

Backgrounds

Characters in **Planetfall** come from a variety of backgrounds which bestow various Abilities and resources to them. Player Characters may select **1** Background by default and do not need to do so at Character Creation.

Though Backgrounds inherently suggest some parts of your character's backstory that you may wish to incorporate, it is down to you how you choose to do so.

Mystic Acolyte

You have been part of one or more of the [Mystic Sects](#) in your life. Perhaps you are still a devout, or perhaps you've moved on and still kept connections in your life. Whatever your connection, you're still able to draw on your past.

Mystic Contacts

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime (or before a Mission) you may ask a question of the Mystic Sect you are connected to.
- You will receive an answer, if they know, or a hint as to how you might go about finding out.

Intervention

- *Utility Ability*
- Once per Mission you may perform an improbable feat when out of combat by loudly proselytising the values of your Mystic Sect or associated Ship Heart.
- Discuss with the GM what feat you would like to perform and they will determine what effect occurs.
- If you already have this feature from being Startouched, you gain an additional use of it.

Officer

At some point, and perhaps still, you had rank within an organised Navy (military or otherwise). People would have reported to you and respected you, and some of that respect and power persists with you now.

Pull Rank

- *Downtime Ability*

- During Downtime (or before a Mission) you may ply a Military Organisation to provide you with information.
- If you're sufficiently well regarded you'll receive an answer or a hint as to how you might go about finding out.
- If you are not, you will be given an idea as to who you might need to persuade.

Summary Punishment

- Once per encounter you may call YOU: BREAK against a target that has directly disobeyed your order.
- The target must have been physically capable of understanding and following the order in order to do this.

Stowaway

You're not *technically* meant to be here. For whatever reason, the ship you find yourself on didn't originally include you on the manifest, and well, now you're here. You'll have spent a lot of time getting used to the internals of your ship and perhaps know how to get places you really shouldn't.

Vent Crawler

- *Downtime Ability*
- You may choose to eavesdrop in on the Downtime briefing or question of another character who hasn't taken sufficient precautions against someone listening in.
- They will not know you have done so.

Make Do and Mend

- Once per Encounter you can call **MEND** on a piece of equipment within melee reach.

Pilot

You have been trained in how to pilot vehicles - specifically, spacecraft. Perhaps you served time in a Navy, or maybe you were an independent hauler. Did you pilot vast ships through the stars, or a sleek fighter between asteroids? However you learned, these skills have stuck with you and are applicable beyond the cockpit.

I'll Drive

- *Utility Ability*
- You are capable of piloting or driving a functioning transport.

- You can use this in uptime or downtime and means you don't need to find or employ a pilot for a vehicle you may have access to.
- Discuss with the GM when this would be relevant to provide an advantage to you and your party in the Mission.

Talisman

- *Utility Ability*
- You have a small intricate object which you can use to determine the level of Decay influence on an area.
 - e.g. pocket watch, metronome, electronic scale
- Inform the GM of this, and when you check it - you can use this to be prewarned of entering Decaying areas or Decay-heavy encounters.

Researcher

You are skilled in research and plumbing the depths of reality to make sense of it. Perhaps you were employed by a corporation like [Aspexx](#) to come up with new improved mechanisms, perhaps you're a volunteer biologist within the [Zeitgeist Research Department](#), or maybe you were a contractor for the [Elegy](#) concocting new means to manage targets in High Decay environments. Whatever your training, you have a mind for research and can apply this to uncover secrets of the universe.

Laboratory Analysis

- *Downtime Ability*
- During downtime you may procure a laboratory to perform analysis on a sample given to you to answer a question about it.
- If what you are trying to find out is knowable scientifically, you will receive the answer or a hint as to the next step in finding it out.

Field Analysis

- *Utility Ability*
- Once per Mission (out of combat) you may ask the GM three questions about the capabilities of a creature you are able to study.
- This could be used to glean combat capabilities from afar, or aid investigation into how a creature acted.

Cybernetics

At some point you gained implants that bestow a minor superhuman ability on you. These don't make you a Various (far from it) but give you a small advantage over the unaltered.

With all technology, interaction with the Decay is risky, and those with Cybernetic implants will find these impaired by Decay itself.

Discuss with the Refs an enhancement you wish to have installed. You gain a Minor and a Major effect from this at the penalty of taking a **BREAK** on the relevant part of your body whenever you suffer from **DRAIN**.

(OC Note: players with this Background are reminded to conduct themselves with particular sensitivity with regards to real world disabilities and prosthetics)

Minor Enhancement

- You may utilise your Minor Enhancement once per Encounter.

Example enhancements:

- Cybernetic Knee Replacements - call PING to STRIKEDOWN.
- Cybernetic Wrist Braces - call PING to BREAK by melee on your lower arms.
- Cybernetic Infrared Vision - call SCAN: CREATURES.

Major Enhancement

- Once per Mission you may utilise your major enhancement.

Example enhancements:

- Cybernetic Knee Replacements - you launch into the air! Call WARP as you fly through the air, reposition, and crash land calling MASS STRIKEDOWN.
- Cybernetic Wrist Braces - for the next 30s take any call that hits your lower arms as if it had hit your weapon.
- Cybernetic Infrared Vision - gain 1 Energy per PING response when you call SCAN: CREATURES.

Starsighted

“Starsighted” is a broad umbrella term that describes those who have an affinity with the universe, but not so strong or manifest as the Startouched. Though they lack the powers of the Startouched they report visions and hearing things they could not possibly know about. As far as can be determined, those with such gifts are selected randomly, and whether those gifts manifest from an early or late age is indiscriminate. You are one such Starsighted. When you discovered this and how is entirely up to you, but your gifts will always be a part of you once discovered.

(N.B. While it is possible to be both Startouched and Starsighted, this is neither required nor necessarily that common. Being Startouched does not imply being Starsighted, nor does being Starsighted imply that you might become Startouched one day.)

Hearing Things

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime (or before a Mission) you may hear things relevant to understanding the world around you.
- You cannot pick or choose what you're hearing about, but should be provided with something relevant to the aftermath of the Mission you have undertaken or may become relevant during the Mission you are about to undertake.

Impossible Knowledge

- *Utility Ability*
- Sometimes you receive impossible visions of the future which aid you.
- Once per Mission, outside of combat, you may call over a GM and explain that you impossibly received visions of this exact moment and may describe one (plausible) preparation you have made to advantage yourself.
- This may be, for instance, packing an item you would have otherwise left behind that you need right now, or perhaps if you're setting an ambush you knew to leave a trap **just** where an enemy is about to walk.

Spectre

You are a member of the [Elegy](#), the organisation tasked with removing elements from the galaxy that would otherwise cause *considerable* issues for galactic peace. The organisation, which runs on a strict moral code, will expect assignments to be completed and reported back to superiors but has considerable resources at its disposal to assist its members.

Contract

- At all times you will have a Contract to complete: killing a named target.
 - *OC Note: Elegy Contracts will be NPCs unless explicitly opted into by Player Characters.*
- You are expected to be working toward this goal though it is understood that it may take several missions in order to be performed, and to be performed according to the Elegy's moral code.
- You will always have a Contract as a Spectre and should ask for one if you don't.
- Each completed Contract will grant you a boon to be discussed with the Refs.
- *Warning: If you abandon your commitment to the Elegy, there will be consequences which may include having a Contract out on your own head.*

Elegy Resources

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime (or before a Mission) you may request specialist equipment from the Elegy to aid in your Contract.
- This could be a higher power weapon of some description, poison, or documents that could help

with pinpointing your target.

Dynast

You are a high ranking member of the [Altarian Dynasty](#) - someone who can trace their inheritance to the elite of Alta, and thus is in line to the inherited power of the Throne of Alta itself. Your word carries weight, even in the borderlands, and you strictly outrank any other Dynasts of lower order of succession. When you take this background you should decide what your family heirloom that proves your Dynastic heritage is.

You may choose to play a low ranking Dynast without this background but will of course not reap any of the benefits.

Grapevine

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime (or before a Mission), you may ask to hear what rumours are floating around higher echelons.
- You may ask the GM a specific question and get an understanding of what those in power feel about a situation, or an idea of why that information isn't being freely discussed.

Weight of Worlds

- *Utility Ability*
- Once per Mission, or during Downtime, you may press your position and power in order to leverage NPCs into listening to you and following the course of action you propose.
- This will be most effective on Altarian NPCs (especially lower order Dynasts) and not so effective on NPCs with no interest in the Altarian Dynasty's rules.

Explorer

Your roots are in exploring the great unknown. Perhaps you're skilled in excursions into unmapped areas of planets, perhaps you're a professional recon scout, or perhaps you're just a really skilled caver. However your interest in exploring, you've gained valuable skills that aid you in the dangerous outdoors.

Favoured Terrain

- Pick a favoured terrain type (e.g. Forest, Cave, Swampland).
- When you are in your favoured terrain you gain an extra use of MISS per cover.

Cartographer

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime you are able to provide detailed maps of areas you have visited during the Mission that can be handed over to various factions e.g. to aid future Missions.

Pirate

In any vast galaxy, there are always going to be those avoiding Cooperation regulations and looking to make a little extra on the side. Like you! Perhaps you were a smuggler, or perhaps you were more of a full time ship-hijacking dignitary-ransoming scourge of the space fare-ways. Whether your piratical days are behind you, or an [active part of your motivation](#) today, your underhanded tactics will give you an advantage.

A Little Something For Me

- *Downtime Ability*
- During Downtime you are able to push for a little extra from your Mission.
- Perhaps you're able to get a little more of a reward, or perhaps you know where you might be able to sell that strange shell you picked up on the black market.
- Discuss with the GM if you're not sure on ideas, but you should always be able to either get a little something for yourself, or get an idea of why you're being blocked from doing so.

Fighting Dirty

- Once per Encounter you may call YOU: BREAK LEG at someone suffering from STRIKEDOWN.

Mechanic

You don't care about getting down and dirty with the solid mechanical workings of the world around you. Try as the Decay might, the machines of the world are alive and ticking and you're here to make sure it stays that way. Perhaps you had an apprenticeship, perhaps you make your own way as a tinkerer, perhaps you worked for an established company in a factory. However you know it, you've got a real knack for machines.

Dabbler Tinkerer

- *Once Per Mission Utility Ability*
- Once per Mission, out of combat, you may attempt Tinkering to improvise work on something.
- Inform the GM that you are attempting some Tinkering.
- They will present you with the [Tinkering Deck](#) to determine the success and power of your

Tinkering in time for the next encounter.

- **If you already have access to Tinkering** this gives you another use of it per Mission.

Take It Apart

- *Downtime Ability*
- You may carefully disassemble a mechanical thing to find out how it works, and any secrets it might hold.
- You can use this perhaps to identify a curious item, or to provide insights into how to improve something for another character.

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Last update: **2022/01/26 19:41**