categories which are referred to elsewhere in the game mechanics. *Descriptive* traits can represent just about anything, usually qualities which do not relate to game mechanics or do not fit on a linear scale. By rule of thumb, they will add  $\pm 1$  to the numerical trait when they apply.

The predefined numerical traits are broken up into four categories: **Body**, **Reflexes**, **Intellect**, and **Discipline**, each of which is described in its own section. Of course, your group can come up with additional numerical traits and perhaps mechanics to go with them – but those ones listed are the only ones referred in the default game mechanics.

The numerical traits are defined on a semi-arbitrary scale, where 4 is the average rating for Terran humans. The scale is intended to be a logarithmic scale – which simply means that for every +2 on the scale, the effectiveness should roughly *double*. This allows the same strength scale to be used for mice and elephants, and same intellect scale to be used for chimpanzees and Vulcans. For humans, a rating of 1 would be a crippling deficiency, while a rating of 7 or more would be legendary.

Rating	Description	Level Cost	Total Cost
0	Crippling.	-2	-8
1	Crippling.	-2	-6
2	A Weakness.	-2	-4
3	Deficient.	-2	-2
4	Average human.	X	0
5	Talented.	+2	+2
6	Elite.	+3	+5
7	Extraordinary.	+4	+9
8	Legendary.	+5	+14

This could be traits such as “Species: Vulcan” or “Ambidexterity”, or it could be quirks like “Thick Russian accent”. Descriptive traits may or may not have a point cost associated with them.

## Allocating Traits

Each year, the Academy accepts only several hundred cadets out of candidates from all of the worlds of the Federation. Thus, Star Fleet officers are the elite of the elite.

As a player, you can allocate traits in one of two ways. The simplified way assumes that your character excels in one of the four basic traits. You should rank Body, Reflexes, Intellect, and Discipline from highest to lowest. The highest trait gets a rating of 7, followed by 6, 5, and 4.

You should then define 1 descriptive trait for each of the three categories: Physical, Instinctive, and Mental, plus 2 Personality traits.

The other way to allocate traits uses more freeform accounting. You are given a total number of “Trait Points” to split among your four general traits and any other traits you want to define. You spend points to purchase useful traits, and get points back by taking traits with negative cost. Your GM will set the number of points (20-30 points would be common), but you should not consider this an absolute restriction. If a concept calls for more or less points, then the GM can usually make allowances.

The general numerical traits have a cost listed in the table above, whereas a descriptive trait is usually 1 point. The costs are fairly flexible. If you want an unlisted trait, then simply asks the GM, who will come up with a cost, and (if quantitative) a scale for what values of the trait mean.

## Species

The trait system assumes humanoid characters as the baseline. A non-humanoid character (such as a Vulcan or Andorian) will have a package of traits relating to his species. This will have a cost in trait points determined by the GM, although the total cost may be zero.

## Body and Physical Traits

**Body** is general numerical trait which represents a combination of your physical fitness and pure physique – i.e. how large, strong, and tough you are. Like most traits in this system, **Body** is fairly coarse-grained. Each step represents a 30-50% change in force/mass/etc.

Stat	Description	Press	Dead-Lift	Typical Terran
0		10kg	??kg	
1		15kg	??kg	
2	Weak	20kg	45kg	
3	Below Average	30kg	77kg	
4	Average human	40kg	90kg	
5	Above Average	60kg	135kg	
6	Strong	80kg	180kg	
7	Superior	120kg	270kg	
8	Superhuman	160kg	360kg	

It costs ( $2 \times Base$ ) to change your general **Body** score, or you can subdivide into more specific traits:

**Strength** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents strength in general, but primarily lift and upper body strength.

**Toughness** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents how much damage a character can soak. This *cannot* be bought up above base **Body**, although it can be bought down to represent various medical conditions.

**Stamina** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents long-term endurance, including resistance to fatigue, shock, and pain.

Of course, there are many physical traits beyond these.

**Appearance:** You should have a basic description of your character's appearance: species, race, height, weight, hair color, and so forth. You may also buy an "attractiveness" to those with compatible standards of beauty (for 1 point or 2 for extreme beauty). However, remember that with the enormous variety of species and cultures within the Federation, beauty is very much in the eye of the beholder.

**Double-Jointed:**

**Ambidexterity:**

**Bulky:**

**Lithe:**

**Tolerance:** You may have an inborn or developed tolerance to certain environmental conditions. For example, you might be used to high gravity, or have a developed immunity to certain poisons.

Also, you should consider *disabilities* - such as deafness, dormant diseases, missing digits or limbs, etc. Due to advanced technology, these are generally not even significant weaknesses. Most diseases can be treated if not cured, and prosthetic limbs may even out-perform the original. Even blindness can be corrected with neurally linked sensors, so effective that people might not even realize that you are blind. Thus, physical disabilities in general are worth no points. Instead, they should be used as descriptive traits to make your character more interesting.

## Reflexes and Instinctive Traits

*Reflexes* is a combination of reaction speed and basic motor skills like balance - representing how quickly and accurately your character can respond to a situation. It costs ( $2 \times Base$ ) to change your general score, or you could buy more specific traits separately:

**Reaction** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents speed of reaction time.

**Agility** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents flexibility and gross motor skills.

**Dexterity** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This trait represents precision in manual activity: hand-eye coordination, a steady grip, etc.

## Intellect and Mental Traits

*Intellect* is reasoning ability in conscious, logical thought, the sort which IQ tests try to measure. It is used to judge aptitude in various scholastic, scientific, and other skills. It costs ( $2 \times Base$ ) to change your general score, or you could buy more specific traits separately:

**Memory** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This is rote memorization ability, which could be applied in any number of ways.

**Concentration** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This is the ability to perform despite distractions.

**Aptitude** This is a bonus to a particular group of skills representing an innate ability. Thus a character could have Musical Aptitude which adds to all musical skills, or Language Aptitude which adds to all languages, and so forth.

Star Fleet commanding officers have a minimum Intellect of 4, and the average is somewhat higher.

## Discipline and Personality Traits

*Discipline* is a function of personality - determination, self-control, and courage. It costs ( $2 \times Base$ ) to change your general score, or you could buy more specific traits separately:

**Courage** ( $1 \times Base$ ) This is simply the ability to overcome fear. A high value need not indicate foolhardiness (although it may in some cases).

**Alertness** ( $1 \times Base$ ) How active you are in noticing things. This modifies most perception rolls.

**Presence** ( $1 \times Base$ ) A function of attitude and bearing. High Presence tends to draw attention and a certain amount of respect from those he meets.

Star Fleet commanding officers have a minimum Discipline of 5, and the average is somewhat higher.

Beyond this, descriptive personality traits are also very important. Most personality traits are both strengths and weaknesses. Stubbornness may cause you trouble, but it may also help you resist interrogation or continue in the face of adversity. Honesty will generally show through when you are trying to make people believe you, but at other times it can be a liability.

Again, a player should try to make up his own personality traits to reflect the individual. These could be codes of belief like honor, ethics, morals, and religion. They could also be emotional biases: arrogance, selfishness, sympathy, underconfidence. Unquantified traits, or quirks, are also very important: fondness of cigars, devotion to a particular culture or history, a weakness for a pretty face, or a love of good food, say.

# Chapter 8

## Skills

*Skills* generally represent training and experience in particular fields. While traits can often be improved with practice and exercise, skills are distinct in the steady progression of ability and knowledge. Skills in this game are very broad, representing universal methods and general understanding rather than knowledge of particulars. Pure knowledge will often be decided on the basis of background.

For example, your character has skill in Warp Engineering, and thus understands the principles of smaller warp drives. However, if he has never worked with drones before, he would not be able to answer specific questions about their design. Given a set of specifications and some time to familiarize himself, however, he could work with them at full skill.

Thus, your *background* determines your exact knowledge, while your *skill* determines effective use and understanding. Of course, skill does serve as an indicator of your experience in the field.

Further, many simple operations and knowledges are not covered by skills. Learning to ride a bicycle, for example, takes some time to pick up, but it is not a skill in the sense that is used here. Similarly, a Marine can break down his weapon and reassemble it, but this is not a level in Mechanics skill.

Also note that many tasks will involve the use of several skills. A doctor might use a combination of Diagnosis and Physiology(Vulcan) to assess a vulcan patient's wound, and then use Pharmacology to sedate him safely before operating, which would use his Surgery skill.

### Skill Levels

Most skills will have a level in the range of 1 through 10. While the specifics will vary, you can roughly relate skill level to real-world terms in terms of scholastic fields like biology and professional fields like auto mechanics:

Level	Academic	Language	Medical
3	High school	Casual Familiarity	
5	B.A.		
7	M.A.	Qualified Professional	
9	Doctorate	Elite	
11	Experienced		

This would require some interpretation for, say, social skills, but the basic analogy remains. For example, a 7 in Guile might be the level of a typical professional salesman.

## Specializations

The high end of the skill range is usually reached by means of specializations. A Nobel prize-winning particle physicist is not likely to be an expert in fluid dynamics (although he will know some principles). This specialization is represented as a bonus to skill within a particular sub-field maximum bonus, with a maximum bonus of one-third the value of the skill (round to the nearest).

In this game, *any* skill will have a variety of possible specializations. The skill descriptions generally include a few suggestions for specializations, but you are encouraged to come up with your own ideas for specializations or even new skills. As some example, Unarmed Combat might have a specialty of Wrestling, or Kicking; and Surgery might have a specialty of neurosurgery or orthopedics.

Sub-specializations are also possible, but these have a maximum bonus of +1, and cost 1 point each. These would be very narrow specifics, such as a specific maneuver for Unarmed Combat, or a particular operation for Surgery.

## Related Skills

The skill list has been subdivided to that, as much as possible, each skill represents an independently learned ability. A given task may require rolls on more than one skill, but learning one skill does not generally give a value in another.

However, this rule is not entirely true. In some cases, one skill may provide a base level another skill, and/or make learning that skill easier. No hard and fast rules are given at this time - you must request your GM for rulings on particular cases. Typical cases might be related languages, related cultures, related physiologies, and so forth.

## Buying Skills

To buy skills, you pay a certain number of *Skill Points* from a fixed pool you have at the start of the game. In terms of how they are 'bought', the skills are broken up into four groups. The first group is the minimum skill requirements which you must fulfill to be a senior officer in Star Fleet. For simplicity, these minimums are automatic — you only have to allocate points for skills above the minimum level.

The three groups of allocated skill points are: *Background* skill points; *Fleet* skill points, and *Free* skill points. *Background* points are for skills developed previous to or outside of Star Fleet. *Fleet* points are for skills acquired on the job. *Free* points are for interests pursued in your free time.

The important thing is to keep in mind your character's history, interests, and duties as you are allocating skills. For example, if you spend all your free points on ship-related skills, then it would imply that you have been spending most of your free time tinkering around the ship.

## Base Skill Level

Your character's traits will have an effect on how easily he learns skills. This system uses the approximation that your natural aptitude for the field will give you a head start over others, but that improving beyond the basics is purely a matter of dedication and study.

Thus, as you start out in a skill, you will jump to a *base level* which reflects your natural aptitude. After that, going up each level takes the same amount of effort, regardless of aptitude.

The base level is determined by adding together appropriate traits. Which traits are appropriate is a subjective decision by the player and/or GM. You must think about what is involved in the particular task.

Base Level:

- Only one trait applies: 3 + trait
- Two traits apply: 3 + (First trait/2) + (Second trait/4) (round up)

As rules of thumb, Intellect will generally apply to scholarly skills, and Reflexes to active physical skills. Note that Personality Traits can easily apply here, in a variety of ways. Ferocity might be secondary to a fighting style, just as Patience might be secondary to research. Of course, Personality traits also might also be first – it is a judgement call.

In addition, there is an optional “Minimum” level of proficiency, which is one-half of the base level (round down).

## Costs

When buying skills, you first buy the Base Level, and then pay for each level beyond that.

**New Minimum Skill:** 5 points

**New Base Skill:** 10 points

**Increase Skill:** N points per +1, where N is the level which it is raised to

**Increase Specialty :** 3 points per +1

For bookkeeping, you should note down the base level and how many points you have put into a skill. This is complicated during initial character creation, but it is easy to figure later on how much it takes to raise a skill by 1.

Additionally, all characters have certain skills at Base Level. These “Everyman Skill” are marked with an asterisk \* in the skill descriptions. Also, all characters speak their native language and understand their native culture at Level 7.

## Raising Skills

The cost to go up one step in a particular skill is a number of skill points equal to the number of the level which you are reaching. Thus, it costs 4 skill points to go from Skill 3 to Skill 4. This is shown by the following chart (which is easily extended).

<b>Skill Level</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Point Cost</b>	1	3	6	10	15	21	28	36	45	55	66	78
<i>Cost per Level</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

## Skill Minimums

As a senior officer of a starship in Star Fleet, there are certain minimum requirements in various skills. To make bookkeeping easier, these minimums are already paid for in a package based on your position. Any points which you spend on Fleet skills raise these skills above those values.

**STAR FLEET SKILLS**

All Sciences	3	Active Sensor Ops	4
Astrophysics	5		
		Athletics	3
First Aid	3	Marksmanship	5
Federation Law	4	Unarmed Combat	4
Military Science	4	Zero-G Ops	4
Starship Tactics	5		
Foreign Language	5	Command	4

**COMMAND BRANCH**

(All mins of prior branch minus 1)

Command	7
Starship Tactics	6
Military Science	5
Federation Law	5
Administration	5
Interview	5
Security Procedures	4

**HELM BRANCH**

Active Sensor Ops	7
Impulse Piloting	7
Warp Piloting	7
Specialty Skill	9

**NAVIGATION BRANCH**

Astrophysics	9
Starship Tactics	7
Warp Sensor Ops	7
Warp Piloting	6

**SCIENCES BRANCH**

All Pure Sciences	base
Experimental Research	7
Active Sensor Ops	7
Specialty Science	9

**COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH**

Three languages	7
Other Culture	7
Administration	7
Mathematics	7
Electronics Engineering	6
Warp Sensor Ops	4

**ENGINEERING BRANCH**

Warp Engineering	7
Beam Engineering	7
Electronics Engineering	6
Structural Engineering	6
Mechanics	5
Specialty Skill	9

**MEDICAL BRANCH**

Diagnosis	7
Pharmacology	7
Surgery	7
Physiology (Humanoid)	7
Physiology (Other)	5
Specialty Skill	9

**Skill Descriptions**

A list of skills is given on a separate sheet. What follows are descriptions of those skills and what they cover.

Note that some skills have specifications listed in parentheses. For example, (*Language*) or (*Vehicle Type*). This indicates that the item is a set of skills of that type rather than a specific skill. The player must choose a specific language for that skill to apply to, and write that down instead of the general category. Thus “(*Culture*)”, for example, might actually be “Klingon Culture” for a given character.

The skills are listed in somewhat arbitrary categories. These categories do not affect the mechanics at all - they are simply a convenient way to organize the list. The categories are:

Pure Sciences	Professional Skills	Liberal Arts
Technical Skills	Physical Skills	Social Skills



## Pure Sciences

**Astrophysics:** This is a general understanding of stars, comets, asteroids, orbits, black holes, ion storms, nebulae, and various other astrophysical phenomena. It does not include details of planetary structure, but does include gross knowledge of the formation of planets and moons.

**Biochemistry:** This is biochemistry and microbiology of a traditional sort, but includes some familiarity with strange systems like silicon life-forms and such. Specializations would include cell structure, genetic recombination, growth mechanisms, etc.

**Biology:** Biology is divided up into several skills. General microbiology is covered by the Biochemistry skill. Xenology covers familiarity with the range of life-forms on different worlds. Macrobiology of a particular ecosystem would be a specialization of Xenology. Physiology covers understanding of particular species or genera.

**Materials Science:** This is inorganic chemistry and materials science. Note that there are many complex chemicals used in modern engineering, including dilithium crystals, zenite, neutronium, superconductors, and many more. Specializations could include particular materials.

**Mathematics:** This includes various higher mathematics, as well as formal logic (including computer science). Note that modern computers do not require any significant technical knowledge or specifications, but a more thorough understanding of heuristics aids in efficient use of them. Specializations could include probability, number theory, formal logic, etc.

**Planetary Science:** This is a combination of various studies of planetary structure and dynamics. It includes geology, seismology, and meteorology on a variety of planetary types. Specializations could be in a particular type of planet (gas giants, Class M), or in a particular field of study.

**Sublight Physics:** This covers all of 20th century physics, both theoretical and experimental. Relativity has been disproven in the 22nd century, but this skill covers pseudo-relativistic effects (which are actually caused by “subspace drag”). Specializations could include nuclear fusion, quantum theory, radiation, solid state, etc.

**Subspace Theory:** This is the physics of warp drives, phasers, wormholes, and other subspace phenomena. Topics would include warp fields, interphase phenomena (rifts, wormholes, etc.), wave propagation (subspace radio, phasers, etc.), and others.

**Xenology:** This is knowledge of the range of species and ecologies on different planets. Obviously possible knowledge is limited, so an topic or region should generally be specified. Specializations would obviously be particular worlds or classes.

## Professional Skills

**Archeology :** This is the study of culture by physical (i.e. non-text) remains. It covers knowledge of a variety of modern techniques for analysis as well as an overview of cultures and their buildings, art, and garbage.

*(Crafts) :* These are any sorts of crafts, such as cooking, basketweaving, brewery, smithing, wood-carving, etc.

**Cultural Anthropology :** This is the study of culture by interactive field work - that is, by social contact with living people. Specializations would be particular cultures, or fields of study like religion, folklore, etc.

**Diagnosis:** This is the basic skill of a physician, which includes a broad range of skills and knowledge. It is partly dependent on the Physiology skill of the species in question - but is still useful with only minimal knowledge of the species involved. Specializations might include fields like toxicology or trauma, or situations like particular species.

**Experimental Research:** This is skill in modern laboratory methods of isolation and analysis, including statistical methods, computing and diagnostic tools, and so forth. Specializations would be particular fields of study, such as medical research, biological sampling, economic analysis, and so forth.

**Federation Law:** While the Federation has almost no laws per se, this is knowledge the various procedures which Star Fleet and some other interplanetary organizations use. It includes a knowledge of Star Fleet regulations and authorized protocol. It also includes a working familiarity with common means of diplomacy, extradition, and so forth from Federation members. Since different members have different laws, these can vary widely.

**First Aid:** This is skill in various basic techniques of first aid. It is redundant with certain physician skills (Diagnosis, Surgery, Physiology) - covering a narrower range of techniques in a broader range of situations. Higher skill develops the ability to deal with a wide variety of situations and patients, but not general medical knowledge.

**Military Science:** While specific tactics are covered under separate skills, there are certain basics to military operations which are covered here. This would cover military history, tactics for a variety of situations, and military procedure. Higher skill develops an increasingly diverse range of topics.

**Pharmacology:** This is the interactions of drugs with a range of biological systems. It is partly dependent on the Physiology skill of the species being effected - but it is still useful with only minimal knowledge of the species involved. Specializations could be particular drugs like psychoactives, sedatives, stimulants - or they could be particular species or situations.

*(Species) Physiology:* This is knowledge of a specific species or range of species, and is required for most medical actions. Most humanoid species (i.e. humans, alpha-centaurians, free orions, etc.) are close enough to be covered by the same skill; similarly one skill would cover Vulcans and Romulans. Others might include Gorns, Kzinti, Klingons, Orion Slaves, P'Igli, etc.

**Psychology:** This is skill in methods of psychological analysis and therapy. As such, it is dependent to some degree on knowledge of the particular culture and species being deal with. Among the common sentient species, however, the basics remain the same. Specializations would include anything from paranoia to telepathic disorders.

**Scholarly Research:** This is library research of original sources, translations, and so forth - as used in historical research, humanities, and other fields.

**Security Procedures:** This is knowledge of the various established methods used in boarding combat, handling of prisoners, conducting investigations, and so forth. These tasks will frequently draw on other skills, but

**Sociology:** This is various forms of sociological study using statistical and analytical methods, including economics, linguistics, political science, and so forth. Specializations could be in particular societies or in particular fields of study.

**Starship Tactics:** This is modern starship tactics of both your fleet and your common enemies. Specializations might include particular races or weapon systems, fleet formations, classic maneuvers, etc.

**Surgery:** This is all intrusive medical procedures, as opposed to long-term treatment which is covered in Diagnosis, and drug therapy which is covered by Pharmacology. Specialties could include neurosurgery, orthopedics, cardiac, transplants, cybernetics, trauma, etc.

## Liberal Arts

*(Artistic Expression):* These are various skills of creative design, including drawing, painting, holography, pottery, sculpture, and many more. You should define a specialty, although the aesthetics will often carry over into other media.

*(Culture)*: These skills are knowledges of a particular culture - its history, philosophy, religion, and so forth. They can be very wide cultures (i.e. Terran culture), or apply only to specific groups (i.e. Armenian culture).

*(Type) Games*: These are various skills in games, and thus requires specification of a type. Rough categories might be: strategy games (chess, klln zha, Go); card games; wargames; and so forth. Within each category, specialization may be taken in a particular game.

\* *(Language)*: This is a particular language, not a language group. Bonuses may be given for similar languages, but due to the vast range, this must be handled on a case by case basis (i.e. talk to your GM).

**Music**: This is skill in music composition and theory, both formal study and intuitive understanding through practice. Specialties might include counterpoint, orchestration, songs, etc.

**Play** *(Instrument Type)*: This is skill in a type of instrument - string, woodwind, harp, keyboards, etc. Specializations could include a particular instrument or type of music.

**Singing**: Specializations might include a capella, opera, etc.

**Writing**: Specializations might include essays, journalism, novels, poetry, etc.

## Technical Skills

It is important to remember that these skills represent a very general understanding. It is possible for a character to be trained for operating equipment without having a high level in that class of skill.

**Active Sensor Ops**: This is skill in operating many modern direct sensing devices, particularly tricorders and ship's active sensors. These devices operate by sending out a focussed sub-space signal which resonates in the target. Thus the skill includes aiming, tuning, and receiving the signal. This is used for acquiring lock-ons and aiming direct fire weapons, for locking on and maintaining transporter signals, and for acquiring of scientific data. It does *not* include passive warp sensors which are used for long-range starship detection and communications.

Specializations would include various uses: direct fire weapons, seeking weapons, scientific analysis, starship hull analysis, etc.

**Beam Engineering**: This is skill in building, repairing, and maintaining various types of high-power electronic equipment which emit sub-space signals. These include subspace communicators, tractor beams, active sensor emitters, transporters, and others.

**Electronics Engineering**: This includes all sorts of basic electronics, from high power lines, batteries, and electromagnetic force fields to digital electronics and computers. Any of these may be specializations.

**Impulse Piloting**: This is skill in operating modern space vehicles from starships on impulse power to shuttlecraft to runabouts. It includes reaction drives, anti-grav, and tractor-based landings. Familiarity with the particular vehicle type is important, but the basic skills are universal. Specializations could be a particular vehicle, or maneuvers such as docking, planetary landings, and so forth.

**Ironmongery**: This is a wide knowledge of the specifications and operation of various forms of weaponry - both personal and shipboard. The details of *how* they work are covered by different forms of engineering. Warp Engineering covers photon torpedoes and drones, while beam engineering covers phasers and disruptors.

**Mechanics**: This covers a variety of basic tool use and mechanical skills. This would cover welding, soldering, disassembly, and so forth. It is constantly used in the dirty work of engineering, but a high skill is rarely required, especially with modern, easy-to-use tools. Specialties might include working with particular machines, like locks, engines, or phasers.

**Structural Engineering:** This is skill in designing structures, and analyzing all sorts of stress, pressure, temperature, and other effects on real materials. It covers aerodynamics, hydrodynamics, demolitions, and more. In starships, it is used in hull repair and reinforcement, and in determining weak points of enemy ships (which would require special methods to target).

*(Vehicle Type) Ops:* These are skills in an enormous variety of planetary vehicles, from chariots to submarines to gliders.

**Warp Engineering:** This is skill in the working principles of warp drives and warp- field-based functions (including the hyperfoil drives of shuttles and fighters). Specializations could include movement, power generation, deflector shields, photon torpedoes, drones, etc.

**Warp Piloting:** This is skill in handling vehicles on warp or hyperfoil drive, such as starships or shuttlecraft. Specializations include maneuvers like High-Energy Turns, Stress Turns, Emergency Deceleration, Erratic Maneuvers, exact ranging, and exact facing.

**Warp Sensor Ops:** This is skill in passive warp sensors, which pick up at long ranges the signature of starships in warp and sub-space communications. The information is very limited and often imprecise, but with data over time, greater details can be extracted - narrowing down location, course, and so forth.

## Physical Skills

Many of these skills the character will have automatically at a basic level.

\* **Athletics:** This is basic physical fitness and various athletic skills relating to movement. This would include sprinting, jumping, vaulting, dodging, breakfall, and tumbling. Complex acrobatics like hand-stands, trapeze, and such might be a separate skill, but would depend on some of these basics.

\* **Climbing:** Specializations would include trees, mountains, buildings, etc.

\* **Concealment:** This is skill in hiding almost anything, from camouflaging tanks, to concealing micro-tools on one's body, to finding a good spot to hide in. It thus also covers finding such hidden objects. The key is an eye for spaces and patterns, and a variety of tricks.

\* **Marksmanship:** This is skill with various modern guns - i.e. those whose method is "point and pull the trigger". Specializations would include: hand phasers, pistols, rifles, crossbows, etc.

**Melee Weapons:** This is general skill in armed melee combat, both defending and attacking. Specializations would include particular styles like fencing or weapon and shield fighting, or skill in particular weapons.

**Orienteering:** This is finding your position and direction while on a planet by various means, whether on land or at sea. Specializations would include various methods like landmarks, stars, magnetic compass, etc.

**Pickpocket:** This includes all sorts of sleight of hand. It is a combination of deftness in motions, but relies more on distractions and misdirection. Specializations could include picking pockets, card tricks, etc.

**Shadowing:** This is the talent of hiding and following, mostly in urban settings. In part, it is appearing inconspicuous in any setting. It is also predicting how your target will move and how he will look around. Specializations include particular settings such as modern cities, or spotting shadowers.

\* **Stealth:** This is the skill of moving quickly and quietly, and staying out of sight. Finding a good spot to hide is covered by the Concealment skill - Stealth is about getting to there. Specializations might include locations like forests, indoors, and such.

\* **Swimming:** Specializations could be diving, scuba operations, etc.

\* **Throwing:** Specializations would include objects like baseballs, knives, spears, etc.

**Tracking:** This is following footprints, debris, and so forth. Specializations would include terrain types from desert to indoors.

\* **Unarmed Combat:** This is skill in all hand-to-hand combat. Specializations would include Wrestling, Brawling, or Kicking. Subspecializations could be specific maneuvers like jump kick, throw, karate chop, head butt, etc.

**Zero-G Ops:** This covers moving and working under zero-g. Specializations would include controlling spins, use of thruster packs, and so forth.

## Social skills

**Acting:** This is skill in feigning other emotions, personalities, and backgrounds. It is primarily method acting rather than improvisation, concentrating on basic skills of gesture and voice (including accents and mimicry). A full range of acting skills would include Performance for stage presence and oration, and Guile for improvisation.

**Administration:** This includes all sorts of ways and means of dealing with bureaucracies and bureaucratic organization. It covers requisitions, records research, finding who to talk to, and so forth.

**Command:** This is skill in commanding respect and attention in a variety of circumstances. In different forms, it is used to sway a mob, command respect from a crew, and talk down a person threatening suicide. It involves both projecting strength and sensing acceptance. Specializations might include training, instilling discipline, sensing morale, etc.

**Disguise:** This skill is primarily an eye for detail. The main parts of a successful disguise are Acting (see Social Skills) and gross features like clothes, hair, etc. Modern methods make prosthetic makeup a possibility, but only with considerable preparation. Specializations include working with prosthetics, quick-changes, etc.

\* **Guile:** This is quite simply skill in lying well. It is distinct from acting in that it does not cover feigning emotions or pretending to be someone else. It is the skill of staying calm as you lies, thinking quickly, and remembering details of what you have said.

\* **Interview:** This is the skill of one-on-one interactions: quickly judging a situation and reading intent from another person. It is used in negotiation, job interviews, interrogations, barter, and many other situations. Someone who is good at this may not be easy to get along with, but will be good at 'reading' other people. Specializations include interrogation, barter, job evaluations, etc.

**Performance:** This is the traditional skill of performing before an audience, and consists primarily of maintaining calm and projecting. It is involved in almost any sort of performance, but particularly oration and other crowd-manipulating forms. It also applies to smaller groups: presentations, lectures, etc. Any of these could be specializations.

\* **Sociality:** This is the skill of social interactions within cultures you know. Someone who is good at this will be able to fit in to social situations easily, identify who is involved with who, make contacts, and the like. It is somewhat dependent on knowledge of the particular culture, but there are many universals. Also, sociality tells you about social roles which is distinct from inner personality. Specializations include carousing, interviews, high society, diplomacy, etc.

**Streetwise:** This might be considered a special sort of culture skill: knowing how to deal with criminals and criminal subcultures. Specializations could include particular groups such as pirates or illegal gamblers, or in particular operations like fencing stolen goods, smuggling, etc.

Note that interactions with criminals would generally involve other social skills - this skill is background knowledge for that. For example, in bribing an official, Streetwise might tell you what amount would

be expected for this situation - but Interview would be involved in feeling out what this particular official wants.

# Game Rules

## Chapter 9

# Basic Concepts

Role-playing consists mainly of verbal description: players saying what their characters are doing, and the GM responding with what they see of the results. The purpose of these rules is to resolve the results of actions *solely* in cases of doubt and disagreement. If it is obvious to both the GM and the players what should happen in the gameworld, then there is no reason to use these rules.

The game mechanics exist to provide a commonly-understood reference for how things work in a universe which is vast and confusing. The mechanics are most useful when dealing with activities more-or-less unfamiliar to the players: i.e. probably deadly combat, and most certainly warp drive repair. They are also useful for addressing the difference between *player* skill and *character* skill. That is, Jodie isn't very good at woodlands survival, but Captain Hernandez is a master.

## Resolving Actions

The method which these rules use is to quantify a character's ability as levels in one or more relevant skills.

- Player describes the action which his character is attempting.
- The GM breaks this down into one or more relevant skills.
- The GM may prompt the player for additional details on what his character is attempting.
- If necessary, the player makes rolls against certain skills.
- The GM describes what happens based on the result totals. The player may describe responses and choices along the way which modify the end result.

This system operates under the single basic assumption that everyone, regardless of his level of skill, has a 100% chance of success *at his level of competence*. Everyone, regardless of talent, can automatically succeed at some actions.

Your skill level defines the minimum difficulty at which you can automatically succeed. Thus, if fluent speaking is Difficulty 7, then with skill 7 you will automatically speak fluently. With skill 4, your speech may (with luck) appear fluent for a time, but soon your mistakes will begin to show.

**Skill Level:** A character's normal proficiency at a skill, as indicated on the character sheet.

**Effective Skill Level:** The skill level used in a particular situation, including modifiers for distractions, fatigue, and other effects.



**Bonus Number:** The direct result from a skill roll: a number from zero to five.

**Result Total:** The sum of the effective skill level and the bonus number.

## Rolling Dice

For certain tasks, the player will roll dice to determine how good a job the character did. The result from the dice is added to the character's effective skill to get a result. This is used *only* to simulate a single attempt at an action, or work under stress or time constraints.

For a single attempt, the player will roll for that attempt. For tasks which can take a variable amount of time, the GM will determine a minimum amount of time to complete it. The player rolls at that point. If he does well enough, he will complete it in the minimum time. If not, the roll will help determine how much longer he will take to finish (if ever). See below, under *Extra Time*.

## Mechanics

Nearly all of the die rolls called for in this system use a single method, termed a "standard skill roll" or simply "skill roll". This uses two six-sided dice to generate a result from 0 to 5.

The method is this: roll the two dice. If the numbers on the dice are different, take the *lower* of the two dice as your bonus number. If the numbers are equal, then the result is *zero* - you succeed only at your minimum level of competence. For example,

Result	Chance		Examples
0	17%	6/36	1 and 1    6 and 6
1	28%	10/36	1 and 2    6 and 1
2	22%	8/36	1 and 3    3 and 1
3	17%	6/36	2 and 2    3 and 2
4	11%	4/36	4 and 4    2 and 2
5	5%	2/36	5 and 5    6 and 6

This can be a little confusing at first, but players generally get used to it pretty quickly. This system was designed under the philosophy that excitement should come from player and GM ideas and decisions, rather than lucky rolls. Hence, in practice these die rolls should become fairly routine and even unimportant.

## Optional: Stress Rolls

This is an optional rule intended to simulate lucky breaks and add some excitement to the die roll. In it, actions attempted under chaotic conditions call for *stress rolls* as designated by the GM. Stress rolls are handled just like normal rolls, with two exceptions. A roll of "boxcars" (i.e. two sixes) corresponds to a lucky break, and a roll of "snake-eyes" (i.e. two one's) corresponds to an unlucky break.

The details of the break should be left open to the GM, to simulate the unexpected. In being lucky, the character might shine under pressure, or the problem might simply be easier than it first appeared. In being unlucky, the character might fumble, or circumstances could conspire against him. Equipment might malfunction; or wet ground might make him slip.

This does not mean automatic success or failure, just a particularly good or bad result. As a rule of thumb, "boxcars" can be handled by rolling one die and adds five to the result. This is then added to the effective skill just like a normal skill roll result. "Snake-eyes", then, is handled by rolling one die and *subtracting* the result from effective skill.

$$\text{d6 and d6} \implies 5 + \text{d2}$$

$$\text{d4 and d4} \implies 0 - \text{d2}$$

## Extra Time

There are often tasks where a character can keep working at a given task for a while, like trying to pick a lock or climb a low wall. In this case, the player makes a single roll after putting in the minimum amount of time. After that, he can decide to keep at it, and he may get a bonus to his initial roll for the extra time he puts into it.

How this works depends on the nature of the task. Some tasks, like lockpicking, depend only on the best effort you put in. Mistakes never cost you, so putting in more time always helps. For other tasks, how you do early on affects your progress. Any mistakes you make stay with you.

**Best Effort** : In this case, there is no lasting consequences to doing poorly. Thus, extra time always gets you a bonus, up to a maximum total of +5 roll plus bonus. As a rule of thumb, each doubling of the minimum time is worth an extra +1 to the skill roll, but the GM will modify that as he sees fit.

Examples: picking a lock,

**Sequential** : In this case, early mistakes can cost you. Thus, extra time gets you no bonus. You can get a new roll only if the whole situation changes somehow.

Examples: remembering an obscure fact, an invasive surgical procedure

**Worst Case** : In this case, a mistake at any time can determine how well you did on the whole. Extra time will *decrease* your roll, down to a minimum of 0 roll minus penalty. As a rule of thumb, each doubling of time is worth a -1.

Example: sneaking through a building (the longer you move around in there, the greater the chance of being noticed)

Obviously, if time is not a factor, then you may not need to roll the dice. A best effort task will get a bonus of +5, while a worst case task will get a bonus of +0.

## Result Totals and Difficulties

The difficulties for skill checks correspond directly to the skill levels explained in the previous chapter. Thus, a difficulty 7 task is the minimum that can be expected of a professional — the sort that is routine and guaranteed success for him.

The following list gives you an idea of how difficult to make tasks in your game, along with a variety of sample applications, listed according to the general categories of skills.

Task	Difficulty
Trivial (requires no training)	1
Average	3
Hard	5
Professional level	7
Impossible without training	8
Impossible without professional training	12

# Chapter 10

## Common Actions

### Perception

The GM should generally make a perception checks whenever there is something specific which the PC's may or may not notice.

Perception is an inherent ability, and thus perception rolls usually do not involve a particular skill. Instead, they use a base value which depends on how directed the character's attention is. A character may get a bonus or penalty (usually  $\pm 1$ ) due to appropriate personality traits.

In general, the GM should secretly make perception rolls for the characters – taking into account the player's description of her character's attention. Keeping these rolls secret is important – there is nothing so frustrating to a player as rolling a zero and being told “You don't see anything.” – since it is clear that your character has missed something.

A rough guideline to the base value is shown below.

Skill Base	Attention
0	Concentrating on another task
2	Normal activity
4	Looking around for anything of interest
6	Specifically searching
8	Concentrated on finding a particular object

Note that you can improve your chances by specifying what you are looking for - but in doing so you may miss other things. Thus if you search a room specifically looking for hidden items, you may fail to notice a letter sitting openly on the mantelpiece.

In some cases, a separate skill roll may be required to realize the significance of a perceived item, or to deduce what exactly you are looking for.

The difficulty scale can be determined from the average values. A difficulty 0 is something which would automatically be noticed by the average person - it would take a clueless or distracted person to miss it. A difficulty 6 is something the average person would never notice unless he specifically looked.

### Tricorder Operation

In *Star Trek*, a common case of perception involves using a tricorder. Now, Federation tricorders are very complex and flexible instruments, designed to be a powerful analysis tool for almost any situation. However, the complexity of operation can cause users to miss the obvious, or spend a long time on simple procedures.

## Physical Feats

Physical feats are things which depend on physical traits more than skill: running, jumping, lifting, pushing, etc. In this game, the traits scales are very coarse. Thus, traits will usually only tell you if a feat is possible, impossible, or borderline for that character. If the chances are borderline, then it is a GM judgement call how well the character does. He can take into account various secondary and descriptive traits, and perhaps ask you for a generic roll.

**Running** Olympic record sprints are between 9 and 10 meters per second (In 1978 the 100 meter run was done in 10.06 seconds). More typical sprints are 4 to 6 meters per second. Over greater distances (like 10km), runners average around 4 to 5 meters per second, with Olympic medalists averaging 6 meters per second.

### Hiking

**Jumping** In Olympic competitions, high jump has a maximum of around 2 meters, long jump has a maximum of around 8 meters.

**Swimming** In short distances(100m), Olympic freestyle swimming is around 2 m/s. As distances go to several kilometers, average Olympic speeds reduce towards 1.5 m/s (1.6 m/s average for 1500m freestyle, say).

### Lifting

### Throwing

[...]

## Technical Tasks

Much effort has been made to keep the technology and science in this game consistent. However, making it understandable is another issue. Use of technical or science skills should not be nonsensical double-talk, but rather extrapolation from the material provided.

In practice, it is frequently easiest to rely on simplistic analogies for how “strange” technology works, and then treat specific cases individually. For example, warp travel relies on the analogy of “skimming” on the surface of subspace to reduce relativistic “drag”.

## Repair

In general, there are three basic steps to a repair job: estimating difficulty of the problem and the time required, conducting the repair, and testing the equipment upon completion.

The difficulty of finding the problem can vary enormously. In some cases, such as battle damage, this is fairly trivial for an expert crew. In other cases the full nature of the problem might not be clear until well into the job.

The difficulty of conducting the repair depends on the nature of the equipment. Warp drives and other such starship equipment are generally difficulty 6, assuming no time pressure. However, if the character wants to rush things, then the difficulty can increase dramatically. As a very rough rule of thumb, assume +2 difficulty corresponds to halving the time of the job. Failure of a rushed job could mean that problems remain in the equipment, or that parts were ruined in the attempt.

Testing the completed job is most important when under time pressure. Again, difficulty is fairly low unless the character wants to rush things. Alternatively, he may want to skip testing altogether in favor of getting the equipment back on line. There are obvious dangers in this.

## Modifications

Frequently skilled officers will attempt various short-cuts to improve the performance of a tool or system. However, there should always be some risk involved. Simply being good at engineering will not get more power out of the ship's engines, for example, because they are already designed for optimal power output. If you want to squeeze extra power out, you will be overloading their safety parameters.

Since these tasks are non-standardized, few concrete rules will be given about them. Rather than constant bonuses, the players should look for ways to take advantage of the particular situation or goals. Players are encouraged to come up with their own ideas. As guidelines, you should consider:

- What is the bad side? Why would this not be formalized and made a part of standard operations?
- Preparation in advance is always helpful. Anything which involves hardware work or significant re-programming (shuttle guidance, photon torpedo fuses, and so on) probably cannot be done in combat time.
- While considerable effort has been put into a consistent technology and operations, it is often difficult to convey this to the players. Also, there are undoubtedly things which were not thought of. Thus, always ask the GM questions about systems which you are interested in to get her point of view on things.

## Research

Research can be anything from testing a possible new piece of hardware to studying a new lifeform. Sometimes this is a straightforward task: collect the data, analyze it thoroughly, and interpret the results to form conclusions.

On the other hand, the researcher can try various shortcuts. He may form a hypothesis early, and then work to prove that point in particular. If the hypothesis is true, then he saves time. If it does not pan out, then he is set back and must start over. For simplification, the GM should describe you preliminary findings, from which you may decide how you want to conduct your research, and if you want to commit to a particular guess.

## Chapter 11

# Social Interactions

Social interactions in role-playing games are always problematic, because they can be handled in two different ways. You can talk through the dialogue literally, saying just what your character says. Alternatively, you can describe the interaction abstractly; like just saying “I haggle with him over price for a while.”

The advantage of literal dialogue is that it lets you get to the specifics. The GM and you can convey nuances through expressions and responses. More importantly, it should be *fun*. The advantage of abstract description is that you can skim over stuff less interesting to you.

Ideally, the choice of how to handle description should be a joint decision of both GM and players. You can start literal dialogue simply by speaking in character... The GM can reply in character, or if he feels otherwise he can respond abstractly. The key thing is for everyone to have fun. If you dislike how things are being handled, you should discuss it with the group.

## Using Skills in Play

In general, your GM should use your skills as guidelines for how others react to you, and for what to tell you about other characters. He will assume that whatever the player says, the character does in a manner befitting his skill. Thus, say your character is particularly glib. If you make a somewhat halting speech, the GM may interpret it as a better phrased and spoken speech for his response. Similarly, if your character is a very good judge of character, the GM may overact his part more to give you clues, or he might just tell you things which you notice.

There are only a few cases where you would actually make a *roll* on social skills:

**Specific perceptions:** The GM should try to color his descriptions to reflect your character’s skills. However, he may have you roll for first impressions or other critical points.

**Long-term interactions:** Obviously it is impractical to role-play through week-long negotiations. This can be abstracted into an outline of your goals and strategy, plus a roll.

**Boring dialogue:** If you and the GM agree to skim over certain dialogue, then a roll may (or may not) be useful in getting the results.

**Seduction:** Many players are uncomfortable role-playing sexual suggestions and responses, and hence prefer to abstract through it.

In general, you and the GM should try to agree on when rolls are necessary — but the GM should have final say.

## Skill Levels

It is useful for both you and the GM to have a clear idea what the skill levels mean.

Language	3	Halting speech, understand simple sentences
	5	Minimum native; non-natives have an obvious accent
	7	Average native fluency
	9	Eloquent speech and/or writing
Interview	3	
	5	
	7	
	9	
Sociality	3	
	5	
	7	
	9	

## Role-Played Conversations

This is the most interesting of means. Try not to interrupt things to try for a skill roll. The GM will be using your skills as a 'filter' in interactions.

For example, you are not fluent in the language, and have no translators available, the GM may misinterpret what you say and occasionally reply nonsense phrases to represent your lack of proficiency.

In *Star Trek*, this is further complicated by the frequent use of automatic computerized translation. While this is certainly a viable way of communicating, it will hamper your understanding and expression of subtleties. Computer translators are very smart, but they are unable to supply the full range of connotations and context that comes with actual proficiency in the language.

## Lying

In certain situations, you may be trying to guess if someone is lying. This may optionally be addressed as a contest between Interview of the evaluator, and the Guile of the liar.

Advanced technology gives the additional information of a *polygraph*, which acts primarily as a substitute method rather than enhancing this skill. A ship's computer can translate stress into statistical probabilities of truth, but there are many factors these statistics cannot take into account.

## Interrogation

There is no one skill or method for interrogation of witnesses or prisoners. Rather, there are a variety of methods and tactics which one may employ - each of which carries its own advantages, disadvantages, and restrictions.

An interrogator should consider the specifics of the case. What does the subject believe his situation is? What is his emotional and mental condition? What would motivate him to talk?

There are several usual tactics. Breaking the subject down by drugs, confusion, and abuse may make him more pliable. Inducements or threats (particularly substantiated ones) may be offered to motivate him. You may make him repeat his story several times and point out the inconsistencies, using them as further threats. Or you may set up a trick which convinces him to demonstrate the truth (such as allowing him to escape and following him).

The possibilities are too open ended (and in some cases distasteful) to treat in detail. Consider each case separately and rely on your GM.

## Long-Term Interactions

### Tips on Role-Playing

In acting out your character's speech, the most important thing to remember is *motivation*. You are never "just talking" - your character will have goals in mind, although they may be subconscious. You can think about what are your goals in general, what are you trying to do in this conversation, and what are you trying to do with this specific line. For example, say you are discussing morale with a fellow officer. Are you trying to impress him? Are you looking for input on a specific problem? Are you simply trying to get him to go away politely?

You can also develop mannerisms for your character, to help you and others distinguish him. Funny accents, peculiar habits, and favorite expressions can be a lot of fun.



## Chapter 12

# Personal Combat

In these rules, personal combat is assumed to be chaotic and confusing. Whereas in calmer situations characters can usually act in whatever manner they see fit, in combat everyone will be acting at once to keep themselves whole. Thus, game combat is structured into *turns*, each of which represents a span of roughly 3-5 seconds.

Every turn, play proceeds around to each character, who declares and immediately resolves her action(s). Almost every action is resolved when it is declared, although allowances may be made for simultaneous, interactive actions (someone chasing another, and so forth). As soon as all characters have acted, the next turn begins.

## Turn Sequence

When your turn to act comes around, you should describe in as much detail as you need what you want your character to do during that round. A normal character can perform two *actions* each turn. This represents the activities you are focussed on for that turn. While physically a person might be able to do many things during those seconds, in practice there is only so much you can think of in the middle of deadly combat.

One action can include: draw and ready a phaser, aiming at a distant target, shooting, move 3 meters, jump over an obstacle, dodge, and so forth. Some things can be done without requiring an action, since they require little concentration: these are called *Casual Actions*. For example, holding the trigger down as you run through a room is not an action (on the other hand, you are less likely to hit anything). Other casual actions might be stepping back, dropping an item, and defending yourself from an attack.

An attack action automatically is the last action in the turn. Thus a character may move and then attack, but not attack and then move. Here an “attack” means any strike or shooting action which requires the character’s attention (regardless of the target).

Your other options include:

- **Holding Action:** Rather than declaring a full action, a character can take one half-turn action (if he wants), and *hold* a specified half-turn action. Thus, he might shoot a target of opportunity. Note that only a half-turn action can be held.
- **Preempting with a Held Action:** If you have a held action, and want to preempt another person’s declared action, then you must make a skill roll of the skill you are using, with a difficulty of the opponent’s skill + 1 (a tie indicates simultaneous action). Situational modifiers may be applied, of course. For example, it is easier to bring a hand phaser to bear than a rifle.
- **Instinctive Responses:** At any point during the turn, a person can *abort* his next action in order to take an *instinctive* reaction. For example, if attacked, he can defend himself or dodge. It is possible

for an instinctive reaction to be offensive (i.e. shoot anything that moves) - however, such a mindset could be quite dangerous.

## Beginning Combat

At the start of a combat, the GM should take a few minutes to describe the details of the scene for you. She will probably draw a rough diagram of what the area looks like, and where things are relative to each other. This is your initial impression: don't expect her to update it with every detail. When you are concentrating on saving your skin, you are likely to miss other details.

After setting the scene, the players should start saying what they are doing. The first characters to act are those that initiate the combat, followed by whoever goes next. In case of doubt, the character with the higher Reflexes trait goes first.

A simpler choice is often to go clockwise around the room to each player, making the order of play simpler. If no one objects, this is a reasonable default.

## Movement

If you want to move about the battlefield, a normal human can go about 3m (10 feet) per action. This assumes that you are moving carefully from one position to another: ready to stop and take another action. Since you are not moving all out, you can take casual actions which do not interfere with movement, like drawing a weapon or holding down the trigger of your weapon as you run past (see *Suppression Fire*).

Alternatively, if your last action was running, you may go into a full *sprint*, moving 6m for a single action or 12m for a full turn move (again, assuming a normal human). You can take few other actions, and have limited ability to turn and stop. To stop, you must take a single action of normal movement. Your turn radius when sprinting is roughly 2 to 4 meters - to sharply corner you must take an action of normal movement.

You can also run zig-zag to avoid enemy fire: this is treated as a normal move combined with a dodge, for a total of two actions.

## Fire Combat

There are three general types of shooting in this system. *Aimed fire* is shooting from a proper firing stance - you can assume this as a casual action, but it means you are standing still with your feet planted and your arms stiff. *Snap shots* are shooting an unready weapon or shooting from an improper stance, which you can do in the middle of whatever you were doing by taking an action. *Suppression fire* is possibly continuous fire on an area without tracking or aiming on specific targets - you can do this without an action just by pressing the trigger and keeping your weapon pointed in that direction.

All of these basically come down to a check against Marksmanship skill, against a base difficulty based on the range and size of the target. The base difficulty assumes that you are shooting from a proper firing stance, in good light against a moving, human-size target. To account for specific conditions, there are a variety of different modifiers, explained below.

Difficulty	Range	Scale	Size	Modifier
		25cm	head shot	+6
0		50cm	prone human (at range)	+4
2	arms-length	1m	partial cover	+2
4		2m	normal human	0
6		4m		-2
8	room length	8m		-4
10		16m		-6
12		32m		-8
14	football field	64m		-10
16		128m		-12
18		256m		-14

## Types of Shooting

- **Aimed Fire** implies that the shooter is in a proper firing stance: feet spread for balance, arm extended to sight down the weapon. It takes 1 action to assume a firing stance. While doing so, the shooter may *set* for better balance by kneeling or leaning against a solid object – this gives a +1 bonus. She may also *brace* her weapon against a solid object by lying prone or resting it on a convenient surface – this gives an additional +1 bonus.

However, being in a proper firing stance means that you are standing still. You cannot move, dodge, or fire at opponents behind you without breaking stance. And stationary targets are easier to hit...

Additional turns of aiming will improve the accuracy by +1 for each turn past the first, for a maximum bonus of +3. If the weapon has a continuous, visible beam like a phaser, then the firer gets an accuracy modifier of +4 after a turn of firing simply by watching the beam and tracking it across to the target. However, this bonus can only be used once the beam is fired — it does not help the first shot.

- A **Snap Shot** means the character is not in a proper firing stance and is not using the weapon's sights. Instead, she just snaps off a shot in the middle of other activity, maintaining her mobility. This gives a penalty of -2 for side-arms (i.e. pistols and hand phasers), or -3 for long-arms (i.e. rifles).

There is a -??? penalty for walking...

- **Suppression Fire** is unaimed, continuous fire over a certain area. The firer's skill is reduced proportional to the area which the suppression fire is covering, but any targets within that area or which pass through that area until the firer's next turn are considered targets. A table is provided.

## Other Modifiers

- **+2:** Stationary Target
- **-1:** Fast-moving Target (over  $\frac{1}{3}$  range per action)
- **-2:** Dodging Target
- **-1:** Dusk
- **-2:** Moonlight; or Smoke/Haze
- **-2:** Off-hand shooting
- **+1:** Laser Sights (replaces 1 turn of aim)
- **+2:** Visible Beam (only after first shot)

If the *firer* is running, the difficulty is increased by -4, and only suppression fire is possible.

## Hand-to-Hand Combat

“Hand-to-Hand” combat is any fighting which involves physical contact, regardless of weapons used. It uses either the *Melee Weapons* or *Unarmed Combat* skill, with appropriate specializations.

Note that these rules assume trained fighting skill on the part of the combatants, the equivalent of ‘martial arts’ and such. The rules do not detail these styles except by specification of the characters’ specializations.

### Options

**Strike:** The difficulty of a strike depends on the defender. If attacking someone who you are already locked in combat with, the difficulty is the skill total of their last hand-to-hand action (i.e. *skill+roll+modifiers*).

If attacking a new opponent, they have a choice. They can immediately make an appropriate skill roll to defend themselves, but this interrupts any ongoing activity and locks them in combat with you. If they do not defend, then the Difficulty is 0.

**Defend:** The previous assumes that the characters are defending themselves as *casual actions*, as explained in a previous section. However, they may also take a full action to defend themselves.

A *parry* or *block* can be combined with an attack in a turn. It adds 1/3 of the defender’s Melee skill to the difficult of hitting the defender in melee.

A *dodge* cannot be combined with an attack.

### Stance (Optional)

A punch has a nominal damage of *Strength – 2*. A kick is *Strength – 1*, but kicks at targets over 1’ off the ground have additional difficulty, and may cause the character to fall.

### Wrestling

A *grab* is an attempt to hold and pin an opponent. A successful Unarmed Combat attack lets you gain a hold, with effectiveness of +1 for every 2 you succeeded by. To escape, the opponent must win a contest of Strength, in which you have a bonus equal to the effectiveness of the hold. Any successes he has subtract from the effectiveness. If it drops to zero, he is free. Holds *may* do non-lethal Strength damage each turn.

A *throw* is a Wrestling task vs. a difficulty of the opponent’s Unarmed Combat skill. If successful, it automatically places the target at a disadvantage (usually prone), giving you a +2 modifier to hit them until they get up - which counts as two actions.

## Chapter 13

# Damage and Fatigue

This chapter is an attempt to generalize damage and exhaustion into just two factors: *Wound Level* and *Fatigue Level*. However, the first thing to remember is that on its own, this does not work. Especially in the *Star Trek* universe, damage can be almost anything: from phaser stun to blood drain by a vampiric cloud.

The GM must try to describe the individual effects of damage. For example, third degree burns cause surface damage of destroyed which will distract through severe pain, and become easily infected if not treated. Phaser stun temporarily disrupts the entire nervous system.

### Taking Damage

Damage from attacks is based on both the force of the attack and the location of the hit.

Direct attacks are narrow, aimed attacks made with a skill roll. These have a base *Damage Value*, with +1 added for every 2 that the attacker hit by (maximum +4). From this you then subtract the target's Toughness and any other modifiers. The result is the number of *hits*, with two exceptions: Any attack which hits by exactly zero is considered a *Graze*, and can do at most 1 hit. Also, any attack which does exactly zero damage after modifiers is a *Marginal Hit* and still does one hit.

The result of the hits depends on the type of the attack. Edged weapons, bullets, fire, and phasers set on disrupt or disintegrate are all *Lethal* attacks. They cause 1 Wound Level for each hit, and in addition, 1 Fatigue Level for every 2 hits.

Blunt weapons, concussion, falls, electricity, and so forth are considered *Blunt* attacks. They cause 1 Fatigue Level for each hit, and in addition, 1 Wound Level for every 2 hits. Certain types of attacks are *Stun-only*, notably phasers set on stun. These do not generally cause Wounds.

### Sample Damage Values

Here are some sample damage values for various attacks. Some antique 20th-century weapons are included as benchmarks.

<b>Attack</b>	<b>Damage Value</b>	<b>Damage Type</b>
punch damage	<i>Strength</i> - 1	Blunt
knife	<i>Strength</i> + 1	Lethal
baseball bat	<i>Strength</i> + 2	Blunt
machete	<i>Strength</i> + 2	Lethal
antique .357 Magnum	4	Lethal
antique 12g shotgun	6	Lethal
hand phaser	0 - 10	Variable
hand phaser(Heavy Stun)	8	Stun-only
antique LAW	12	Lethal (Explosive)
phaser rifle	0 - 15	Variable

## Fatigue Levels

A character's Fatigue Level represents bruises, concussion, exhaustion, hunger, lack of sleep, sedatives, etc. In general, any non-localized, non-lethal effect is represented by this. Note that each level is a very large effect: the equivalent of several miles to a skilled runner.

Pts Lost	Level	Penalty	Recovery Time
1	Winded	0	One turn
2	Tired	-1	One turn
3	Weary	-1	One turn
4	Exhausted	-2	One turn
5	Dazed	-4	One turn
6	Insensible	-6	Turns (1d6)
7	Unconscious	-	Minutes
8	Out Cold	-	Hours

The first four levels represent increasing effects of system fatigue on the character. He is slowing down, and has trouble with concentration and coordination - resulting in the indicated penalties to almost all rolls. He may still move at close to full speed, and exert his full strength (although this may increase his fatigue rate).

- *Dazed* means the character is unsteady on his feet. He is at half movement, and at half strength (-1). He is likely to drop items he is holding - he must roll to hang on.
- *Insensible* means the character loses his balance and most likely falls to the ground, marginally concious. He can hear things going on, and can attempt minor actions like speaking into a communicator or hitting a button. Any such action will require an appropriate roll - even if it as simple as turning his head and looking for something.
- *Unconscious* means the character is incapable of any action. He is the equivalent of asleep - and will come out of it within a few minutes, or may be brought around by slapping him around, cold water, smelling salts, etc.
- *Out Cold* means the character is completely unresponsive. He is out for an hour or more. It will require advanced stimulants to bring him around, and this may be unhealthy to his system.

The effects of further levels of fatigue are left at the GM's option. The character may fall into a coma, or may require many days of sleep.

## Wound Levels

A character's Wound Level represents gashes, broken bones, ruptured organs, blood loss, shock, pain, etc. In general, any potentially lethal damage is represented here. Note that a single level is a very large effect: the sort you would go to a hospital to treat, such as a nail driven into an arm or leg. Small cuts and scrapes are not represented here.

The recovery time for Wound Levels is a more complicated issue, and is handled in a separate section (see Healing, below).

Pts Lost	Level	Penalty
1	Hurt	0
2	Battered	-1
3	Wounded	-1
4	Serious	-2
5	Grievous	-4
6	Crippled	-6
7	Incapacitated	-8
8	Fatal	-10

The first four levels represent increasing levels of non-critical wounds: fractures, sprains, gashes, and so forth. Sensible characters may take this as worrisome and rest up, but if motivated they can still function. They may be impaired in some way depending on the nature of the wound. For example, a hit to the hand will inhibit any use of it, even if the wound is not serious. At these levels, bleeding will not generally be life-threatening, but it may aggravate the character's condition if allowed to continue.

- *Grievous* means the character will soon into shock. He is at half movement and half strength (-1) from the pain, and will most likely be holding his wound(s) or doubled over. Bloodloss from open wounds may be fatal, but this may take several hours. From a single wound, this could be a major break or blood channel cut, which impairs a large part of the body.
- *Crippled* means the character is unable to stand due to pain and shock. He can be helped to walk with a comrade, or can crawl. However, to perform any physical activity requires an appropriate roll. Bleeding wounds may be fatal within 15 minutes to an hour.
- *Incapacitated* means the character is overcome by wounds, and may fall unconscious. He must be carried to move, and cannot effectively do anything except perhaps speak. Bleeding wounds may be fatal within a few minutes.
- *Fatal* means the character may not be clinically dead immediately, but will certainly be so within a few turns. It requires a very difficult roll to remain conscious, and if successful, the most he can do is whisper.

## Bleeding

Note that almost any serious wound may eventually result in death if not treated properly. A character with an untreated wound may get worse over time: open wounds can bleed or become infected, broken bones can cause internal bleeding or become aggravated by movement. Some description of bloodloss is covered in the descriptions, but the specifics vary highly from situation to situation.

## Healing

With modern medicine, nearly any non-fatal injury can be successfully treated with sufficient preparation and equipment. Going beyond stitches and surgery, a starship's doctor can knit flesh and bone back together using protoplasers, directly restore blood and other vital tissue, and stabilize the body's responses. However, sometimes such optimal care is simply not available.

### First Aid

The primary purpose of first aid is to stabilize a patient's condition, and to prevent it from getting worse. As such, first aid may aid the return of Fatigue, but simply stabilizes lost Wound levels.

The difficulty of this depends on the type of wound. Bandaging, stiches, and splints are difficulty 5 or 6. Advanced tools like spray bandages will reduce pain, eliminate infection, keep the wound sealed. More advanced problems may come from treating burns, disruptor wounds, compound fractures, and so forth.

The other primary function of first aid is restarting the heart and vital functions in the event of mishap. This requires a skill roll on the part of the medic (difficulty 8) and a trait roll on the part of the patient.

### Advanced Medicine

On a starship or other advanced facility, characters can recover very quickly (much faster than 20th century hospitals). As a rule of thumb, you can assume that up to 2 Wound levels can be recovered in a matter of hours, and after that he recovers 1 Wound level per day.

This is a poor approximation, however. The primary holdup in major wounds is repairing or replacing vital organs. If none of these are harmed, then treatment is much faster and easier. Bones and cuts can be knit fairly quickly, and then natural healing is accelerated by drug treatments which keep the patient fairly comatose until he is well along the way to recovery.

### Natural Recovery

Natural recovery from injury or exertion is slow at best, and dependent upon the care which the character receives. Any loss of blood and system damage must be recovered to further natural healing.

On average, characters will recover 1 wound level per week, assuming appropriate first aid. The exact rate of healing is based on the character's Stamina, with modifiers depending on the sort of treatment the character is receiving.

Care	Modifier
professional care, rest	+3
basic medicine, light activity	+1
first aid, light activity	+0
poor care, medium activity	-1
no care, heavy activity	-3

The total of the character's Stamina and the modifier given then translate to a multiplier. Each +2 halves the healing time, and each -2 doubles the healing time.



## Chapter 14

# Campaigning

Perception, repairs, social interactions, and combat are all minor pieces in the larger picture. Ultimately, the campaign will revolve more around your executive decisions as officers than any nitty-gritty task you take on.

### Handling a Starship

The mechanics of how to run a starship and what it can do is covered by a variety of source material with this game. You should look over all of this material, but in particular study up on the functions under your character's command. The player of the Chief Helm Officer should be the expert on ship's weaponry, and so forth.

If the others are amenable to it, you as player may evolve into the group's authority on your field. Thus, when a question regarding phasers comes up, rather than asking the GM, the other players will turn to you. If the source material is unclear, you will be the one to decide.

For more information on starship operations, see Appendix A.

### Ongoing Activities

#### Career:

**Leadership:** One of the primary duties of an officer is to act a leader and mentor for those under her command. You may take an interest in the officers and crew under your command, and look at how *their* career and skills are advancing.

#### Networking:

**Study:** Assuming normal duties, characters will gain approximately 1 Skill Point per month of game time. This represents the slow learning process. In addition, they may transfer 1 Skill Point per month between two skills. This is a simplified way of representing skill decay. A skill which loses a point was not practiced enough to stay in shape, giving the character additional time at the other skill.

As a simplification, players may keep track of the additional points and transfers which they have "saved up" and spend them all at once. They should keep in mind, however, that the actual process is continuous. Spending your saved up points on a skill which became important just last session is not allowed.

#### Technical Projects:

## Fortune Points

Fortune Points give the players the ability to bring luck in on the side of the characters in limited ways. In combat, they can be used to save characters from dire situations. Between sessions, they can be used to enhance the characters' long-term gains.

They are there for several reasons. First of all, from a practical standpoint, it is more fun. Players do not like their characters dying, and new PC's are more work for the GM. Further, the gains bought draw attention to between-session activity, and may make for interesting plot material.

Second, it encourages bold and daring behavior. This is generally appropriate from Star Fleet officers, and is an established part of the genre. The Fortune Points serve both as a safety net, and as a motivating reward for appropriate behavior.

### Use in Combat

As noted, players may spend Fortune Points in play to save characters from dire situations. This is usually in the form of "take-backs" for mistakes made, or in moderating the effects of failure. They *cannot* be directly used to gain success, but can be used to get another chance. Note that they are generally used for personal safety, but can be used to help others.

Each player may spend up to 3 FP's in a given combat/engagement. Involved players may pool FP's together for a given effect, but players cannot spend points unless their characters are involved.

- 1 FP can be used as a take-back of a simple mistake, or a reroll of an unlucky result. The take-back must be done almost immediately: perhaps within a minute of real time or before the next game turn.
- 1 FP can also be used to get an immediate action. Upon spending the point, you go before everyone else, preempting whatever was currently being resolved. After that, you always act at your new place in the round.
- 1 FP can lastly be can be used as a one-shot save from a particular attack or slip-up, as long as the player can come up with a plausible explanation (i.e. sudden movement causes a shot from ambush to miss).
- 2 FP are required for a take-back or reroll if the action was obviously risky or if the GM gave a warning of such. While there is nothing wrong with risky moves, you have to pay the price.
- 2 FP can also be used to temporarily overcome some part of a penalty or problem - like walking despite your wounds. Like before, the player must come up with an explanation which is plausible given quite lucky.

In general, it is hoped that the characters will not be forced to spend *any* Fortune Points in an episode.

### Use in the Campaign

Fortune points can also be spent between sessions to improve a character's social position, rank, reputation, and so forth. Characters may make gains along these lines without them, but Fortune Points make the progress faster and easier.

At first, you spend 1 or 2 points for a temporary gain which should come up in the next episode or two. After that, you may spend the same amount to make that gain permanent.

Obviously, not all uses for Fortune Points will be possible. You must talk to the GM first with your idea and what you want to spend. He may approve it, suggest a close alternative, or simply disallow it. If the GM approves a gain, but cannot arrange it within two sessions due to plot reasons, then you get your points back (Sorry!).

Described below are various types of gains which you can spend Fortune Points on. If you have an idea which does not exactly fit into the categories below, by all means suggest it. The list is intended to stimulate ideas rather than limit them.

**Allies** In general, these would be officers and crew members on the character's ship. Officers have tours of duty from 2 to 5 years on average - but unexpected transfers are not unknown.

You may spend points to get better or more appropriate personnel assigned to your ship. Alternatively, you may spend points to improve the workings or morale of personnel on board. Details may be left up to the GM,

**Contacts** Contacts are any sort of connections or relations a character may have, not simply sources of secret information. A contact may be an admiral who is simply willing to listen, or an enemy captain who found you intriguing the last time you faced each other, or an old lover who is now head of an important research project.

Players are encouraged to fill in details regarding their contacts. If the GM approves the general idea, it is a great help if he does not have to create a full character and history along with the ten other things he must do before the next session.

**Supplies** While maintaining starships is usually top priority, often there are limited resources which Star Fleet wants to conserve. Examples include transporter bombs, commando squads, spare dilithium crystals, and so forth.

In this case, making a gain permanent means a steady but not everlasting source. 1 point means top-of-the-line, the sort of thing command ships get: extra reloads, spare parts, boarding parties, and so forth. 2 points means limited issue: t-bombs for ships not at war, a multi-role shuttle, and so forth.

**Research** Officers will often pursue long-term research projects, both on their own merit and as a way of sharpening their skills on long patrols. An engineer may be developing an experimental weapons system; or a communications officer may be studying a series of enemy signals. Such field work is encouraged as long as it does not interfere with basic missions.

In this case, a temporary gain means a prototype which is subject to unexpected behavior and breakdown. Making it permanent does not mean that it will not break down, but at least the chances are better understood. What constitutes a major or minor step depends highly upon the specifics of the project. As a rule of thumb, a 2 point gain will bring standard issue to state-of-the-art. Steps beyond there move into experimental or unknown territory.

**Reputation** In the Star Fleet Universe, interstellar communication is rather limited, going through a bottleneck of the relatively few interstellar-capable transmitters. As such, large stories often develop from small amounts of real information.

A minor reputation would be limited to a few Star Fleet circles, or well-informed civilians. A major reputation could spread through Star Fleet, or even among enemy fleets. The nature of the reputation is up to the player, based on the incident(s) in question. Remember, though, that a wild reputation is less likely to be believed or paid attention to by sensible people.

**Status and Rank** Despite efforts to the contrary, there is often bias and luck involved in Star Fleet promotions. On average, the system works, but the review board always has some biases involved.

## Gaining Fortune Points

After each full session, it is usual that every player who showed up get at least 1 FP. In addition, there are special bonuses: A given player gets +1 FP if his character intentionally put his life at risk as part of the episode. A player may also get +1 FP for a particularly inspired idea or dialogue. Finally, the entire group may get +1 FP for decisive action in a tough situation.

# Appendix A

## Design Notes

I started my first Star Trek in early 1995, using a modified version of the *CORPS* rules by BTRC. Soon after, I began writing up my own rules, both as an exercise in game design, and to better fit the peculiar style of my game.

### Notes for Trek Enthusiasts

As mentioned, I have strayed rather far from the “canon” in some areas of my background. There is simply no way to put together all of the sources in a way that makes sense, and there are major topics which have never been addressed.

### Source Notes

The **primary** sources are those which form the basis of my vision. They are often used for inspiration more than details, since many details are inconsistent.

**The Original Series** are considered about as accurate as present-day TV movies which are “Based on a True Story”. Hence, facts may be misrepresented, and true accounts may be extrapolated to fictional stories — like a docudrama which portrays who really killed JFK, for example. One should assume that the portrayals are sensationalized compared to the ‘real thing’.

For example, the Organians as portrayed “Errand of Mercy” are fairly accurate. Since then, however, powerful energy beings have become quite popular among conspiracy theorists as well as many others writers and journalists in this universe. Thus, there are a number of stories which expose energy beings as the cause of mysterious or little-known events.

**Star Fleet Battles** This is a simulation game of starship combat by Task Force Games, and a near-canonical source for my starship technology. The game has spent many years developing coherent and sensible rulings on starship technology, as well as a considerable amount of background material.

**The Star Trek Chronology** This takes many off-hand remarks and minutia of the show too seriously for my purposes, but is undoubtably an important reference. I vary from it at times, but not by much.

**The Star Fleet Technical Manual** This is a jumble of notes by Franz Joseph Designs regarding the Original Series. It has some near-nonsensical information, but it is the most ‘official’ work on the technology of the original series.

**The Final Reflection, by John Ford** This is by far the best work in the genre, in my opinion, and a look at the history and politics of both the Klingon Empire and the Federation.

The **secondary** sources include all the materials for the Next Generation era. Parts have been adapted as best I can, but were much lower in priority. First of all, they apply to a different era than my material. Second, the new series are different both in facts and in spirit from the original.

**Star Trek: The Next Generation Technical Manual** While I tried to throw in jargon from this, to a large extent it is a morass of technobabble which sounds considerably less plausible for all the jargon it uses.

**The Other Series** including Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, and Voyager. These were occasionally used for ideas or inspiration, but my knowledge of them is much more sketchy than the original series.

**TFG's Federation and Empire** This game has many inconsistencies which I found impossible to resolve, most notably the enormous distance scale of the map.

The remaining sources were freely ignored in development. Occasionally material from them was adapted if it fit, but I did not even make much effort to adapt them.

**TFG's Prime Directive** This game has serious technological inconsistencies with the original series, and a view of the Federation as a benevolent autocracy. While I have looked over much of it, I am forced to ignore major elements of it.

**Other Novels** Frankly, there are more novels out there than one can shake a stick at. I have read many of them and been generally unimpressed. I will from time to time throw in references to ideas taken from the novels, but I feel no compulsion to read or research them in detail.

Novels I found of note (besides *The Final Reflection*) would include *My Enemy*, *My Ally* and *The Romulan Way* by Diane Duane, and perhaps *Dreadnaught* by Diane Carey.

## Distances and Time

Frankly, there is very little agreement and even less sense regarding the size of the Federation and the speed of starships.

Both the original *Star Trek Technical Manual* and the game *Federation & Empire* suggest that in the era of the original series, the Federation takes up a significant fraction of the galaxy. However, if you look at the speeds they are travelling, it just doesn't add up.

My solution to to ignore these maps and have the size of the Federation in the original series era be just a small corner of the galaxy. This is still consistent with a great many details. The “edge” of the galaxy encountered in *Where No Man Has Gone Before* was an energy barrier on the **top** of the galactic disk rather than the rim. Nearly all of the “real” stars referred to in the original series are within 300 light-years of Sol. The Next Generation maps are still perfectly possible assuming rapid expansion of the Klingon, Federation, and Romulan empires.

## Computers and Robotics

In many ways, Star Fleet technology portrayed seems unsophisticated. It does not make use of nanotechnology, virtual reality, cybernetics, biotechnology, and other advances branches of technology. In my interpretation, this is a result of an intentional and motivated policy rather than lack of ability.

Wherever practical, Star Fleet operations are to rely upon living individuals rather than machines. As long as it does not jeopardize the mission, a task should generally be handled by a person rather than automated. Thus, in investigations, landing parties are transported down rather than sensor drones. Phasers banks have crews rather than being fully automated. The same is true throughout the Fleet.

While there is some drop in efficiency, Fleet resources are still more than enough for most tasks they are assigned to. More importantly, this policy emphasizes personal responsibility and flexibility which is vital to the long-term drive and discipline of the personnel.

The *reason* for this choice is a cultural one. With all the humanoid cultures around, one can see some clear patterns. There are many cultures which develop intelligent computers, virtual realities, and so forth. On average, it is clear that these cultures generally develop into “leisure societies” in which endless simulated possibilities are explored.

The primary starfaring races inevitably put an extremely high premium on personal achievement, and shun computer control, robots, and similar easy outs. This is universally true among the handful of starfaring races known: Klingons, Romulans, Gorns, Kzinti, Humans, Vulcans, Andorians, and Orions.

Star Fleet and many members of the Federation are quick to realize that an overdependence on automated machinery means eventual stagnation of the culture into a leisure society like many which have gone before. Further, Earth learned a particularly harsh lesson on creating technological ‘supermen’ with its Eugenics Wars centuries ago.

Thus, Star Fleet’s position is validated by considerable sociological evidence.

## Politics

I have interpreted the United Federation of Planets as a loose alliance of several hundred member states, with an enormous variety of cultures and philosophies. As such, the Babel conferences are aptly named. An huge number of delegates get together and argue for a long time, and very little gets accomplished. Thus, the Federation has very few laws, and certainly does not legislate an overall morality.

The Federation government, then, is not the automatic “good guy.” Rather, it is a fairly enlightened government which makes plenty of mistakes and which has much internal dispute. Star Fleet, as shown in the original series, is a military body - which is quite enlightened as compared to 20th century navies, but still a disciplined force.

## Timeline

As can be seen from any compiled timeline, consistency is practically impossible. I have ignored much of the fan material and novels in favor of my own rationalized history. I have carefully considered all of the “canon” information from the series, but at times I have reinterpreted (and thus conflict with the *Star Trek Chronology*).

For example, in the episode *Space Seed*, they refer to Kahn Noonian Singh as having left Earth in 1997; but they also refer to him being in flight for two centuries. The *Star Trek Chronology* chose to use the first reference and ignore the second as erroneous – I have done the opposite (thus placing the Eugenics wars in the 2060’s rather than the 1990’s). Further, in addition to the ‘canonical’ Star Trek material, I am also drawing on the games of the Star Fleet Universe by Task Force Games, as well as several novels.

## Notes for Star Fleet Universe Players

More than anything else, this universe is based very closely on *Star Fleet Battles* and related background material. The timelines match fairly precisely, as do all the mechanics. However, there are inevitably choices which must be made. Many things which work fine as wargame rules are unsuitable for creating a coherent role-playing universe.

A role-playing game has to deal with a much greater variety of situations than a wargame. In making

these rules, I have had to cover strategic operations, contact with primitives and more advanced civilizations, detailed planet-ship interactions, and much more.

## Distances and Time Dilation

In order to conserve the speed of light, SFB states that relativistic time dilation makes 1/30th of a second on a planet is 1 minute on a ship. As a wargame, this is more or less ignorable.

In the role-playing game, however, characters often have to deal with lightspeed phenomena. Imagine that the characters are communicating by radio. It is quite a strain on the imagination to have to wait a minute for radio communication from orbit to reach the surface of a planet. Thus, I have rescaled the distances and times in SFB, as follows:

**Lightspeed** is approximately 32 hexes per turn.

**A Turn** is approximately 1 minute, making an impulse 2 seconds. There is no time dilation for units moving under warp or impulse power.

**A Hex** is approximately 10,000 kilometers.

In this universe, the Theory of Relativity has been proven false. There exists a preferred reference frame - a substance of space which is fixed. Lorentz contraction, time dilation, and so forth result from the “subspace drag” of an object going at high speeds relative to the substance of space. Warp drives allows one to skim the surface of space, avoiding this problem.

Thus, units in warp will experience virtually no time dilation. Units not in warp which are moving at relativistic speeds (over 20 hexes per turn) will experience time dilation as a result of subspace drag.

The rules of *Star Fleet Battles* remain exactly the same under this change. Units under impulse or in standard orbit move at 1 hex per turn. This is still unbelievably fast for a thrust-propelled vehicle, but it is somewhat more acceptable.

Frankly, I think this explanation fits better with the SFB framework than the excuse given in the original design, for several reasons:

1. SFB makes no differentiation between action on ships and action on planets or bases – which directly contradicts the time dilation explanation.
2. Units under impulse or in standard orbit move at 1 hex per turn. This is insanely fast for such units. To accelerate to just 1% of the speed of light in 1 minute, a starship would have to accelerate at five thousand gee's, releasing kilotons of fuel.
3. In fact, there is already precedent in SFB for objects not in warp moving at over 1 hex per turn - matter thrown from supernovae, and matter drawn towards black holes. Also, relativity was overturned in SFB by Positional Stabilizers, which lock onto a fixed position in space.
4. If lightspeed is 32 hexes per turn, then there is a natural division between tactical speeds and strategic speeds. This explains disengagement by acceleration as the jump to FTL speeds (which also matches the effects from the movies).

Under extremely unusual circumstances, a sublight unit may be accelerated to speeds of over 1 hex per turn. Thus unit will move at an assigned pseudo-speed in a fixed direction, possibly with a regular pattern of sideslips. Its maneuver rate is zero: it may use impulse TAC's. If the unit has impulse power allocated to movement, it can move in a direction it want to on impulse 32, rather than in the fixed direction.

## Strategic Operations

This was the trickiest part of the rules. I had to generate a set of rules to explain the level of operations between *Star Fleet Battles* and *Federation and Empire*. The system does not exactly match the results of *F&E*, but then, the battle rules from *F&E* do not reproduce the results of SFB. It is an approximation.

**Warp Shock:** To explain some of the variation in movement, I invented the concept of warp shock - which parallels the weapon shock rules, and which replaces the HET bonus.

Ships collect warp shock by moving at above their safe cruising speed. As long as they move from base to base, they can pour it on, and have the warp shock quickly. If they are moving into an operational zone, they cannot afford to be so lax.

**Strategic Engagement:** In SFB, if one opponent doesn't want to fight, he can easily disengage. This does not explain F&E, where ships will "pin" other ships.

Thus, I postulate that there is another level of engagement, which occurs at strategic speeds. It takes hours or even days to resolve, during which time the ships will be tied up.

## Prime Directive

This campaign was started before *Prime Directive* was released, and consequently there are some serious differences. While I have tried to incorporate as much as possible, in the end *Star Fleet Command* is not compatible with *Prime Directive*. I will try to summarize the differences below.

1. **Hand Phasers** in SFC are much more potent weapons than in PD. As shown in the TV series, phasers are virtually guaranteed to incapacitate in one shot regardless, and all have a wide-beam option.  
Frankly, the weapons of PD are pathetic. The laser weapons of Y106 (2217 A.D.) in the Federation Sourcebook are uniformly *less* effective than modern ballistic weapons.
2. **Personal Armor** is not often used in SFC, because of the power of phasers. According to military doctrine, the only effective defense is not getting hit.
3. **Other Personal Technology** is generally more advanced than is shown in PD. The communicators are longer range and more sophisticated, for example.
4. **Psionics** works differently than in PD. Most Vulcans are restricted to touch for their powers. Psionic masters can achieve greater ranges and effects, but they are exceedingly rare.
5. **The Federation** is not the benevolent autocracy that it is in PD. Rather, it is a democracy of diverse members, who have roughly equal say in defining policy. Thus, there is internal dissension and compromises within the Federation, rather than authoritarian ethical codes imposed by the Full Members.

Star Fleet is fairly independent of the internal politics of the Federation congress, defining its own policies and agendas. These are generally well-intended, but they are viewed as authoritarian by some members.

## Game Rules

The primary feature I noticed about the game rules in my Star Trek games was that they were hardly ever used. Star Trek has a lot of absolutes: phaser combat is over instantaneous, etc.

The ideal which I was trying for was a system which could produce reasonably accurate results with as few artificial burdens as possible. What you will find in here is an absolute minimum of "gamespeak".



**Simplicity** is key.

**Skill Use**

**Speed**

**Scaling**

**Combat**

In my playtest campaign, any sort of personal combat was exceedingly rare and brief. Thus, I am more concerned that the combat be seamless than accurate.

## Appendix B

# Starship Operations and Combat

For starship combat, we will be making use of the simulation game **Star Fleet Battles** by Task Force Games. However, this remains a role-playing game on a larger tactical scale. The players are expected to *role-play* their character's reactions and decisions during the battle. Each player will be directly responsible for his character's portion of the ship's activity.

### Officer Tasks

What follows is a breakdown of the command positions on a Federation starship: what they are directly in control of and what is expected of them. The breakdown described is exactly what the character is in control of - *not* some wargame fudge. If disagreement occurs between officers in a combat situation, the player who is in direct control always has the option to say that his character engages those switches, regardless of what the others say. Of course, his character may later be held responsible for insubordination, or even removed from his post by security or other officers.

### The Captain

The captain is not directly in control of any ship's functions. Rather, he is in command of the other officers, and is responsible for everything they do. He is expected to dictate tactics, maintain order, and in general, lead the ship. It is expected that there will be considerable confusion during a pitched battle, and the captain must maintain order.

### The First Officer

The First Officer works to advise the captain, to coordinate miscellaneous ship functions, and to take over command should the captain be incapacitated. He is responsible for coordinating all branches not represented on the bridge: security, transporters, boarding parties, medical, and safety procedures.

### The Helmsman

The helmsman is directly in control of all direct fire weapons and tractor beams. He also controls launch and recovery of shuttlecraft and any other units. Lastly, he controls engaging and disengaging the engines. However, the engineer allocates power to movement, and the navigator controls the course plotting, so engaging the engines is only a nominal duty. He may decide not to engage the engines at the start of the

turn, or may disengage the engines in the middle of the turn by declaring an Emergency Stop. He does not set the speed or control any movement.

The helmsman is expected to know the range to all possible targets at all times. He is also expected always know which of the enemy's shields he is firing on at any moment.

## The Navigator

The navigator is directly in control of all course plotting. This includes setting of the speed and all movement, high-energy turns, and tactical maneuvers. He also controls the raising and lowering of shields. As a minor game kludge, the player of the navigator is directly in control of the movement of shuttlecraft and other launched units.

Note that the engineer allocates power to movement, but the navigator may choose to set a lower speed than the maximum which he has power for.

## The Engineer

The engineer is directly in control of all allocation of power, use of reserve power, damage control, and repair. In addition, as a pure game function, the player of the engineer will handle Damage Allocation, dealing out the cards and making choices when necessary concerning which boxes are hit.

The engineer is expected to intelligently respond to the captain's chosen tactics, and provide power accordingly. He is expected to repair systems to maximal effect.

## The Science Officer

The science officer is directly in control of the operation of sensors and labs, including all monitoring of the condition of other units. A schematic display of the rough position and course of other units is available to all officers. However, only the science officer can observe the details of other ships and their operations.

The science officer is expected to analyze the capabilities, actions, and intentions of enemy vessels, and to communicate this information in as concise and descriptive a manner as possible to the captain and other officers.

## Rules

In general, this system will follow exactly both the rules and the background of Star Fleet Battles. Keep in mind, though, that the rules are only an approximation of the true situation, and they contain several implicit assumptions:

- *Standard operating procedure is followed.*

This is pretty much straightforward. The fuses on photon torpedoes have standard settings, emergency life support is not used unless the ship is crippled, safety procedures are followed regarding reactors and antimatter, and so forth.

- *Optimal (but not outstanding) skill in the officers and crew.*

The rules for crew quality and legendary officers have been replaced by a system which integrates with the role-playing system skills and task resolution. The crew may forget to take certain safeguards or make mistakes, or they may

- *Star Fleet Intelligence reports of enemy capabilities are accurate.*

In the real game, details of Klingon ship layouts and other specifics may be changed to reflect inaccurate surveillance reports. Further, the timeline may diverge at any point from the SFB timeline. Even if the campaign events do not affect a particular field, that does not mean that ‘history will go as written’.

Star Fleet Battles is a game with many advanced and/or optional rules. Recognizing that some players are new to the system, certain rules may be not used at the start, for simplicity. However, these might be introduced later if the players seem capable of handling them. Further, certain rules related to the skill of crew/officers have been replaced (see below). Finally, some rules will never be used, and are not a part of this universe.

**Always used:** Emergency Deceleration, Fractional Accounting, Free Movement, High-Energy Turns, Hit-and-run Raids, Passive Fire Control

**May be used:** Continuous Damage Repair, Electronic Warfare, Erratic Maneuvers, Speed Changes (plotted or reserve power), Tactical Intelligence, Transporter Bombs, Wild Weasels

**Replaced:** Crew Quality, Legendary Officers

**Never used:** Critical Hits, Dogfighting, Energy Balance due to Damage, Leaky Shields, Narrow Salvoes

In addition, there will be time limits set on decision making. These time limits may be subject to change once play has begun if things seem too difficult or too easy. The following values are only rough benchmarks, which must be modified to suit the particular players and campaign.

Each impulse, up to 30 seconds to decide on movement, including HET’s. The helmsman may call for fire decision at this point, in which case he has 30 seconds to decide on a command card indicating his fire. After revealing cards, he must immediately describe the weapons fired.

At the end of each turn, the engineer has 2 minutes to turn in an Energy Allocation form for the next turn. It is expected that he be preparing the next turn’s form as the turn progresses. He has 5 minutes for the first turn’s form, and 1 minute to readjust his form after a damage volley which effects power output.

## Officer Skill and Non-standard Maneuvers

In the role-playing game, these guidelines replace the rules on Legendary Officers. The *normal running* of a starship is done at a skill level of 6. The crew is assumed to have skill 6 in all appropriate skills. The officers’ direct skills are not so vital as their leadership and decision-making.

Highly skilled officers may attempt various short-cuts to improve the ship’s performance. However, there is almost always some risk involved. Simply being good at engineering will not get more power out of the ship’s engines, for example, because they are already designed for optimal power output. If you want to squeeze extra power out, you will be overloading their safety parameters.

Since these tasks are non-standardized, few concrete rules will be given about them. Rather than constant bonuses, the players should look for ways to take advantage of the particular situation or goals. Players are encouraged to come up with their own ideas. As guidelines, I suggest:

- What is the bad side? Why would this not be formalized and made a part of standard operations?
- Preparation in advance is always helpful. Anything which involves hardware work or significant re-programming (shuttle guidance, photon torpedo fuses, and so on) probably cannot be done in combat time. Remember that a turn in Star Fleet Battles is only 5 minutes to the crew.
- While considerable effort has been put into a consistent technology and operations, it is often difficult to convey this to the players. Also, there are undoubtedly things which were not thought of. Thus, ask the GM questions about systems which you are interested in.

## Tactics

The navigator may also try to predict his opponent's next move. This attempt will be based on starship tactics skill, against a difficulty based on the opponent's starship tactics skill + 2, with bonuses or penalties depending upon how well you know your opponent. An unfamiliar race or mindset could be +3 difficulty, while a well-known opponent could be -3 or more.

In general, characters with a high level in Starship Tactics *may* be given additional hints by the GM, based on their automatic success in skill. Should they choose to push it by guessing something, the GM may make a secret roll against an unspecified difficulty - failure again results in false information (i.e. "You think he is going to turn right.")

## Engineering

As stated, the engineer can increase power output only by risking overload or even breakdown. Excessive pushing or mistakes will cause what is known as 'warp shock', and is covered in the following section. The engineer may also attempt emergency repair of systems, but this too is chancy. Even if it appears to succeed, there may be flaws overlooked. If the photon torpedoes blow up as they are being loaded, that's just no good at all.

## Operations

In turn, the helmsman cannot improve the accuracy of the ship's weapons with straight skill - after all, they are not aimed by hand. Rather, additional target information must be given to the guidance systems. However, this runs the risk that the guidance systems will be confused, slowed, or misled from their normal operation.

## Maneuvering

Similarly, just navigation skill does not let the navigator directly improve a ship's turn mode. A navigator may attempt to push the engines and hull stress beyond normal tolerances (i.e. a 'stress turn' as opposed to the more drastic 'high energy turn'). Recall that the turn mode, sideslip, and free movement mechanics are only rough approximations of the actual situation.

## Sensors

The Science Officer may guess at bits of information based on incomplete data, but this naturally increases the margin of error. Any rolls for this will be done in secret by the GM, without exactly specifying the difficulty. A failure may result in false information.

## Warp Shock

As a balancing measure for increasing engine output, I am instituting rules for *warp shock* (and by parallel, impulse shock). If an attempt to increase output fails, the engines will gain a random number of *shock points*. Once a threshold, then the ship is in danger of breakdown. The number of shock points currently is held secret.

There are three ways of gaining shock points. The first is a High Energy Turn. These rules supplant the rules for the HET bonus as described in the original rules. However, the end result is the same unless

The second is a *Stressed Turn*, where the navigator pulls a turn slightly early by declaring one move in advance that he is straining, and then turning at one less than the current turn mode.

The third way is by failure in a roll to increase engine output - which results in no energy gained and shock points accumulated. As a guide to difficulties: 6 is normal running for a starship, and increasing the drives by 2 is approximately difficulty 11.

High Energy Turn (HET)	9+1d6
Stress turn	1d6
Failure in pushing engines	1d6 per two difficulty missed by

Each ship has a threshold represented by a number of shock points. While the shock points are equal to or less than this threshold, then the engine is comparatively safe. A roll for breakdown is still required for large shocks of 10 or more points, such as HET's - but rolls for breakdown have a +2 bonus.

After the threshold is reached, an unmodified breakdown roll is required for all shocks. In addition, half of all subsequent shock points are *permanent* - this is deformation of the dilithium crystals, and can only be repaired at a starbase by replacing the deformed crystals. Orion engine doubling in theory avoids this shock at the expense of the drive integrity.

The threshold for most ships is between 15 and 20. Older designs tend to have lower thresholds. Nimble ships typically have 30.