

STAR ACE

www.staracerpg.com

Star Ace: Adventures in Space is a setting that takes you across galaxies and into adventure at speeds faster than light. You're going to run into new worlds, new life forms, and new excitement every time you leave on a mission, or even when you're on furlough from your hidden base in the Wilderness System. Any place can become an instant hot spot, whether you're flying your Star Team fighter, or stopping over in a bar on Stalitsa! As you play the role of a Star Team member, you join a crack organization whose job is to travel through space, sabotaging the Empire's efforts to rule the universe, and keeping whatever riches might happen to fall their way. Of course, your enemies - and they're not just the Empire - always plan to make your mission a tough one.



Blood and Space

A lot of the D20 rules for **Star Ace** are taken from, or built from, the material found in RPGObjects' **Blood and Space**. This use is with the permission of RPGObjects and the authors of **Blood and Space**. You will not need **Blood and Space** to use **Star Ace** but, if you're looking for more depth and variety, **Blood and Space** has a lot to offer.

Some of the material you'll find useful for your **Star Ace** games include more new classes, several new skills and feats, and the starship construction rules that were used to build the **Star Ace** ships.

The following pages introduce you to different aspects of the **Star Ace** universe. This preview material could change in the final release of the game book. See www.staracerpg.com for more information.

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The Empire



Permit me to introduce myself. I am Yasik the traka. They called me Yasik the Wondrous when I was the High Storyteller to the Imperial Court at Cairn. Times change, and each person's story is a long one; now I'm a Star Ace, Free Order of Diamonds, and assigned to brief you about the Empire, the Alliance, and some folks in between. This time, I'll keep my story short but true.

As far as we know, the Galactic Empire is the largest military, political, and economic force in the galaxy. It covers over 8000 inhabited worlds in almost as many star systems, including the worlds of all PCs and NPCs (except, of course,

the Xenophobes). The Emperor holds complete power, and rules through a group of hereditary "high-born" nobles who control all positions of influence. Until recently, the Empire offered its provinces military security, but the Imperial thugs took

an arm and a leg in return - the provinces supplied nearly all their resources to the Imperial military machine, and most of their young folks served in the front lines of the Imperial Army as nothing more than laser fodder. The Empire still bleeds its provinces, but the military security it once promised is now threatened - by the mysterious Xenophobes from the galactic core and by those of us in the Star Teams (not to mention those in the Alliance and resistance movements on occupied planets, who help us on the sly).

History of the Empire

Strange as it may seem, the seeds of the Empire were sown on the planet Earth - that same Earth that fought the Empire for nearly 500 years and which is still a hotbed of rebellion against Imperial authority. But Earth is the home planet of the human race, and the Empire is a human institution. No non-human has worn the Imperial crown, nor can any of the few non-human nobles expect to rise to the throne.

One thing I'll have to grant humans: they're a race of survivors. Those on Earth recovered rapidly from the nuclear holocaust of 2054, aided by the ancient Kleibor and Tarsan civilizations who contacted them in 2145. In the six centuries from 2200 to 2800, the aggressive human race spread throughout the inhabitable worlds of almost a tenth of the galaxy. Though they weren't the oldest (nor by any means the wisest) race in this section of the Milky Way, humans became the dominant race.

Founding and Expansion

Human cultures varied greatly from world to world, and in some cases - maybe because of isolation, war, or economic collapse (who really knows why?) - humans turned back to an almost primitive barbarism, which I suspect is their natural state. That's what happened on the planet Cairn, where in 2899 a young barbarian named Leo used sword and flame to seize planetwide royal power.

Leo's bloodthirstiness was unusual, even for a human. Soon he caught the attention of some neighboring crassites. Always after the quick money, the Crassites backed Leo with hard cash and high tech, using him as a strongarm man to "convince" nearby worlds that dealing with the crassites on crassite terms was in everyone's best interest. The arrangement was

right up Leo's alley: he took over six worlds in six years. Then in 2905, he turned on his crassite bosses, wiped them out and sacked their two home planets, then proclaimed himself Leo I, Emperor of the Galaxy.

Well, the worlds nearby didn't take Leo and his eight-world empire all that seriously; most never heard of it, and those who did were right to think that it would take all the brains a hoodlum like Leo could muster simply to keep his worlds in order. But they overlooked Leo's son.

Educated by the finest means crassite wealth could buy, but still a gangster at heart, Young Leo did away with his father in 2910, blaming the murder on a crassite separatist plot and assuming the "Imperial throne." In a rare show of humor, Young Leo renamed himself Innocent I, and in 2911, began the greatest career of conquest in recorded galactic history.

He must have inherited his genius from his mother, but at any rate, Innocent knew what he was doing. He applied high technology equipment and advanced administrative theories to the needs of his barbaric but numerous forces, and increased his empire from eight planets to nearly 7600 star systems in the 64 years of his reign. After his first few military conquests, the rest of these planets simply surrendered.

Innocent's empire was feudal: he granted control of star systems and planets to his relatives, followers and non-human allies, all of whom received titles of nobility. Each overlord ran his provinces much as he wished: all the Empire demanded was loyalty, money, resources, and manpower to continue its conquests.

Empire and Alliance

When Innocent I died in 2974 (peacefully, and of natural causes), a welcome quiet settled over the galaxy. A number of short-lived successors struggled for 85 years to tighten Imperial power in the vast number of conquered systems. Meanwhile, the systems still free from the Empire began a series of long negotiations, more out of terror than anything else. In 3059 some of these systems formed the Federal Alliance, for the sole purpose of preventing further Imperial aggression. Ironically, the Alliance's strongest supporter and its first and foremost military headquarters was - once again - Earth.

The Four Hundred Years War

Forming this Alliance merely stirred things up again. Under Emperor Leo II (a brilliant general in his own right), the Empire declared war on the Alliance in 3081. You know most of the story of the next four centuries: wars and rumors of wars, the early Imperial victories, all the truces broken by the Empire, and the formation of the Alliance Star Teams.

Let's just say that the tactics of the Star Teams gave the Empire fits until the final Battle of Sol (3480), in which the Alliance main fleet was destroyed by the massed might of the Imperial Navy. Imperial losses, however, were so severe that the Empire couldn't follow up its victory. In fact, it welcomed the Alliance's request for an armistice, demanding only control of Earth. Both sides agreed not to interfere in the area of the galaxy called the Wilderness Region, although as usual, the Empire's word was as worthless as a deed to Tamillan farmland.

The Xenophobic War

Negotiations following the armistice failed to produce a peace treaty. Not only did the Empire gain the Sol system, including Earth, but it soon broke the non-interference agreement and occupied several systems in the Wilderness Region: Sepa Green, Emniyet, and Shamba. Things looked bad for the Alliance; the Empire, with all its resources, could rebuild much faster than the

Alliance and would probably attack as soon as it was able.

The Alliance was saved by the appearance of the Xenophobes in 3503. We'd never heard of them before, and we still don't know much about them: they're not human, and they're from somewhere near the galactic core. At any rate, they know how to make a strong first impression: they announced their arrival in this section of the galaxy by blowing two

entire planets to cosmic dust and attempting to grab three more. Naturally, this caught the attention of the Empire, and with many of their forces dispatched against the Xenophobes, they no longer could carry on a fullscale war against the Alliance. As for the Xenophobes, they're still a major Imperial headache, but they haven't bothered the Alliance . . . yet. At any rate, theirs is not what you'd call a mission of mercy.

The Empire Today

Enough of history. I spent some time on Cairn not so long ago. They asked me to leave, for reasons I won't go into at the moment I've been kicked out of better places before, so good riddance! Here's the lowdown on the way they work things on Cairn, and throughout the Empire.

First of all, the current Emperor, Frederick Constantine II, is a complete incompetent - can't handle the Star Teams, much less the Alliance or the Xenophobes. The court is one big shark tank with each advisor out for himself. Life near the Emperor is dangerous; those who displease him have been known to end up pushing rocks on Tamilla or floating face-down in a swamp on Sepa Green.

Beneath the Emperor himself are three roughly equal ruling classes: the heads of the Imperial bureaucracy, the Council of 100, and the Emperor's direct vassals. It is possible for one person to be a member of all three groups at once.

1. The Imperial bureaucracy has five branches; one individual, appointed by the Emperor, heads each branch:

Administration (headed by Duke Metellus) has offices and agents on almost every Imperial planet. It handles the daily operation of the Empire and carries out Imperial policy.

Revenue (headed by Duke Metellus) is the Imperial tax collect-

ing agency, responsible for raising and guarding Imperial funds.

Legal (headed by Count Sillith) is the Imperial court system. All trials are conducted by its appointed judges. These officials can command testimony, inflict torture to obtain information, waive any or all the rights of the accused, and impose penalties, including death. They seem to enjoy all these duties. The legal branch keeps voluminous records and has facilities for almost any type of research related to Imperial law or law enforcement.

Imperial Military Forces (headed by Grand Duke Otto IV) includes all regular military forces of the Empire. The head of this branch, the High Admiral/General, reports directly to the Emperor who is Commander-in-chief of the Imperial forces.

Only the highest and most trusted officials know the exact size of the Imperial Navy and Army (and since the Emperor trusts no one, even those officials aren't sure), but these forces are certainly enormous. All occupied planets have a garrison, usually numbering several thousand at least, and the navy's vessels patrol all major space routes. In addition to patrol and occupation forces, there are the main battle fleets of the navy and the assault units of the army.

Imperial Command Enforcement (headed by Duke Yanayir) is composed of fanatically loyal elite troops

who also function as the Imperial secret police. ICE has priority and authority over other branches when in the field, and answers only to the Emperor.

2. The Council of 100 is an advisory body with no legal authority. However, its members have the right of access to the Emperor; he must agree to see them personally about any grievance or problem they have. The Council advises on Imperial law and policy. Its members include all nobles with the rank of Grand Duke or Duke, and anyone the Emperor feels like appointing; when a member dies or retires, the Emperor simply appoints another to fill out the 100. Duke Metellus is the present President of the Council.

3. Vassals of the Emperor are all who govern planets or star systems. Direct vassals hold their territories by direct grant from the Emperor himself; other vassals hold territories by grant of these direct vassals. For example, Baron Silva is a vassal of Countess Livia, who is a direct vassal of the Emperor. Only direct vassals are of equal rank with Council Members and heads of the bureaucracy, but all vassals have certain privileges: the right to legal authority in all nonImperial affairs in their possessions, the right to tax their planets or systems, and the right to raise personal military forces.

Conditions on Occupied Worlds

Of course, occupied planets differ widely, but the Empire leaves its calling card on all its possessions. The populations are viewed as a resource for the use of both the Empire and the local noble who governs the planet. Seizure of property, military drafts, and citizen relocation are common practices on occupied planets.

Attitudes toward the Empire vary from system to system, planet to planet, depending on the policies of garrisons and officials. However, most people (and non-humans) in most of the occupied worlds take part willingly in the scramble for fame and fortune, believing the Empire's lie that "anyone can better himself under our guiding hand."

Planetary economies always benefit the Empire and the nobility, but sometimes enough profits trickle down to allow for a fairly well-to-do middle class. On more advanced worlds, the merchant class does especially well for itself. These people play the Empire's game - make their money under its "guiding hand" - so they aren't likely to support the Alliance, much less the Star Teams. Those on the poorer planets live with very few comforts: the struggle to keep those comforts and not to sink to day-by-day survival keeps people busy, so there is little thought of rebellion.

Attitudes towards the Alliance and the Star Teams vary, but as a rule the Alliance is seen as an enemy; after all, many folks in the

Empire lost several generations of family members in the Four Hundred Years War. We're considered pirates, terrorists, or (at best) desperados. Face it, there's some bad publicity out there.

Every major city and installation on every occupied planet swarms with the Imperial military in their shiny white armor. In addition, troops of the local overlord patrol everywhere, dressed in anything from the fanciest uniforms to old animal pelts. These two military groups serve as the primary means of law enforcement and control. Of course, everyone lives in great dread of the ICE secret police and "special duty" squadrons: their techniques have made them famous.

Despite the iron grip of the Imperial hand, resistance movements are quite . . . lively on several occupied planets. The organization, strength and success of these groups vary from planet to planet. The resistance may spread anti-Imperial propaganda, spy for the Alliance, furnish information, shelter, or even bases to Star Team members, or maybe even tinker with a few Imperial gadgets, if you catch my meaning. ICE fights the resistance by taking it out on the locals, or by trying to infiltrate the resistance groups. As to what they'll do when they catch a resistance fighter or a Star Team member . . . well, you've seen the wanted posters, and I don't think you'd care to hear the details.

LEFT: Just one of the many worlds under Imperial control. This world, somewhere near the core, is obviously very important as can be seen by the amount of traffic in orbit around the world.



I sight the Tamillan freighter as soon as we pop out of translight. Against the gas giant's turbulent surface, she looks like a silver beetle crawling through space. She's right on schedule for our little rendezvous, and so are we. This little girl has enough andilinium concentrate aboard to mint money for an entire system, and to keep my entire crew in Stalitsan heaven for the rest of our lives. The boys know what to do: two quick missiles to her fat belly, a few bursts at her rear laser, a quick scuffle with her crew when we board, and she's ours.

As I bring us to missile range, the sensor alarms break into a scream. I glance down at the ultra-wave radar and see a blip coming around the farside of the gas giant. I slap the alarms off and turn back to the freighter. The rear gunners will handle the blip, it's just an IMP fighter or two escorting the freighter. Nothing for a Spade Ace like me to worry himself about.

The freighter swells up in our viewing screen like a great big whale just waiting for a harpoon. "Tag" and I launch our mis-

siles at the same second, and I swing the ship around to our prey's hindquarters.

The ship intercom crackles, and Leo, the rearunner, yells, "Step on it, Ace - you've got a frigate on . . ." Suddenly, the whole craft shudders and lurches. Damage alarms ring like church bells. Leo doesn't finish his sentence.

"Tag" flips the viewing screen to rear and we see an ICE frigate five sectors away, her heavy lasers blazing away. Her next hit takes out our translight drive. "I've got big neg vibes about this," Tag growls, his cat-like ears lying flat.

Maybe "Duck" Tasha was right, after all. The scoop on this freighter had come too easy; it must have been an ICE plant. As usual, I should have listened to the trakan. But my poor manners won't matter in another five seconds.

The scanners show four IMP fighters dropping out of the frigate. Looks like we're all dressed up with no place to go. There's only one thing to do: dive for the gas giant and hope for the best. If I can put the planet between us and the frigate, we might

take out a few of the interceptors before we become cosmic dust pollution.

As we whip into orbit around the planet-sized ball of gas, my scanners pick up a huge explosion from the frigate's direction. Curiosity gets the better of me - it's a chronic weakness. I pull out of the planet's gravity well and swing around to establish visual contact.

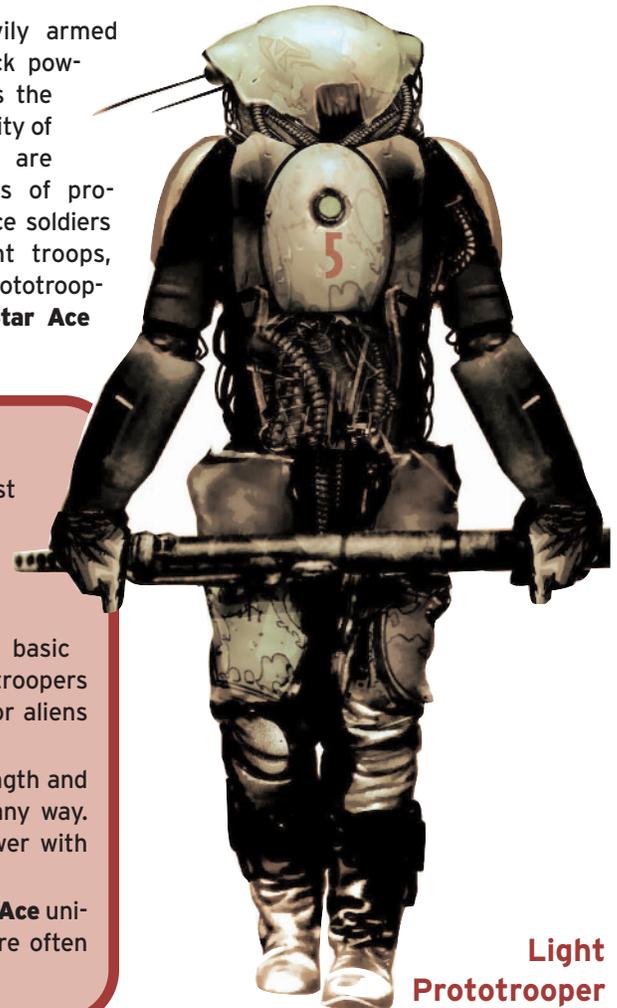
There's an Imperial cruiser, drifting through the ICE frigate's wreckage her big plasma guns still glowing. Pretty odd: an Imperial cruiser attacking an ICE frigate?

"Wheeeaaa!" The voice comes from inside my head. It has a kleibor accent. "Where you going, good buddy? The freighter's over there! We'll take care of those mosquitoes for you." I could kiss that big dumb-sounding bear, whoever he is. How he got his paws on an Imperial cruiser is beyond me, but I'm not complaining. Tasha probably had something to do with it. All I know for sure is that when we get back to Marauder's Landing, I'm going to buy that kleibor the weekend of his life!

Imperial Prototroopers

While a large number of Imperial troops are gorgons, there has been a growing movement within the Empire's high command to deploy armored troops of many other races (including humans). The prototrooper, a type of "foreign legion soldier," has been created by the Empire to test new tactics and weapons and prepare for a time of less reliance on gorgon troops.

Prototroopers are heavily armed and armored, wearing thick powered armor that augments the strength, speed, and dexterity of the wearer. While there are dozens of different types of prototroopers, from deep space soldiers to hazardous environment troops, there are a few standard prototroopers seen throughout the **Star Ace** universe.



Light Prototrooper

Light Prototrooper

Fast, mobile, and always ready, the light prototroopers are most often deployed within urban environments or inside starships and space stations. Their armor is environmentally sealed and protects the prototroopers from any and all environmental hazards (including space) for up to 24 hours before the armor's systems must be recharged with a standard charging station. The basic armor is designed for the humanoid form and most light prototroopers stand about six feet tall though some suits have been adapted for aliens that vary slightly from humanoid average (four arms, for example).

Light prototrooper armor offers only a minimal increase in strength and speed and does not augment the wearer's natural dexterity in any way. Built into the suit is a short-range communications system, viewer with range finder and night vision, and motion detector.

These are the most common prototrooper units seen in the **Star Ace** universe (though gorgon troops will be seen three to four times more often than prototroopers).

Races

Yasik the traka, ladies and gentlemen - back again and at your service, this time to acquaint you with some of the folks you're likely to meet during your **Star Ace** adventures.

There are several hundred known intelligent species within the boundaries of the Empire and the Alliance. Of these, a handful play important roles in Imperial and Alliance affairs. I'm going to give you a little background on these important races.

One of the most exciting ways to adventure in a **Star Team** is to play the role of a nonhuman alien. Player characters in **Star Ace** belong to one of a number of different races. One race is, of course, the human race, who, if they aren't Earthlings, trace their ancestry to Earth. But other races are just as important to the Alliance, and each is just as important to the **Star Teams** because of the richness and quality of their talents.

What follows is a short assortment of races available for **Star Ace** players to choose from. The galaxy of **Star Ace** is massive, limited only by the imagination of the players involved in the game. With the approval of the GM, races from other D20 books can be easily integrated into a **Star Ace** campaign. The introduced race may be "the last of his kind," a survivor of some great cataclysm. Or, perhaps, the race selected is from some outer world that has yet to be properly explored and cataloged by either the Empire or the Alliance. The player and GM should work together when introducing new races to **Star Ace** campaigns.





Crystal Clones

This race is a result of mixing the crystal folk of the planet Ruoka and the human race.

Soon after humans first arrived on Ruoka, it was discovered that contact between the crystal folk and a human cell causes a cloning of sorts. Human explorers who searched for Ruoka's famed Xantium crystals reported feeling a strange surge of energy pass through them. These hour-glass shaped waves of energy were, as we know now, the crystal folk and after these strange but harmless encounters, the humans were surprised to find other humanoid

beings coming from nowhere to greet them, or sometimes just to watch them.

What had happened was this: by a method unknown to anyone but the crystal folk, these bizarre living waves of energy had acquired a cell from the human they passed through, and begun a cloning process. The resulting alien was more human in appearance and physical make-up than its crystal folk ancestors. But the diet and behavior of the new race was decidedly "Crystal." It was impossible for these creatures to fit into Crystal society, and they were not

welcomed into general human society for other, unfortunate reasons.

Appearance and Behavior

Crystal clones appear thin and frail compared to their human "ancestors." They are about six inches shorter than the average human. They have arms, legs, and hair, just as humans do. Crystal clones are pale blue, almost white; their hair is white or light yellow, and always very straight and limp. Their eyebrows are raised and

their ears pointed. Because of the physical appearance of the crystal clones, earlier humans coined the insulting term "thin rock" when referring to them. The Empire, never known for racial tolerance, has gone so far as to officially name this race the "thin rock race."

Crystal clones are very quiet. They don't tend to socialize, and avoid contact with humans whenever possible. When they do have to deal with humans, they're withdrawn and quiet; sometimes you can barely get a simple "yes" or "no" out of them, and they very seldom engage in small talk or friendly chatter.

Even when provoked, the clones try to avoid fighting. Don't corner one or push him around: in those situations, they're fierce indeed, flying into an almost uncontrollable rage. Correction: there's no "almost" about it - they let the human monster out of the cage, and couple it with their cold, crystal folk intelligence. Many a human has mistaken the frail body for that of a weakling, and afterward regretted calling a crystal clone "thin rock" to his face. "Thin rock," indeed! They may be thin, but they're some of the toughest fighters and best techs around.

Surprisingly, although they don't like socializing with humans, crystal clones have a fondness for loud and crowded situations: it's not as much the company as the loud noises and bright lights. Although seldom loud themselves, the clones make a great audience for bizarre music and flashy light shows.

Crystal clones are very protective of their "home" planet: it seems that when the crystal folk create them, they create them for a specific reason, giving each clone all the knowledge he or she needs to carry out that duty. The clones inherit the gender and the ability in some skills of their human parent, but they take what they call "the Crystal Purpose" very seriously: it's an overwhelm-

ing drive, and they have no real human passions that distract them from the Purpose.

This Purpose varied through the ages. At first the crystal folk seemed bent on helping the human visitors by keeping both them and their machines in repair. This might account for the clones' skill in both technology and medicine. But soon it became clear that those famous Xantium crystals (with their technological and military uses) were what those humans were after, and that they didn't give a gorton's skin for the safety of the crystal clones or the folk who produced them. We like to think that those humans in the Alliance and the neutral systems have changed in their attitude. The Empire surely hasn't, and the clones soon considered the Imperial forces as the greater evil.

The Crystal Purpose has become the defense of the Planet Ruoka against the Empire - at all costs.

Therefore, because of the racial policies of the Empire, its potential threat to their home planet, and the chance to live away from human settlements, many crystal clones find their way into the ranks of the Star Teams. They prefer this service to positions in the regular Alliance military because of the smallness and tight organization of the Star Teams - ideal for the crystal clone's desire for less talk and more order. Because these aliens don't bother anyone, and are exceptionally talented in certain areas, the crystal clones are always welcomed by the Star Teams.

Crystal Clones Alien Traits

- +2 to Intelligence, -2 to Charisma. Crystal Clones single-minded sense of purpose and genetically pre-programmed knowledge grants them greater intelligence than other races, but their lack of emotional empathy leaves them detached and distant when dealing with others.
- Medium-size. Crystal Clones get no special bonuses or penalties for their size.
- A Crystal Clones base speed is 30 feet.
- +1 racial bonus on Spot and Listen checks. Crystal Clones are more aware of their surroundings than other races, taking in nuances of light and sound that go unnoticed by others.
- Repair Affinity: The Purpose of the Crystal Clones was once to maintain human machines and visitors. Although their Crystal Purpose has changed to the defense of Planet Ruoka they still retain a knack for repairing things, be they mechanical or organic, granted by their original Purpose. Crystal Clones get a +2 racial bonus on any Repair or Treat Injury check.
- Defensive Rage: A crystal clone forced into self-defense, or acting in the defense of Ruoka according to his purpose, slips in a defensive rage as they fight their way free. In any fight not started by a Crystal Clone or his companions, Crystal Clones gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls and a +2 dodge bonus to armor class while their rage is guided by their cold, analytical intellects.
- Favored Class: Variable. A Crystal Clones aptitude for certain careers is derived from traits inherited from their human parent. When created, a Crystal Clone may pick one career. When determining whether a multiclassed Crystal Clone suffers an XP penalty, the selected career does not count.

Crassites

There's no doubt that the ancestors of the crassites were grazing herd animals. Crassite society and culture still have a herdlike structure.

Crassites organize themselves socially into large clans (called muir'im), which consist of, at most, a few dozen adult males, and 3-10 female crassites for each male: the wealthier the muir'im, the greater the number of females.

Being male is an advantage among crassites: all males carry both a personal name and the name of the muir'im into which they were born; females have only personal names until they are sold or bartered to a muir'im in which they will breed. Males are the valued members of the muir'im; females are seen as bargaining chips or breeding stock.

For most crassites, the good of the muir'im is more important than the individual. Because the "good" of the muir'im is seen purely in terms of money, a "good" crassite may sell his own son or daughter into slavery if the price is right. Almost all property and goods owned by members of a muir'im are considered the property of the muir'im; when you deal with a crassite you're actually dealing with the "family business." Quarrels within a muir'im are often settled suddenly and violently.

During the annual breeding season, the males of the crassite muir'im compete fiercely for the attention of the clan's females; this is probably the reason crassites love to show off their riches. Most of the time, crassite males wear their wealth: heavy, jewel-encrusted gold nose rings, diamond lensed monocles, all kinds of rings and earrings, extremely expensive black robes of silk or crushed velvet, silver or gold brocade, and ornamental weapons, worn more for show than for use.



Crassite males are as cold in business as they are with their females and families: it doesn't bother them a bit to ruin someone financially, have someone roughed up, or even hire an assassin to get their way. However, aside from the lower class crassites whose love of plunder makes them fierce (but unruly) mercenary soldiers, most are cowardly in the face of violence; they much prefer to hire others to do their dirty work for them, and agree to almost anything when threatened (not that they keep promises when the dan-

ABOVE: Crassites are short, fat humanoids with tapirlike snouts. Their knack for business and trade has made the phrase "bargain like a Crassite" a part of the Universal language.

ger has been removed). Crassites are noted for their long memories and ability to nurse grudges for decades.

Crassites Alien Traits

- **+2 to Strength, -2 Charisma.** While the Crassites squat form is capable of great feats of strength, many races find Crassites unattractive to look at and as emotionally cold as their home world.
- **Medium Size.** As Medium-size creatures, Crassites get no special bonus or penalties due to their size.
- **A Crassites base speed is 20 feet.** Crassites bulk makes them slow and ponderous compared to other races of comparable size.
- **Art of the Deal:** Crassites are natural traders, possessing a keen instinct for a good deal and a willingness to do whatever it takes to make a profit. They receive a +4 racial bonus to Merchant checks. Crassites are also sensitive to any attempts to hide the truth during negotiations, giving them a +2 racial bonus to Sense Motive checks negotiating with others.
- **+2 racial bonus to Bluff checks.** Crassites feel little moral attachment to the truth, making them excellent liars.
- **+2 racial bonus to Gather Information.** It's in a Crassites' interest to keep up to date with local news, and their sizable clans often know at least a few scraps of rumor regarding everything that's going on.
- **Cold Affinity:** Crassites are most at home in cold environments, and get a +4 racial bonus to survival checks in worlds with low temperatures. They have a cold resistance of 5, and receive a +2 racial bonus to any Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of extreme cold.
- **Heat Sensitivity:** Crassites suffer a -4 racial penalty on Survival checks in areas with temperatures above 60 degrees, and have a -2 racial penalty to any Fortitude save made to resist the effects of extreme heat.
- **Favored Class: Smuggler.** A multiclass Crassites Smuggler class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty.

Appearance and Behavior

Crassites measure height to the shoulder, rather than to the top of the head, because a crassite always stoops forward from the shoulders. The average crassite measures about 4'10" to the shoulder, although some are as tall as 5'3".

Crassites are extremely fat by human standards, with a layer of fatty tissue just below their grainy, stubbly, gray skin that protects them against the cold on their home world, Fal'el. Their size has its disadvantages, too: they become uncomfortable in most temperate settings. Temperatures over 60 degrees Fahrenheit cause a crassite to sweat like a kleibor in a sauna, and they can't stand temperatures higher than 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Crassites have small hands and short, stubby fingers. Their bodies are hairless except for a few greasy black locks at the top of the head, which disappear when the crassite gets to be about 70 years old.

Despite their ugliness, the physical makeup of crassites isn't that different from that of humans. Crassites are omnivores, although they tend to eat meat sparingly; they share the same senses as humans, and crassite females bear live young. The average life expectancy of a crassite is about 100 Earth Years.

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