

COMBAT

Several minor changes to the original CODA combat system used with Decipher's Star Trek Roleplaying game are suggested here. Most of the modifications serve to weigh combat heavily in favor of the Player Characters. This will make for a much more cinematic gaming experience and these rules might not be appropriate for all games.

Players desiring more of the feel of later episodes of *Deep Space Nine*, or of other science-fiction series outside the Star Trek genre (such as the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, or the short-lived *Space: Above and Beyond*) should not use this system. The CODA combat system, as it stands, is quite capable of creating a darker, or edgier combat scenario; these minor tweaks simply make it easier for a PC to live to fight another day.

Players who want the feel of the original *Star Trek* series, or *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, or *Voyager* can achieve that easily using these modifications.

Another reason for implementing these changes to the rules, is to speed up combat. It's not often that a group of PCs will go up against a vastly outnumbering collection of enemies, or encounter a situation where they are fighting nameless, and virtually faceless goons in a Star Trek setting. But, in such cases as when a ship is boarded by a large number of enemy soldiers, or the characters find themselves in a barroom brawl at a frontier outpost, these rule-mods can help to speed that combat along.

ATTACKS

Roll all attacks as per the combat system laid out in the CODA rules, and described in both the Narrator's Guide and the appendix to the Player's Guide. Treat all attacks as skill tests with the appropriate combat skills. But, apply the following changes to the basic system:

1 - Do not allow enemy combatants to roll for Dodge, or Block/Parry, unless they are a PC or NPC. Assume that an unsuccessful attack roll on the part of a PC, or major NPC is the result of the adversary Dodging, or Blocking (if the circumstances would logically apply) just as easily as a miss, and roleplay the scene appropriately. This same rule should apply to Starfleet "redshirts", and base-stat rabble characters who happen to be on the side of the PCs.

This should expedite combat, cutting down on how many dice-rolls a Narrator actually has to make during a fighting sequence.

2 - Do not allow the "double-six rule" normally applied in the CODA system to apply to a rabble-level adversary's Attack roll. PCs and important supporting cast members receive the double-six benefit; but street bullies, goons, or "bulk troops" in a Jem'Hadar attack or Borg boarding party do not.

The double-six benefits should also be removed

from those famous redshirts, just to be fair (and perhaps to ensure they more readily meet the fate Star Trek usually intends for them.

Alternatively, the Narrator could allow one re-roll for rabble or redshirts on a double-six. But, only one. ie.: if a Nausicaan pirate rolls a double-six, trying to shoot the captain, then he can roll one additional die. But, even if that die comes up as a 6, he does not roll any further. This can increase the challenge of a fight, without reducing a PC's chance to dodge, or defend to an absolute impossibility, just because of a quirky tumble of the dice.

This modification is very similar to an optional rule regarding the "Drama Die" given in Last Unicorn's Star Trek (The Original Series) core rulebook (p. 101).

3 - All courage spent by a PC or a major NPC, during an attack or defensive action is restored at the end of the scene if the courage was spent to achieve a heroic goal. Do not restore courage immediately if the PC is simply fighting for the pleasure of it (as Klingons often do), or is not behaving in a heroic way; working towards the goals of the crew.

This is discussed in the Player's Guide (p. 148). However, so many Narrators who started out as GMs running roleplaying games where the rules stop short of assigning the gamemaster the job of "character killer" tend to overlook this basic CODA rule, preferring to only restore Courage points at the end of an episode, or, Goddess forbid, make player's buy them back with advancements !

During a combat involving a large number of combatants, the Narrator may opt to assign a number of required successes to an adversary, rather than an actual Health level.

In this case, if an adversary is treated as a "2 success combatant", for example, this means a PC need only score 2 successful attacks against him to kill, knock out, or subdue their opponent regardless of the actual total of damage inflicted. This works well during large brawls, or military ground actions.

The usual number of success required to kill or subdue an opponent is 1-3, but this could be set higher by the Narrator to reflect the general strength and endurance of an adversary as well as the level of damage some *Star Trek* weapons are capable of doing.

This rule also works well if you're striving for a high level of *Kirk-fu* in your game. *Kirk-fu* being that certain edge had by such *Star Trek* heroes as Captain James T. Kirk, who can usually render a hulking Eymorg, or a burly Klingon unconscious in 1-3 blows.

This rule is borrowed from Decipher's Lord of the Rings roleplaying game. And the actual rules governing this type of combat resolution can be found on p. 270 of the Core Rulebook for that system.

DEFENSE

The basic CODA-system rules for determining a character's Defense score is fairly straightforward. Any PC, or major supporting-cast NPC will have a Defense equal to 7+ their Agility attribute modifier.

In most cases this will accurately represent that individual's ability to defend themselves on the fly based on their raw instincts. The use of Reactions, Dodging, Blocking, and Parrying represents a conscious defensive effort based on skill and training.

Even a starting character in the Star Trek roleplaying game can have an impressive Defense score, depending on their Agility attribute, and good scores in Blocking, etc.

But, if players, and Narrators would rather PCs have a decreased chance of a successful attack being made against them, the root-score for Defense can be calculated as per the *Lord of the Rings* roleplaying game: $10 + \text{Agility mod} = \text{Defense}$.

This is the formula used in the LotR RPG (where the attribute, *Nimbleness* is equal to Star Trek's *Agility*), to better reflect the more warlike and inherently dangerous lifestyle one is often forced to live in Middle-Earth. The Star Trek universe is considered a less violent place (though combat, in Star Trek can be every bit as deadly as in Tolkien's world). As a result, Star Trek characters have a generally lower root-defense, by a total of 3 points.

Optional: A PC's Defense score might upgrade, automatically, after several advancements to represent said character, advancing to that place in the lexicon of Trek occupied by James Kirk, Spock, Worf, or Benjamin Sisko. In this case, once a character receives a certain number of advancements, they automatically gain another basic point of Defense up to a maximum of 10.

ie.: After 10 Advancements, the PC's basic Defense goes from 7 to 8. Then, at 20 from 8 to 9. And at 30, from 9 to the maximum of 10; putting the character on a par with the defensive abilities of a PC in the Lord of the Rings roleplaying game through earned advancements. In such cases a PC with an Agility modifier of +1 would have a Defense of 9 at 10 advances, 10 at 20 advances, and 11 at 30 advances.

Of course, if a character raises her Agility attribute through advancement to a point where the attribute-modifier is increased, this automatically increases her basic Defense.

Actual defensive efforts made during combat should be done in accordance with the CODA system, with the following modifications:

1 - Dodge rolls should be conducted using the following formula; Quickness Reaction modifier +3 (Dodge edge, if applicable) +1 (Gymnastics (Tumbling) affinity) +1 (affinity for skill with the weapon used in the attack) and/or +1 (affinity for Unarmed Combat skill, if appropriate - see Combat Affinities below)

2 - As stated above, rabble and goons do not roll a Dodge, or Block/Parry action. This serves to expedite combat by cutting down on how many times the dice have to be rolled; it also gives the PCs and important supporting characters the same kind of advantages they have on Star Trek TV shows, and in the movies.

On television, the characters usually have the script on their side. Quite often, the roll of the dice cannot, or will not be as merciful as a screenwriter !

3- All courage spent by a PC, to defend is

immediately restored at the end of the scene if the courage was spent to achieve a heroic or cinematic goal. Do not restore courage immediately if the PC seems to be trying to avoid taking damage in a cowardly way, or is simply trying to avoid risk without a clear-cut purpose definable within the scope of the story.

Again, this was touched on in the discussion of Attacks above. And this modification is simply another reference to the topic of recovering Courage as described in the Player's Guide.

Some Narrators, perhaps striving for a less cinematic game, seem to have difficulty with the rules regarding restoring courage.

They want to make it harder for characters to recover Courage points, or make it easier for them to run out of points to spend during the course of an adventure.

This may make the game more challenging for some, but this isn't how the CODA system was intended to be played. It has been this writer's experience as a Narrator that players will tend to ignore their Courage points, for fear I wont restore them, and their characters end up failing their TNs to the detriment of the story, or worse.

I always tell new players, "this is not Roleplaying in 1981, you are not a 1st level Halfling, and I am not here to kill you".

DAMAGE

After a successful attack damage is determined as per the CODA system, with the following changes.

SKILLS: Add the characters full skill level to all damage inflicted, with the exception of damage inflicted by energy weapons. This reflects the fact that a skilled martial artist knows how to strike an opponent for maximum effect, while a character with skill in the use of an archaic ranged weapon or a projectile weapon will know, through their skill, how to strike vital areas and inflict more damage. Energy weapon damage is inflicted on the body on contact and it is not as important to strike a particular body part, or location to inflict a certain level of damage. The bonus to damage from skills should equal the character's actual skill level, not their final modifier that includes bonuses from attributes, edges, etc. Thus, If a character has Unarmed Combat (Mok'Barra) +6, but her final modifier due to attributes and edges is a +8, the modifier to damage would only be +6.

Skill levels can be applied as bonus damage for rabble and redshirts at the Narrator's discretion, but for the most part should be avoided unless the individual is an exceptionally skilled fighter, or an expert shot. The Narrator should always try to inflict as little damage as possible on the PCs, unless the drama of a particular episode requires a character to become incapacitated.

SPECIALTIES: At the Narrator's discretion, a PC or important NPC might gain a damage-bonus from their combat skill specialties as well. If stacked onto bonuses from actual skill-levels this might seem redundant, but it does reflect the use of specialized maneuvers in unarmed combat or specialized knowledge of a particular weapon governed by a broader skill. As with the normal bonuses applied to skill tests for specializations, a damage bonus from a specialization would be a flat +2.

ie.: a PC with Unarmed Combat (Mok'Barra) +6 would receive not only a 6-point bonus to damage during Unarmed Combat, but an additional +2 if using the Mok'Barra fighting style.

SUCCESS LEVELS: Add degrees of success to any damage inflicted by a PC, or by an important supporting cast character. Add one point of damage for every point of success on the dice roll. Complete Success should inflict up to 5 points of damage. Extraordinary Success, 11 or more.

This does not apply to the use of energy weapons. See Skills above. Success Level damage bonuses can be applied to the damage inflicted by rabble adversaries as mentioned above. But the same rule of thumb should be applied regarding damage inflicted on PCs, or important supporting characters.

STUNNING & SUBDUING: As discussed above, a Narrator may assign a number of required successes (usually 1-3) that a character must achieve to automatically knock out, or even kill an opponent. This rule is borrowed from Decipher's *Lord of the Rings* roleplaying game. And can be quite efficient in expediting combat so that lengthy fights don't dominate a gaming session, disrupting the Star Trek style and flow of the game.

Another method of stunning an adversary, or rendering an opponent unconscious during Unarmed Combat is for the Narrator to force a Stamina reaction versus an appropriate stun-level TN if a character receives enough damage in a single attack to warrant such a test.

WOUND LEVEL	STAMINA TN
Dazed	15 (Heavy Stun)
Injured	12 (Medium Stun)
Wounded	9 (Light Stun)

Another method of stunning an opponent in one or two attacks could be based on the Success of the initial attack. In this case the Narrator forces a Stamina reaction versus an appropriate stun-level, or it's equivalent TN measured against how successful the attacker was in delivering their blow.

SUCCESS	STAMINA TN
Complete	15 (Heavy Stun)
Superior	12 (Medium Stun)
Extraordinary	9 (Light Stun)

These system of knocking out, or subduing an opponent makes it easier for a PC to function similar to a cinematic Star Trek character like Captain Kirk in a fist-fight. It also enables an antagonist to subdue a character for dramatic effect, as often happens in Star Trek (especially on the Original Series), and most other adventure-dramas.

WOUND-MODIFIERS: Functional penalties incurred due to injuries (-1 at Dazed wound-level, -3 at Injured, etc.) can be imposed by the Narrator at her discretion if she believes the individual has suffered enough damage to cause them to perform with decreased efficiency given their normal Strength, or Vitality levels.

These penalties do not have to be imposed if the Narrator, or players feel that impeding a character's abilities, especially at a low level of injury, goes against their interpretation of the feel and style of Star Trek drama.

Injury penalties should be imposed, in most circumstances, for

higher wound-levels (basically, above the Injured level) to reflect the severity of such a wound, or wounds. But, under circumstances of low or minor injury or "stun damage" the Narrator may decide waiving penalties is in step with the style of adventure portrayed on Star Trek.

This gives all major characters a very cinematic edge in combat. But, think about Star Trek, on television. Captain Kirk, Lieutenant Worf, Captain Archer, or B'Elanna Torres can take enough punches to knock most people cold, and still go on fighting at their peak efficiency.

Another option for dealing with injury-based penalties and modifiers could be a Reaction or Attribute test. Each time a character is reduced one wound level (from Healthy to Dazed, or Dazed to Injured, for example) the narrator could call for a Stamina or Willpower Reaction test, or an Attribute test based on either Strength or Vitality (as appropriate for the situation at hand).

The TN would be the amount of damaged suffered from the initial attack that served to reduce the character's wound-level. A successful Reaction or Attribute test in this case would negate the penalty suffered as the effect of the injury, but not reduce the physical damage to the character.

ie.: if a Vulcan security officer with a Health of 7, and a Stamina reaction of +3 took 15 points of wound-damage to reduce his Wound-level from Healthy to Injured, he would have to roll 15 or better on a Stamina reaction test to resist suffering the penalizing effects of the wounds (in this case a general -3 penalty to all tests).

Use of Courage to resist the effects of injury should be allowed, since it could be considered a very heroic act to "soldier on" with a severe phaser-burn.

COMBAT AFFINITIES

There are no Attack affinities in these rules beyond any applicable affinities described in the CODA system, unless the Narrator decides to apply any she feels are appropriate.

Defensive affinities include (but are not limited to) affinities for Gymnastics (Tumbling) skill, skill with any weapon being defended against, and skills with any applicable unarmed combat style that can be used defensively (Boxing wont help defend vs Phaser fire. Capoeira would, however, due to the nature of the fighting style). Other defensive affinities may apply at the Narrator's discretion.

Most offensive affinities will exist between overlapping Armed and Unarmed combat styles with similar application and technique. A character using Mok'bara might receive an affinity bonus for Terran Karate as the styles are very similar. Or a Vulcan fighting using the Ponn-ifla style could gain an affinity bonus from their skill in Brazilian Ju-jitsu.

A character using an Armed Combat style to wield a weapon might receive an affinity bonus from their skill in an Unarmed Combat style if said style is often taught in tandem with the Armed Combat style.

An Andorian fighting using their Chaka Hramdal skills might gain a +1 bonus from their skill in the Hlesha Tlara unarmed style.

COMBAT ACTIONS

All PCs, and important Supporting Cast NPCs should be allowed 3 combat actions per round, + their Agility modifier.

These actions are separate from all other actions, and include both attack and defense actions.

Alternately, a character could be granted additional combat actions based on their combat skills at a rate of 1 extra action for every 3 levels of combat skill.

ie.: If a character has Energy Weapons (Phasers) +9 before attribute modifiers, or Unarmed Combat (Karate) +6 then he would receive 3 additional actions during a phaser-fight, and 2 in an Unarmed Combat encounter where he were using his Karate skill.

This system could become complicated and necessitate excessive record-keeping, however.

NOTE: This modification is meant to represent more closely the Action Points system from FASA's original *Star Trek Role Playing game*. Despite some of the system's failings that made a truly cinematic game hard to achieve, the Action Point system did allow for more actions by a PC in a given round than any game published before FASA's system, or most games published afterward.

While FASA's system did not give extra Action Points for combat, it did allow a character enough actions in a round for them to perform very cinematic attacks, defenses, and combat oriented "stunts" similar to what is seen on *Star Trek TV shows*, as well as in most action and martial arts films; without sacrificing the ability to do some simple task like tap a combadge, or open a tricorder.

NEW RULES

Beyond the modifications to the combat systems offered here, several other minor amendments to the rules are suggested for anyone who wants to use them to expand, or perhaps improve their game. In any case, these modifications will serve to improve the cinematic quality of a game, and make characters play closer to their TV and Movie counterparts.

TAKING 6 & TAKING 12: The CODA system rules are often compared to the d20 system, and sometimes unfavorably. But, this depends on one's opinion of d20. As a GM and Narrator, I have never had any difficulty running or playing most d20 games. Although for Fantasy roleplaying I tend to prefer Decipher's *Lord of the Rings* RPG over Wizards of the Coast's *Dungeons and Dragons*.

Having said that, many rules that originated with d20 can easily apply to the CODA system with a bit of tweaking. A good example of this is the rule of "taking 10", or "taking 20" to replace a dice-roll when resolving a Skill test.

Since the CODA system uses a mechanic based on 2d6 rather than 1d20 to resolve tests, it is necessary to alter the amount taken to reflect the range of 2-12 rather than 1-20. The simplest way to do this is by replacing Taking 10 with Taking 6, and Taking 20 with Taking 12.

If a character has plenty of time to perform a task (*ie. 6 rounds to spend performing a normal, 1-round action*) and is not being distracted she may choose to Take 6. Instead of rolling 2d6 to resolve a test, calculate the test result as if some combination totaling 6 had been rolled. Thus, if the character's Skill bonus, including Attribute and other applicable modifiers is +7 the result would be 13.

For tasks with a difficulty ranging between TN5 and TN10, taking 6 makes it almost impossible to fail, but a character cannot take 6 if she is being distracted, or threatened.

If a character has even more time available to her (*12 rounds in which to perform a normal 1-round action, for example*), and the action being attempted carries no penalty for failure then she may choose to Take 12. This time, instead of rolling 2d6, calculate the result as if a 12 had been rolled. Thus the above example of a +7 Skill bonus would work out to a total of 19.

This puts a near-impossibility of failure on tests in the TN5-TN15 range. But, taking 12 can only be performed in the absence of any threat or distraction, as with taking 6.

It goes without saying that the Double-six rule does not apply to Taking 12. Even though Taking 12 would imply a "roll" of a Double-six, no dice were actually rolled.

Courage may be spent after taking 6 or 12. But only 1 courage point may be spent to improve a result, and only for a +3 bonus, regardless of otherwise applicable Edges that could convey a +5 bonus for spending Courage on the task at hand.

Also, the normal benefits of achieving a Superior or Extraordinary success are not conveyed from taking 6 or taking 12.

A character can take 12, or take 6 to perform any skill test, attribute test, or reaction test provided they have the time required. Simply replace the Skill bonus with the Attribute or Reaction modifier when applying to the taken total of 6 or 12.

ie. One might Take 6 while trying to convince a visiting Arbazan scientist to join them, Kayaking on the holodeck. Or Take 12 to resist a Ferengi's sales pitch (presuming the Ferengi makes an extended pitch). But no one could take 6, let alone 12 in a Dodge action.

THE RECKLESS FLAW: This Flaw, as written in the *Star Trek* version of the CODA system seems to convey an inability function well in any situation that requires agility, dexterity, or physical prowess.

Several *Star Trek* characters on the TV series and in the movies behave recklessly at times. Captain Archer, Tom Paris, Kira Nerys, and even Data, or Captain Kirk.

Actual recklessness, or at least a tendency to reckless behavior, could be described as an Edge for flight control officers, and some command officers.

The best way of dealing with the Reckless flaw that better defines what it means to have a reckless personality, is to apply the Flaw as per the *Lord of the Rings* roleplaying game (*LotR Core Book – p. 157*)

The *Star Trek*-specific version of the trait would then read something like this:

RECKLESS

You often rush into problems headlong. You prefer action over careful planning.

Effect: If you spend a Courage point to improve the results of a Physical test you receive only a +2 bonus instead of the usual +3 (+4 instead of +5 if other Edges, or Professional Abilities are applied). If anyone, including a superior officer, tries to discourage you from reckless action they make any tests to do so at a -5 penalty.

While other Edges, and Flaws, in the CODA system that effect a broad range of skills based on category (Physical, Academic, or Social) very accurately represent how these traits function from a real-world perspective; the Reckless flaw does not.

The Reckless flaw, as described in the Star Trek rules (*Player's Guide*, p. 143) seems to be more representative of a clumsy, physically awkward, or bumbling character rather than one who is simply impetuous or has a "seat-of-the-pants" approach to using their Physical skills.

PSIONICS: Members of normally non-psionic species (such as humans) can acquire the Psionic edge as a self-trained Key Trait. But they may only acquire 1 psionic skill. In most cases this will be the Mind Shield skill, as even normally non-psionic humans can train their minds to be hard to read. Non-psions can also learn limited telepathy (as shown in *Encounter at Fairpoint*, when Riker speaks to Troi telepathically).

Characters who are not naturally psionic, such as a human like Commander Riker, may only learn Telepathy to +3, however. At the Narrator's discretion this telepathic ability could be further limited to communicating with the person or persons who taught the skill to the character.

Riker's ability to speak, telepathically, with Troi – he is never shown at any other point in the series to be able to communicate in this way with anyone else.

Any attempt to use the Telepathy skill to communicate with other recipients should receive a -3 to -5 penalty.

Some Psionic skills, and abilities can also be learned by non-Psions and used in tandem with the Presence attribute rather than a Psionic attribute. These Psionic skills are usually defensive in nature – levels of **Mind Shield** taught to non-Psions by Vulcan or Betazoid adepts, for example. And allowing characters to use Psionic skills without the Psionic Edge, or a Psionic attribute score should be handled by the Narrator on a case-by-case basis.

In most cases Psionic skills used without the benefits of the Psionic edge must be skills able to be learned without such innate mental powers. These skills can be modified by the Presence attribute in the absence of a Psionic attribute.

ADVANCEMENTS: The Star Trek roleplaying game has a very clear system for character advancements, described in detail in both the Player's Guide and the Narrator's Guide books. The system functions as follows:

For every 1,000 experience points a character receives, he receives 1 Advancement. This gives him 5 points to "spend" to upgrade or acquire Edges, to acquire Professional Abilities, to upgrade Attributes & Reactions, to gain Courage points, or increase skill levels and acquire Skill Specialties. That is a lot of area over which to spread 5 points. And an average character is only likely to earn between 200 – 250 experience points per adventure, or episode.

This means it will take a PC four or five adventures to gain a single advancement. Since it can take between 30 – 40 advances to build a character from scratch, who is on a par with the characters we see on Star Trek; this would mean between 120 – 200 "episodes" of roleplaying.

This could take 20 years of gaming. Thirteen years longer than most Star Trek TV series run.

After reverse-engineering the statistics given for the characters in the Narrator's Guide, I found that several of them do not have enough advances, as per the rules as written to have the Skill Levels, Edges, and Professional abilities credited to them. In at least one case one of the characters was short a total of 30 advances.

A very simple solution to this problem is to bump up the number of points made available to a PC for advancement and upgrades, with each acquired experience-advance. Instead of 5 points per advancement, a character should receive 15 points.

Using this system, Dr. McCoy would have been able to spend 270 points to acquire his wide variety of high-level skills, and specialties as well as his Edges, and Professional Abilities. Rather than the 90 his 18 advances allows as per the rules.

Since Edges cost 2 points, Professional Abilities 3 points, Professional Skills 1, non-Professional Skills 2 points, and Skill Specialties cost 1 point each (for a total of 9 points over all), 15 points should make it possible for a PC to advance more rapidly, and still, realistically.

Slow advancement is never fun in a game based on a TV series where characters debut on the scene with expert-level skills. It actually hampers the game's ability to replicate the setting it was designed for.

All modern Class/Level RPGs are based, in some part, on the d20 system, which in turn was based on the original Dungeons & Dragons game. In d20 it can take an interminably long time for a PC to advance to a respectable level of skill and ability. And in Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, a 6th-Level fighter is still fair game for a meager 1-hit-die monster after 12 – 15 years of gaming, and slowly earning experience points.

It is no fun to sit down at a gaming table, at 16 years of age, saying "I want to play Captain Kirk", only to find one's self in their late middle-years by the time their character finally "gets there". And Kirk, himself, was only 33 years old when we see him as an expert in several skills that would have taken him a good 20 years of gaming to achieve.

In a realistically run RPG, characters age too. This means a 22-year old Academy graduate will be well into her sixties by the time she has the skills, and abilities Geordi LaForge had at age 28, or B'Elanna Torres was seen using at 22.

The easiest solution to this problem is to allow more rapid advancement for PCs. Tripling the points available per advancement period makes it possible for a character with only 16 advances (240 points) to have the skills and abilities Harry Kim is seen to have and use from his very first appearance on Voyager (rather than his last), or Dr. Bashir from his first scene on Deep Space Nine.

Some gamers (indeed, most gamers) do not enjoy advancing very rapidly in an RPG. But for a truly cinematic experience in a game based on a swashbuckling Space Adventure TV show it is a necessity.

ATTRIBUTE INCREASES: PCs may increase any attribute beyond the 12+ Species Modifier maximum within reason. No Klingon, no matter how big and muscular will have more than a 16 or 17 Strength. No Ferengi could ever

top a 14 Presence.

Players should be required to explain the high attribute(s) with a backstory, or in game terms, as per the rules governing acquisition of the Psionic edge for a normally non-psionic species.

A human who is a renowned genius could have a 13 Intellect (*Stargate's* Samantha Carter would serve as a good example).

A Vulcan could have a Strength of 17 if he is a muscular bodyguard like those protecting T'Pol in the TOS episode, *Amok Time*.

But no PC may start the game with any attribute higher than 12+ Species mod without applying the appropriate number of advancement picks as well as a good in-character explanation for their unusual abilities. And all attributes above the species maximum must be approved by the Narrator on a case-by-case basis.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS: As a GM, I normally support all of the published errata for the *Star Trek* roleplaying game. I have used the erratas extensively in both character creation and in running actual games. And I have found that most changes or clarifications in the rules serve to add to the game, and make it even more enjoyable.

The one point of errata I tend to disagree with are the Attribute Modifiers given on page 9 of the *Player's Guide* errata. Specifically the assignment of a negative modifier of -1 to characters with any score of 4-5, and +/- 0 modifier only to characters with attributes in the 6-7 range.

The original range of attribute modifiers, giving a +/- 0 to a score of 4-7 better reflects the fact that most, if not all characters in an adventure game are meant to represent the "best of the best", or, at least people who can hold their own among the more adventuresome and heroic of the *Star Trek* universe.

A broader attribute average- *represented by a +/- 0 modifier to the range of 4-7* -better represents characters of this caliber. With these modifiers, which are the originals given in the *Player's Guide* (p. 81), a character with an average attribute score can perform challenging or difficult tasks with a higher degree of success.

And a broader range of what is considered average conveys a certain level of superiority to these characters who choose a lifestyle often fraught with danger, and personal risk to life and limb.

If the CODA system were used as a generic roleplaying system similar to GURPS, True20, or the Cortex system; the amended attribute modifiers given in the *Star Trek* errata could serve as a very accurate modifier range for more average, and real-world characters.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS: A minor discrepancy involving the advancement of Professional and non-Professional skills can be found in the *Player's Guide*, and this has not been addressed in the official Errata. So, I feel it should be addressed here.

On *page 51*, in the chapter discussing character Professions this statement is made:

Skills unrelated to your character's profession are more difficult

to acquire, and your character may never be as accomplished in them as in his professional skills.

This seems to insinuate that a Rogue with Observe (Spot) +6 could not have a skill of Athletics (Climbing) +8, since Athletics is not a Professional Skill for the Rogue.

Not only would this be a very unrealistic and restrictive rule, but this rule is never repeated in the *Player's Guide*, nor is it mentioned in the *Narrator's Guide*.

This statement is also made later in the *Player's Guide*, on *page 98* (in the chapter discussing Skills):

... the Star Trek RPG makes it easier for characters to acquire and develop their professional skills. Any skill not listed as a professional skill for your character's chosen vocation are called nonprofessional skills. It is more difficult for a character to acquire and upgrade nonprofessional skills.

This would imply that any character may acquire and advance any skill, but that it is easier for a character to learn skills associated with their professions. And this makes a great deal more sense.

A Rogue could still be an expert climber. It might even come in handy depending on how the Rogue functions in his chosen profession.

Having thoroughly analyzed this, I'm going to assume that this is an undocumented errata and that the original sentence from page 51 should be amended to match the sentence on page 98.

EDGES & FLAWS: Although it is not explicitly stated in the *Star Trek Player's Guide*, nor defined in the *Lord of the Rings Corebook*; when a character takes a flaw this automatically confers the right to take a new Edge, or upgrade one the character already has that is able to be upgraded.

This is the purpose of Flaws, in respect to game-mechanics, and character development. And this is reasonably clear during character creation, but it is not made clear that this effect of taking Flaws continues throughout the game.

Optionally, rather than allowing the taking of a Flaw to grant a free Edge or Edge-upgrade during game play as it works in character creation, a Narrator might allow Flaws to increase Advancement Picks at a rate equal to the acquisition or upgrade of an Edge.

ie.: If a character takes a new Flaw she gains 2 free bonus advancement picks to apply to her next advancement. Upgrading a Flaw adds an additional 2 picks. So that a character taking one new Flaw and upgrading another would cause their next advancement to be worth 9 picks, rather than the usual 5.

PROFESSIONAL ABILITIES: In the *Star Trek* roleplaying game, as well as the *Lord of the Rings* system published by Decipher; Professional Abilities (called *Order Abilities* in *LOTR*) are designed to enhance a character's skills within their chosen profession. Whether she is a Merchant, Starfleet Officer, or a Middle-Earthen Wizard.

A Professional Ability is meant to give a character a bit of an advantage above a character trying to perform the same

skill, without that professional edge. Any Starfleet Officer can fly a shuttle. But only a skilled Flight Controller can pilot a shuttle through an ion storm.

This is what the Professional Ability is designed to portray.

Several Professional Abilities, as written in the rules, actually function to limit a character's skills, however. Meant to convey a type of concentrated training, in one skill, or specialty; the resultant -4 penalty imposed on all other skills or specialties within that skill, or skill-group often serves to hamper the character into incompetence.

For example, as an Operations Officer, Miles O'Brien would, likely, have the *Duty Officer* Professional Ability. He would gain 2 levels of skill for each advancement pick, rather than 1. But, he would suffer a -4 penalty for any Systems Operations skill outside of his specialty (*Transporter*).

This might make it easier for O'Brien to achieve a Systems Operations +8 skill-rating. But it would also penalize him with a -4 to all *Command, Deflector, Flight Control, Sensors, Tactical, Security, Communications, Environmental Control, Hologystems, Medical, Science, or Mission Ops* skill-tests.

A -4 penalty is enough to drop a character with a skill-rating of 12 down to 8, while performing his duty. Harry Kim's Systems Operations skill would function as if he has a level of 2 for most specialties.

This is not what we see on 173 episodes of *Deep Space 9*, or 168 episodes of *Voyager*. It is impossible to imagine O'Brien telling Kira; "*I can beam a fly off a Gul's nose from orbit. But you put your life at risk having me fly you to Bajor.*"

This phrase (or any wording of it) should be removed from the CODA system in the *Star Trek*, or *Lord of the Rings* roleplaying games - ... **but [he] suffers a -4 penalty to his [appropriate] skill when making tests outside of his specialty.**

UNARMED COMBAT SKILL: In the *Player's Guide* (page 126) Unarmed Combat is treated as an individual skill with different fighting styles gained as specialties. According to these rules a character might have *Unarmed Combat (Boxing)* +3, or *Unarmed Combat (Judo, Tai Chi Chuan)* +8.

To add further detail and realism to the CODA skill and combat systems, Unarmed Combat can be treated as a skill-group. And separate styles as separate skills with maneuvers applicable to those styles as specialties of each style.

With Unarmed Combat as a skill-group and styles as separate skills a character might then have *Boxing (Uppercut)* +3, *Judo (Arm Lock)* +4, or *Tai Chi Chuan (Sticking, Pressure Points)* +8. Individual maneuvers function as specialties, conveying the usual +2 to Unarmed Combat tests.

For detailed information on different combat styles, as well as extensive lists of maneuvers, several sources may be consulted including the *Starfleet Operations Manual* (published by Decipher for the *Star Trek* roleplaying game), several of Last Unicorn's supplements to their own *Star Trek* game (including the *Vulcan*, and *Andorian* sourcebooks, as well as the *Player's Guide*) which detail various combat-arts, and even the internet, including descriptions of different fighting styles from around the world given on Wikipedia.

An excellent source for information on martial arts, and unarmed combat styles is ***GURPS Martial Arts*** (1st and 2nd editions) by C.J. Carella, published by Steve Jackson Games. The sample specialties given above were derived from information in that volume. Carella's material published by *Eden Studios* (***Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Witchcraft***, etc.) also feature good listings of unarmed combat maneuvers such as *Back Kick* and *Sweep-Kick* that can be applied to most unarmed combat styles.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: To create more realistic and well-rounded characters with richer backgrounds, a character may be allowed to take two Personal Development packages at character creation; stacking the abilities and bonuses gained from both.

The one important caveat to allowing this is that these packages do not clash. A character could have both Military "Brat", and Colony/Frontier Upbringing because of having a military parent, or parents stationed at a colony-base or on the frontier.

But, a character could not have both Starfleet "Brat" and Criminal Upbringing.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Likewise, a character may begin with two Professional Development packages, to indicate they received some training or had some minor experience in a profession prior to actively beginning their primary career.

Again skills, Edges, and other abilities acquired this way may stack. And a character with two Professional Development packages must take one of the two professions as their starting profession.

As with Personal Development packages, the Professional packages must not clash. Virtually any Professional package pertaining to the Rogue profession would clash with the training of a Starfleet Officer. While Rogue and Merchant packages could be seen as largely compatible.

Soldier and Starship Officer packages might be redundant (unless you're creating a character in the infantry of a starfaring culture – such as the Klingon IDF or the Starfleet Marine Corps).

Scientist and Mystic packages may be seen as clashing depending on the culture in which the character was raised. A Bajoran Mystic, or especially a Vulcan Mystic will find it easier to embrace science than a practitioner of most Earth religions.

CLOAKING DEVICES: The rules regarding detection of a cloaked vessel given in both the *Narrator's Guide* (p. 138) and *Starships* (p. 13) state that a Cloaking Device's rating is equal to the TN required to detect the ship.

This works just fine until you have an officer with Systems Operations (Sensors) +7 working aboard a ship with Class-5 Sensors at a reasonably close range trying to detect a ship using a Cloaking Device with a rating of 20. A roll of 6 or higher will detect the cloaked ship.

There are several ways to work around this situation.

One would be to add the cloaked ship's Size to the Cloak

rating (considering a larger ship will be able to produce enough power to generate a more potent cloak).

Another would be to apply a +1 to the Cloak rating for every 5 years the cloaked ship is newer than the ship trying to detect it.

Or, for even more powerful cloaking devices, the Narrator could simply add ½ of the cloaked ship's Cloak rating onto the cloak as a bonus (giving a ship with a Cloak Rating of 20, the equivalent of a 30, and so forth), or even double the rating of the Cloaking device.

This would serve to simulate televised Star Trek, where most cloaked vessels are virtually impossible to detect.

INNOVATIVE EDGE: A very useful Edge on the CODA Star Trek system is *Innovative* (page 135 of the *Player's Guide*). With enough levels of this Edge, a player can purchase all, or most of the *Professional Abilities* of any basic Profession in the Game. It must be emphasized the only the Professional Abilities associated with a basic Profession can be acquired in this manner. Abilities keyed to any Elite Profession cannot be gained through the Innovative Edge. And this includes the various Elite Professions associated with Starfleet Officers.

However, the Abilities listed under the basic Profession, Starship Officer (page 88, of the *PG*), as well as those associated with basic Starfleet Officers (pages 34 – 35, of the *SOM*) may be bought using *Innovative*. Some tougher GMs may balk at this, however, on page 34 of the *SOM*, the rules state the, if the Narrator allows this, then these Professional Abilities may be used by non-Starfleet Starship Officers. This makes these Abilities tantamount to Abilities associated with the basic Starship Officer Profession, and, thus, able to be picked up using the Innovative Edge.

SCOUNDREL'S FORTUNE: A Tier-1 Professional Ability of the *Rogue* Profession (page 60, of the *Player's Guide*). As written, this Ability “maps” to any of the professional skills of the Rogue. And if the character only has Rogue as her Profession, this makes perfect sense. But, if she has more than one basic Profession, this Ability should be able to be mapped to any of that character's professional skills, in any of her Professions.

If this is allowed, then by extenuation, taking Scoundrel's Fortune with the *Innovative* Edge also makes sense.

KEY TRAITS

Introduced into the rules lexicon of the Decipher *Star Trek* Roleplaying game in the *Starfleet Operations Manual*, key traits add a new dimension to character skills, and how they function. They also add a new complication to the record-keeping process of the game.

Key Traits are the CODA system's equivalent to *Cascade Abilities*, added to *Last Unicorn's ICON* system in the *ST:TNG Player's Guide*.

It should be pointed out that key traits are not a part of the *Lord of the Rings* roleplaying game – the other published system to use the CODA rules. Similarly, despite being included in the TNG *Player's Guide*, and several supplements, *Last Unicorn* did not include *Cascade Abilities*, or rules for using them in later iterations of their *ICON* core rules (the *Deep Space Nine* and *Original Series* books).

Key Traits tend to function as very detailed skill specialties. They are usually “keyed” to certain skills – so far, only combat skills in the published CODA material – but are purchased using advancement picks as if they were Edges (*costing 2 points*). They have prerequisites, like Edges and some skills, and often apply bonuses to Attack Tests, and/or damage.

Key Traits also require a separate, detailed listing on a character's record sheet there is no space provided for on most available sheets (including those featured in the *Starfleet Operations Manual*). And acquiring and keeping track of Key Traits and their in-game function can lead to some headaches as far as the record-keeping process is concerned.

Key Traits were introduced to add more detail to combat, and also to provide for a conversion of many of the cascade abilities from *ICON*, into the CODA system. While the *SOM* only covered combat-based traits, it is likely others, converted from *ICON* cascade abilities (such as *Psionic* abilities) would have been included in future supplements to the *Star Trek* roleplaying game had Decipher been able to continue expanding the line.

While Key Traits can add a great deal of detail to a combat-session, and to how a character uses their combat skills they can also complicate not only the upkeep of one's character sheet, but also the actual resolution of a combat, slowing down the intended cinematic pace of *Star Trek* roleplaying.

And, in some cases, albeit rarely, attempting to invoke the effects of a Key Trait can actually cause an attack, or defensive maneuver to fail or be less effective. These rules simply do not use Key Traits, as intended.

Instead Key Traits are treated as special Skill Specialties. They cost the requisite 2 points as described in the *SOM*, and carry the same prerequisites.

ie.: a character wishing to acquire the Key Trait, Jab, as a specialty of Boxing must have the Boxing skill at level 3 or higher to do so.

They can be upgraded. But they serve only to provide the +2 Specialty Bonus for using the applicable skill. However, Key Traits can be upgraded as many times as indicated by each Trait's description in the *SOM*, adding another +2 bonus to any tests made with a skill featuring that Trait as a specialty.

ie.: a character with the Key Trait, Covering Fire (p. 23 of the SOM) as a specialty of their Energy Weapon skill, upgraded 3 times would gain a bonus of +6 to their Energy Weapon skill tests when attempting to lay down covering fire.

This simplifies how Key Traits function in the game, eliminates any possible negative effects of trying to use a Key Trait, and still maintains some of the special nature of Key Traits by making them the only skill specialties that can be individually upgraded for a further bonus to skill tests.

Narrators wishing to use the effects of Key Traits described in each Trait-description in the *SOM* may then apply the effects, as described, once a character has made a successful skill test wherein the Key Trait was featured as an effective specialty. But this should be done without requiring further dice-rolls on the part of the player/character. A

successful “attack” has already been achieved. To force a further test to see if the effects of the trait, or specialty was actually successful goes against the natural playing style of the CODA system and can often turn a successful attack into a failed “Key Trait test”.

It is because of this additional possibility of failure, or a decreased success that Key Traits are reduced to “glorified skill specialties” by these rules.

Basic Key Traits apply to certain skills as follows:

KEY TRAIT	APPLICABLE SKILL
Covering Fire	Ranged (Energy & Projectile)
Double Fire	Ranged (Energy & Projectile)
Get the Drop	Ranged (All) / Armed (All)
Snap Shot	Ranged (All)

Some Narrators prefer to drop the Double Fire key trait from the game-system all together as it can serve to turn a skilled character into an over-powered killing machine. This is not as likely if Double Fire is applied only as a specialty of a weapon-skill, when a character is trying to “double-fire”.

UNARMED COMBAT: The Key Traits listed in the SOM (pp. 28-31) as keyed to various unarmed combat styles can be converted to maneuver specialties as described in *Unarmed Combat Skills*, above.

FENCING: A skill, now, in the Armed Combat skill-group. The Key Traits keyed to Fencing (pp. 20-21, of the SOM) should be considered specialties of the Fencing skill. Fencing does carry a prerequisite of a specialty with at least one weapon that can be used to fence as a Simple Weapons armed combat skill.

ANBO-JYUTSU: As with Fencing, Anbo-jyutsu should be considered a separate Armed Combat skill, and the Key Traits described on page 19 of the SOM allowed as specialties of this skill.

CHAKA HRAMDAL: The most widely known Andorian armed combat style. Chaka Hramdal should be considered the Andorian equivalent of the Klingon and Vulcan weapon skills within the Armed Combat skill group. And the Key Traits detailed on page 20 of the SOM are available as specialties of this skill. So would be skills using most Andorian weapons.

NEW EDGES

Acting Rank: This edge functions similar to the Promotion Edge (see p.136 of the *Player's Guide*). Acting Ranks are usually bestowed on a character in lieu of a promotion, or to facilitate the character taking a command, or duty-station their rank would not normally qualify them for (a Lieutenant taking command of a Nebula-class ship, for example). Acting Ranks cost the same as levels of the Promotion Edge – but Acting Rank begins with Ensign at level 1.

The Rank of Acting Captain is achieved at level 6 instead of level 5. A character functioning at an Acting Rank is treated as if she has the full effects of the actual rank. But, a good backstory must be supplied by the player and approved by the Narrator before any levels of Acting Rank can be purchased for a character. (Why is the Lieutenant taking command of the Nebula-class ship, or the Acting Ensign taking a bridge position

as Chief Flight Controller ?).

Bricolage: The skill of constructing items from inferior or unusual components, or making repairs using similar materials. Any character with the Bricolage Edge gains a +4 to all Construct, and Repair skills. Also, they suffer no penalties for working with inferior or primitive equipment.

Clever: The character is unusually capable of reasoning things out, even if she does not have any skill, or expertise in dealing with the problem at hand. +2 to all Perception attribute tests.

Provisional Rank: Like *Acting Rank* (above) this edge functions like the *Promotion* edge detailed on page 136 of the *Star Trek Player's Guide*. Provisional Rank is most often bestowed on civilians who work so closely with Starfleet, the Klingon IDF, or the Romulan Imperial Fleet they are often given assignment aboard vessels in those fleets. Only the Federation, Romulans, and Klingons give temporary, provisional commissions to civilians in such a capacity.

Like Acting Rank, Provisional Rank costs the same number of advancement or development points per level as the Promotion edge. And the first level of Provisional Rank is the rank of Ensign. Unlike Acting Rank, there are only 5 levels of Provisional Rank. There are no Provisional Captains.

A character with Provisional Rank 2 (Lieutenant, jg.) or higher who is acting as a senior officer, or department head is treated as if they actually held one rank-grade higher than their Provisional rank. Thus a Provisional Lieutenant jg (level 2), or a Provisional Lt. Commander (level 5) would be treated as if they held the ranks of full Lieutenant and full Commander with respect to the in-game effects of their provisional commission.

Lucky: The character seems to be exceptionally favored by good fortune. Once per play session you may re-roll any Skill, or Attribute test, or any one Reaction roll, and chose the better of the two rolls.

Or (Narrator's choice as to which version of “Lucky” best fits her series)

Twice per game session, when you spend courage to enhance any dice roll, you receive a +5 bonus instead of the usual +3.

At the discretion of the Narrator, this edge could be considered a prerequisite for Starfleet Captains in the Enterprise or Original Series eras.

Pattern Recognition: The character is adept at recognizing patterns within data, solving mysteries and puzzles, deducing facts from incomplete data, spotting camouflage, and similar feats. When you spend 1 Courage to improve a Perception attribute test, or a roll on any Perception-based skill, you receive a +5 bonus instead of the usual +3.

Prerequisite: Perception 6+

Resistant: The character has a tolerance for a particular substance, or substances. While this can be fairly innocuous (Romulan ale, or Saurian brandy, for example; allowing a character to drink others under the table), it could refer to a natural resistance to toxins. +2 bonus to all Stamina reaction rolls made to resist the effects of the designated substance. This edge may be acquired multiple times, creating resistances to several substances.

Skill Focus (Attentive): +1 to Investigate and Observe skills.

This edge was actually mentioned several times in the Player's Guide, in the sections on character development and development packages. However, it does not appear in the Skill Focus chart on page 138. The values given here were an attempt to assume what was intended by the Skill Focus: Attentive edge referenced in the Player's Guide. These values were later confirmed, in the Player's Guide Errata (p. 12).

Skill Focus (Crack Shot): +1 to Energy and Projectile Weapon use.

Skill Focus (Keen Smell): +2 to all Observe (Smell) tests.

Skill Focus: (PsiSense): Your natural Psionic talents provide you with a unique ability to "tune in" to your surroundings. You receive a +1 to all Perception based skills, as well as a +1 to Quickness tests to determine Initiative. **Prerequisites:** *Psionic Edge, Psionic attribute of 6+, 3+ in either Empathy or Telepathy skills.*

Toughness: The character has a remarkable resilience that seems to surface at just the right moment ! When spending Courage to enhance a Stamina reaction, or Vitality attribute-test you receive a +5 bonus instead of the usual +3.

Prerequisite: *Vitality 6+*

Wily: The character is very clever, but often uses their cleverness in a way that could be seen as underhanded or deceitful. Rogues will most often choose this edge. +1 to Influence (Charm) or Influence (Seduce). +1 to Sleight of Hand.

SKILL FOCI

One of the most important aspects of the CODA system's Edges are the Skill Focuses, or "Skill Foci" to borrow the term from Last Unicorn's Starfleet Academy material.

What follows is a table collecting all the Skill Foci, from the Player's Guide, "forgotten" Focuses left out of the Player's Guide (most notably, Skill Focus: Attentive), all the Skill Focus edges added to the system as of this writing, and several extras listed only in the table below.

In keeping with the spirit of the CODA system, I have tried to create an expanded version of *Table 7.3 on page 138 of the Player's Guide.*

NAME	BONUS	SKILLS
3-D Thinking	+2 each	Space Science (Astrogation) & Systems Operations (Flight Control)
Attentive	+1 each	Investigate & Observe
Attractive	+1 / +2	Influence / Influence (Seduce)
Charismatic	+2 each	Influence & Administration
Compassionate	+1 each	First Aid & Medicine
Craftsman	+1 each	Construct & Repair
Diplomatic	+4	Negotiate (Mediate)
Eloquent	+2 each	Negotiate (Entreat) & Persuade (Oratory)
Furtive	+2 each	Stealth (Hide) & Conceal (Cache)
Inquisitive	+2 each	Inquire (Fraternize) & Investigate (Inspect)
Keen Hearing	+4	Observe (Listen)

Keen Mind	+2 each	Investigate (Inspect) & Investigate (Deduce)
Keen Sight	+2 each	Observe (Spot) & Investigate (Inspect)
Keen Smell	+2	Observe (Smell)
Keen Taste	+2	Observe (Taste)
Keen Touch	+2	Observe (Touch)
Linguist	+1	All Language skill-tests
Mathematician	+2	Physical Science (Mathematics)
Miserly	+2 each	Appraise & Negotiate (Bargain)
Naturalist	+2 each	Survival (any 2 specialties)
Natural Leader	+2 each	Tactics (Unit) & Tactics (Ground)
Persuasive	+2 each	Inquire (Interrogate) & Influence (Fast Talk)
Seductive	+2 each	Influence (Charm) & Influence (Seduce)
Scientific Genius	+1	All tests in Science skill-group
Swashbuckler	+2 each	Armed Combat & Gymnastics
Talented	+4	Entertain (any 1 specialty)

NEW FLAWS

Addiction: *An expansion of the Addiction flaw, listed in the Player's Guide (p. 139).* A character can become addicted to several other things besides substances, such as a drug, or a type of alcohol. Other types of addiction could include gambling, using the holodeck, reading technical journals, or playing Parrises Squares. In most cases, it will be up to the Narrator to determine the exact effects of an addiction.

But an addiction such as gambling should effect either the character's Presence or Intellect. In some cases Agility could be effected, if the character is too distracted by their addiction to perform normal tasks.

The rate at which an addicted character must indulge their addiction must, also be determined by the Narrator. A compulsive gambler, for example, must indulge his urge to gamble "whenever he gets the chance", rather than a mandatory once or twice a day.

Argumentative: You simply love to argue – this is a very common trait among Klingons, Capellans, Markalians, and Tellarites – even if you agree with someone you're likely to start an argument just for the fun of playing "devil's advocate".

When the opportunity arises, the character will start, or engage in an argument. And he must make a Willpower reaction test vs the other person's Presence score (+ or – Renown modifier as appropriate) to avoid arguing.

Devotion: *An expansion of the Devotion flaw, listed in the Player's Guide (p. 140).* The original CODA Star Trek system only allows for devotion to a person. A child, spouse, lover, or relative. It could also mean a devotion to a group, a planet, or even a ship. One could argue that Scotty's devotion to the Enterprise is akin to that of a family-member, and the same could be said of Kira's devotion to Bajor, or

Quark to his business.

The same effects, and conditions for an upgrade would easily be maintained.

Intolerant: *An expansion of the Intolerant flaw, listed in the Player's Guide (p. 142).* Similar to the Devotion flaw, the original CODA rules only allow for intolerance for a group of people. And this certainly does apply. However, it is also possible for a character to be intolerant of an idea, an emotion, a religious belief, or certain aspects of a culture without viewing the entire culture with disdain.

In Federation society, such “flaws” as Intolerant (Bullies), Intolerant (Prejudice), or Intolerant (Misogyny) would easily be wide-spread. Most Klingons would have Intolerant (Cowardice). Some Klingons or Andorians could have Intolerant (Pacifism). Some Vulcans would have Intolerant (Violence).

The effects of the flaw would be as written, with levels of the flaw representing the level of disdain the character has for the person, or persons being interacted with.

Irreligious: An Irreligious person sees no need to practice religion, or have any knowledge of it. *Irreligious* characters suffer a -4 penalty to all Religion skills, as well as a -2 penalty to all Social tests performed in a religious setting (such as meeting with a diplomat who is also a Religious leader, or performing First Contact procedures with a strongly spiritual people).

Ungainly: Even with a high Agility, the character is awkward, or accident-prone when performing physical skills. And as a result, they receive a -1 penalty to all Physical tests. *This flaw replaces the effects of the Reckless flaw as described in the Star Trek Player's Guide (p. 143).*

MEDICAL REMEDIES

Covered as Advantages and Disadvantages in the ICON system; physical and medical disabilities are not given much attention in the CODA system. This is because the CODA system does not provide statistical modifiers for things that can be taken for granted in a roleplaying situation.

For example, if a character is blind, and they do not have access to a device like a VISOR to correct this problem, then they are blind. They simply cannot see. Applying a -5 or -10 modifier to *Observe (Spot)* skills as a result of blindness is moot because a fluke of the dice (such as rolling a double-six, followed by 3 or 4 subsequent sixes) could still result in the blind character succeeding at the roll, and thus “seeing” when he cannot. There is no need for a Blind, or Mute flaw, for these reasons.

Medical Remedies are another matter entirely. Geordi LaForge makes a good example for the use of Medical Remedies. Without his VISOR (or, later, his Occular Implants), LaForge is blind. But, with these enhancements he is capable of seeing better (albeit quite differently) than most sighted persons.

If a player decides to play a character who is blind, deaf, mute, or somehow physically impaired, and the character enters the game with his impairment, then the player should be allowed an additional free Edge-pick during character development. The impairment can be listed on the character sheet as a Flaw, but the in-game effects do not normally work out to dice-rolls, or modifiers.

If a character becomes impaired during the course of the game (blinded by weapons-fire, deafened by an explosion, etc.); then he should receive a free Edge-pick at that time.

Medical Remedies for impairments can take on as many, varied forms as the impairments themselves. And their effects are largely left up to the players and Narrator to determine.

But, if a character who begins the game impaired wishes to also begin the game with a Medical Remedy, this should count as his free Edge-pick. Likewise, if a character becomes impaired and wishes to have it remedied medically, this counts as the free Edge-pick at that stage.

Exactly how a Medical Remedy functions is up to the Narrator. In the Narrator's Guide there is no mention of LaForge's blindness – however, the effects of his VISOR are accounted for by giving LaForge the *Night Vision*, and *Skill Focus (Keen Sight)* Edges. Other medical remedies can function similarly. A device used by a deaf person to simulate hearing could provide a *Skill Focus (Keen Hearing)* edge. A prosthetic arm might provide a +2 to Strength attribute tests, and Strength-based skill-tests. A pair of prosthetic legs might provide the same effects as the *Speed* Edge.

Some Medical Remedies would not, necessarily provide any significant bonus. Not all prosthesis will be adjusted to provide superior speed or strength to their user. And a device designed to synthesize a voice for a mute character would only provide them with the ability to speak. Not to speak in 10 languages (unless the device came with a built-in Universal Translator).

In some cases, Medical Remedies will be more of the equipment variety, and should not count as the character's free Edge-pick. But, the device must be approved by the Narrator.

NEW SPECIES TRAITS

Additional species-based traits for aliens, not covered in any of the published sources for gaming statistics for the *Star Trek Roleplaying Game*. (the **Players Guide** (pp. 30-49), **Narrators Guide** (pp. 190-195), the **Starfleet Operations Manual** (pp. 45-59), or **Aliens**).

These traits are not generic traits that can be fit into any species profile, as with the traits and abilities featured between *pages 211 and 221* on the **Narrator's Guide**. These traits are specific to races already documented in the CODA system material.

They should be considered as *Optional* species-traits, by Narrators.

Betazoids:

The Betazoid Phase; When a Betazoid female reaches an age between 60-75 she goes into phase. Her sex drive quadruples. Treat as Addiction (Sex), level 1. This flaw may be upgraded to level 2 for additional edge picks.

NOTE: *This assumes the Betazoid Phase is the equivalent of human menopause. This has been hinted at, even by some canonical sources. However, the term “fully sexual” has also been used to define the effects of the Betazoid phase, indicating a*

Betazoid female is not considered fully mature until she acquires a sex drive four times as potent as that of a human woman.

Betazoid women have also been known to conceive more easily after entering the Phase.

If this is taken into account it may be that the Betazoid Phase begins earlier than 60 years of age. The Phase may actually begin as early as age 40 in some individuals.

This is a matter of choice for the Narrator, as to how the Phase effects Betazoids in her series.

In any case, Betazoid women become more sexually active during the Phase, almost displaying an addiction to sex itself. But, if Narrators choose to allow the Phase to begin at a younger age, it may be that in these cases, the Phase also enhances a Betazoid woman's ability to become pregnant.

Betazoid Agility

“(Betazoids) are also very flexible, and they can control many body functions. Their body functions (heart, respiratory, circulatory, excretory, endocrine) are very similar to humans, with the exception of their skeletal system being close to that of a cat.”
While not officially canonical this “fanon” observation has been posted on several Star Trek fansites between 1995 and the present; including sites giving encyclopedic essays on Betazoids and sites associated with on-line roleplaying games.

While no site associated with table-top, or pen-&-paper roleplaying gives such a reference; on-line or e-mail roleplaying sites, or SIMs tend to be more accurate on such details as species information due to a lack of rules designed to limit a character physically.

In how this information effects table-top roleplaying, and the Decipher *Star Trek* game in particular; it is, of course, up to the Narrator as to whether or not to consider this cat-like quality to be an attribute of Betazoids in their game.

If so, then all Betazoids should receive a +2 species bonus to their Agility attribute to represent this more flexible skeletal structure.

Betelgeuseans:

As a GM, I have played with one player who created a Betelgeusean character in the early 90s (using the *FASA* rules). This character was later converted to the ICON system, using the material on pages 45 – 48 of the ICON *Player's Guide*. The character converted smoothly. When it became time to convert the same character into the CODA system, however, we encountered a major difficulty.

The ICON system introduced the concept of the Betelgeusean Archetype. Each Betelgeusean will follow the example of one of several Betelgeusean heroes from their history; and they will do so in a quasi-religious fashion. This works well, the way the ICON system does it. Following an Archetype gains a character several bonus skills, as well as bonuses to basic attributes.

In the CODA version, however, following an Archetype becomes a hindrance. The Species Trait, *Rigid* (page 33, of *Aliens*) functions to limit the character so severely that most

Betelgeuseans will seem both incompetent, and belligerent.

Following an Archetype would result in a Betelgeusean Starfleet Officer spending most of her time in the brig for *Dereliction of Duty*.

Again, taking a page from the *Lord of the Rings* version of the CODA system; the Rigid trait can be rewritten to reflect a Betelgeusean's devotion to his Archetype without making the character dysfunctional, or ultimately unplayable.

Rigid: Betelgeuseans conform to their assigned mythical roles, and rarely deviate from them. An *Altaa* won't sneak, a *Slichez* won't bargain, and a *Doban* won't fix warp drives. For a Betelgeusean to act against the ways of her Archetype, she must spend a point of **Courage**; even if she is following an order from a superior officer.

Centaurans:

Psionic; While all Centaurans have the species-trait, *Empathetic* (p. 47, of the *SOM*); which hints at an underlying psionic potential, some Centaurans do develop powerful psionic abilities. The Psionic edge can be considered as an optional species trait for Centaurans.

If the Psionic edge is considered a species-trait of Centaurans, it should be allowed only in rare circumstances. Psionic Centaurans will normally be part of the Mystic, or Diplomat professions. Psionic Centaurans should be required to take at least one level of the Pacifist flaw (see p. 142 of the *Player's Guide*).

Deltans:

The information given in the *Starfleet Operations Manual* (pp. 48-49), and *Aliens* (pp. 54-58) should be enough to play a Deltan character very accurately, and enjoyably.

If more information is needed websites such as *Memory Alpha*, or the material published by *Last Unicorn*, for their *Star Trek* line of games should fill any gaps nicely.

Orions:

Originally published in 1988, the *FASA* books dealing with the Orion species are a fan-favorite and several attempts to convert the statistics into other systems, including CODA, have been made.

However, this involves a great deal of work. Furthermore, no canon source acknowledges the existence of Ruddy or Grey Orions. Nor do the CODA or ICON rule-systems. This can result in a lot of work for nothing if a gaming group wants to play a modern system, intact, using the Orions portrayed on both *Star Trek: The Original Series*, and *Enterprise*.

With an abundance of material on the “Green Orions” mentioned in the *FASA* books given in *Aliens* (pp. 118-121), and the *Narrator's Guide* (pp. 192-193); it actually makes better sense for a dedicated Narrator to create a new species representative of the Ruddy and Grey versions.

Or two distinctive species, of one prefers.

Encountering the new species could ever be a great Episode for the crew's adventures.

In our own series, the Ruddy and Grey Orions are represented by the *Zuri*, with the *Zuri Prime* filling the role of the Ruddy Orions in the FASA material, and the *Zuri Gral* taking on the role of the Orion Greys.

This is one way of working in the Ruddies and Greys, while avoiding the Green Orion "Animal Women", as per the FASA system; in favor of the Orion Pheromonal Treatments mentioned on p. 120 of *Aliens*.

The CODA version is more in line with canon *Trek*, more scientifically sound, and far less sexist.

Tellarites:

Several alien species, were first listed in the *Player's Guide* (pp. 29-49), *Narrator's Guide* (pp. 190-195), and the *Starfleet Operations Manual* (pp. 45-59). And each time a species from any on these three manuals are later listed in the *Aliens* book, the final article is longer, with more information, but basically the same game-specific statistics. There are a few additions to the basic Species Traits, but nothing you have to erase your character sheet over.

Not so with the Tellarites.

The section on Tellarites in *Aliens* (p. 142) is vastly different from the article on the same species in the *SOM* (p. 54). Almost as if they are meant to be two different species.

The easy answer to this is, there are two different races in the Tellarites species. The more well-known Tellarite race from the original *Star Trek* series, and the "new look" of the Tellarites people showcased on *Star Trek: Enterprise*.

It is the opinion of our gaming group, that the original Tellarites are profiled in *Aliens*, while the "new" Tellarites are profiled in the *SOM*.

This was derived from the Species Traits for each race. The *Aliens* version of Tellarites feature the Species Traits, *Skill Focus (Exhaustive)*, *Pig-Headed*, and *Stubborn*. All of which fit Ambassador Gav (*Journey to Babel*) perfectly.

The *SOM* version of Tellarites feature the Traits, *Skill Focus (Craftsman)*, *Engineering Training*, *Eye-Hand Coordination*, and *Infrared Vision*. This better fits the smaller, less porcine Tellarites from *Enterprise*.

The *Enterprise*-Tellarites actually seem to be more technologically aware than their 23rd century counterparts. With more visible eyes, and a less hoof-like appearance to their hands, these Tellarites could have better eye-hand coordination. And these Tellarites seem to be more similar to the Dwarves in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* films (both in look, and culture).

In the classic roleplaying game, *Dungeons & Dragons*, heavily inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien's work, Dwarves actually had infrared vision.

Trills:

Unjoined: Most Trill desire to be joined, and train for this for a

great deal of their early lives. And they must be able to convince the Trill Initiate Institute they are worthy of hosting a symbiont. This often requires a higher degree of success in their endeavors prior to being chosen as a host.

To represent an Unjoined Trill's greater efforts made to achieve a level of success that might impress the Initiate Institute, or get the Trill noticed as a hosting candidate, all Unjoined Trill receive an additional Courage Point when they begin the game.

NEW STARSHIP TRAITS

Dual Warp Core

The ship is designed with two warp cores, feeding power into the same power grid. The vessel still only has one warp engine, and can only achieve the speeds of the engines specified for the vessel, with a singular core. However, the ship is twice as capable of maintaining power.

Effect: The ship has double the damage capacity for its warp engines, resulting in two damage tracks for the Warp drive. The warp drive must be reduced to its lowest level on the damage track *twice* before the system goes off line. Also, no penalties are incurred by the propulsion system until the same level of damage is inflicted on the system *twice*.

Carrier: The vessel has been designed to function as a carrier, for either multiple shuttle-craft, a large compliment of runabouts, or even a squadron or two of Starfighters.

Effect: A Carrier will have x2 the space of a non-carrier of equivalent size, but this extra space must be used to accommodate the ship's carrier status (extra shuttlebays, space for fighters, etc.). *ie. a Size-10 carrier would have 330 space, but with 165 points allocated to picks for things such as shuttlebays, fighterbays, etc., and still 165 points to build the basic ship (weapons, life support, sensors, etc.)*. This trait can be chosen multiple times to build a high-capacity carrier, but each additional pick only serves to add x1 to the space. *ie. a Size-10 ship (which begins with 165 points of space) doubles its space (330) with one pick of "Carrier", and on a second pick would have 495 points of space, 660 on three picks, etc.*

359 Refit: All auxiliary vessels built after Wolf 359 have been designed to handle higher loads in their EPS systems.

Effect: This enables them to support Phaser arrays normally available to vessels one size higher, at no additional space cost.

A Note on Starship Construction

While the CODA system has one of the easiest to use and easiest to learn systems for constructing original spacecraft of any roleplaying game (excepting, possibly, *West End Games' d6 Star Wars RPG*) it is still possible to become mired in a myriad of mathematical calculations when building a ship from scratch.

To make starship construction easier, there is a functional shortcut –

Simply find a ship already statted out, either in *Starships*, or the *Narrator's Guide*, that fits the general size, era, and basic configurations of the ship you are trying to design. Make the necessary adjustments to the ship's systems, enhancing some, and pulling back

on others to make sure the allotted spaces work out for the final desired result. Then, finalize the design with Starship Traits, and Maneuver Modifiers individual to that design.

The result should be a ship that is very, very close to the accurate number of spaces used as per the CODA system rules.

All starships should be allowed to be “off” by a few spaces – using one or two spaces the ship doesn’t have, or having more spaces left over than the standard “stock” design for the ship-type.

As long as a ship does not go over its allowed spaces by more than 5-7 units the result should be considered functional.

This reflects the fact that even ships designed for the major Navies of the world do not always conform to the basic design schematics depending on when and where the vessel is constructed. And some systems are “squeezed in” or “pushed out” to make sure everything fits.

The same can hold true of interstellar, starfaring “navies”. Especially when ships are built quickly, or turned out in large quantities.

NEW PROFESSIONAL ABILITIES

Differential Diagnosis: The character is able to make medical diagnoses with a high degree of accuracy, even with very little actual data to go on. This is done by making a *Differential Diagnosis*; by observing a patient, noting the symptoms they do and do not have, and assembling a profile of their condition that best fits a known illness. When making a Medicine test to diagnose a sickness or disease, the character may roll 3 dice, and discard the lowest. A Differential Diagnosis may only be performed once, after which the character must make a successful Investigate (Research) test with a +1 affinity for Medicine before trying a Differential Diagnosis again.

Availability:

Starship Medical Officer (Tier 3, Prerequisites: *Perception 6+*, and *Diagnosis*)

NEW STARSHIP MANEUVERS

Fly-by Transport Rescue (Tier-2 Helm)

Prerequisites: Lock On (T), Match Speed (H), must be at Short range. The ship must also drop shields to facilitate a transport.

Duration: Lasts while range is maintained, as well as Match Speed maneuver (if the transport-target is on a moving vessel)

TN: 15

Effect: The “Lock On” required maneuver is used to simulate a bridge officer getting a transporter lock as the flight-controller moves the ship into very close range for transport. If successful, not only does the ship manage to fly in close enough to the target to effect transport, but the person, or persons being targeted for transport are safely beamed to the maneuvering ship.

This maneuver is used several times in Star Trek films, and on television. One notable example is during the climax of *Star Trek: Insurrection*, when Picard is beamed off of the So’na Collector in the nick of time !

Strafing Run (Tier-3 Helm)

Prerequisites: Lock On (T), and Match Speed (H). Must be at Short or Medium range

Duration: Instant

TN: 20

Effect: Very similar to Fast Attack, but instead of allowing the Multiweapon maneuver for free, a successful Strafing Run allows up to three free Multifire maneuvers if the Tactical officer has the individual actions available to perform these maneuvers. These maneuvers do not count against the ship’s action allowance. All Multifire attacks are made against the same target, with the attack TN equal to the target’s protection +5 for each Multifire attack test. A failed test does not halt the chain of attacks. Roll damage for each attack separately. A successful Strafing Run maneuver also provides a +3 to the attacking ship’s protection for the next immediate round as the ship flies past its target rapidly.

Target Specific System(s) (Tier-2 Tactical)

The Commanding officer during a combat orders a specific system, or systems on an opposing vessel to be targeted. The Tactical officer then locks his targeting sensors onto that system on the target-vessel.

Prerequisites: Point-blank, or Close range. Lock On (T).

PROFESSIONS

While it is not stated in any strenuous terms within the rules themselves, it is assumed that most characters in the Star Trek roleplaying game will begin with one basic profession and then advance into one or more elite professions.

This is not to say characters cannot have more than one basic profession, as long as the rules for advancing in more than one profession are maintained (see p. 155 of the *Player’s Guide*).

Acquiring new basic professions should follow the same process as the one used for the acquisition of an elite profession (again, p. 155 of the *PG*). The main difference here being that a new basic profession will carry no prerequisites.

This issue was dealt with in the Player’s Guide Errata document (p. 18). I felt the need to touch on it here, as it has been an issue in our gaming group, in much the same way as the restoration of Courage Points. Despite being officially sanctioned in at least one source, some players seem unable to grasp the concept as an acceptable or canonical rule. Largely because it appears to make the game “too easy” on the characters.

The same rules should apply regarding a character with two or more basic professions that apply to potentially clashing basic and elite professions.

ie.: A character who is at once a Starfleet Officer, and a Rogue would represent something of a conflict of interest between the two professions. The same could be said of a Soldier, and a Diplomat. Or, in some cases a Scientist and a Mystic (depending on the philosophical dogmas of the character’s school of Mysticism).

It is possible, of course, for a character to resign from one profession (stop advancing in that particular profession), and take up another. In this case, a Soldier could become a Diplomat. Or an officer resign his commission in Starfleet to become an itinerant gambler.

Duration: As long as *Lock On* holds.

TN: Target's protection, plus a certain amount for each system targeted (see table below).

Effect: All damage scored in subsequent hits on the target are applied directly to the system-damage track of the targeted system, rather than the ship's Structure total, until the Lock On is broken, or the attacking ship stops targeting that specific system, or systems.

SYSTEM	TN MODIFIER
Sesnsors	+3
Operations	+10
Life Support	+10
Propulsion	+8
Weapons	+5
Shields	+5

Restrictions Targeting more than one system at a time incurs a cumulative modification to the TN (ie., targeting both Weapons & Shields results in a +10 to the TN).

Use of this maneuver only serves to lock the weapons onto the specific target. To score actual damage on the targeted system a successful Fire maneuver must be executed after acquiring the target.

This maneuver may only be performed using beam-weapons. It cannot be performed using a missile weapon.

All attempts to execute this maneuver are performed using the *Systems Operations (Tactical)* or *Systems Operations (Beam Weapons)* skill. A +1 Affinity bonus for *Systems Operations (Sensors)* skill may be applied.

Note: This maneuver is meant to replace the Target System Tactical maneuver described on page 119 of the Narrator's Guide. This new maneuver is designed to allow for a greater degree of accuracy on the part of the Tactical officer. It also provides for more damage to be done to a ship's systems when they are individually targeted.

This reflects the way targeting a system functions in Star Trek. When Picard, or Janeway order their tactical officers to target a specific system on an opposing ship Worf, or Tuvok very seldom miss. And when they score a hit, the other ship's weapons, shields, or whatever are usually immediately taken off line.

The maneuver, as described in the Narrator's Guide, can make it nearly impossible for the Tactical officer to score a hit on the targeted system. A skill of Systems Operation (Tactical) +10 is usually required to make the shot (without spending up to 3 courage points). The original maneuver, also, does not provide for enough damage to the targeted system to bring that system off line in one or two shots as portrayed on Star Trek.

Worf can usually bring an enemy ship's shields down in a targeted shot or two. Using the Target System maneuver as it stands, a Galaxy class starship would have difficulty bringing down the shielding on even a small freighter in under 6 or 7 shots.

A Note on Command Maneuvers

Command maneuvers are unique in three ways. All Command maneuvers are Tier-3 maneuvers (at least those listed in the Narrator's Guide, or Starships). All Command maneuvers have TNs 5-10 points

higher than most Helm or Tactical maneuvers. All Command maneuvers are performed using the Commanding officer's Tactical skill which may not be as developed as the Helmsman's Systems Operations (Flight Control) skill, or the Tactical officer's Systems Operations (Tactical) skills.

This can make some Command maneuvers harder for an experienced Captain to perform, than a less experienced crewman, performing a Helm or Tactical maneuver.

While it is possible to carry out a ship-to-ship battle without maneuvers, using Tactical TNs to score hits, and Helm TNs (with Narrator-assigned difficulty) for evasive maneuvers; the maneuvers included with the CODA system often add both realism and cinematic excitement to an encounter.

Command maneuvers simply need a little boost, to allow for a PC-Captain to command with the skill attributed to Captains such as Picard & Janeway, on the Star Trek television series. In the *Narrator's Guide* (pp. 242 & 244), these commanders are given Tactical skills of +8 & +5 respectively. Neither Captain could perform a *Full Attack* maneuver, without rolling unusually high, or spending several courage points.

Since Command maneuvers normally consist of a commander ordering another officer – usually a Helmsman, or Tactical officer – to perform a task; to allow for a slightly higher degree of success in Command maneuvers, the Narrator can apply an Affinity bonus to the Command officer's Tactics test based on the skill of the Helm and/or Tactical officer on duty during the combat.

The chart below gives examples of Affinity bonuses that can be applied to Command maneuvers, to reflect the skills of the Helm and Tactical officers involved. It should be noted that in applying these bonuses, Command maneuvers may be interpreted as now being run as Combined Tests.

MANEUVER	APPLICABLE AFFINITY BONUS
Cochrane Deceleration	Helm (+2)
Evasive Attack	Helm (+2), Tactical (+1)
Fast Attack	Helm (+1), Tactical (+2)
Full Attack	Tactical (+2)
Immelmann Turn	Helm (+2)
Pentis Maneuver	Helm (+1), Tactical (+1)
Picard Maneuver	Helm (+2)
Riker Maneuver	Tactical (+1), Engineer (+2)*
Slingshot Effect	Helm (+2), Science (+3)*

While most Affinities in the Star Trek Roleplaying game provide only a flat +1 bonus, bonuses here can go to +2 or +3. This is to reflect the fact that the skills from which the Affinity is drawn are often a more useful skill in carrying out

the Maneuver than the Captain's Tactics skills (the *Slingshot Effect*, for example, is much more reliant on the calculations made by a Science Officer).

* - Before Affinities may be applied from Engineering or Science skills; the Engineer or Science Officer must first make a successful skill test vs the maneuver's TN. For the *Riker Maneuver*, the skill is Systems Operations (Engineering) to vent the ramscoops at the appropriate time, in synergy with the Command officer's order to execute the maneuver. For the *Slingshot Effect*, the Science Officer must perform a Physical Sciences (Temporal Science) extended test with a TN of 50 prior to executing the Slingshot Effect maneuver.

Failure of either test, and the Engineer, or Science Officer contribute no Affinity bonus to the Command test.

NEW DEVELOPMENT PACKAGES

Merchant

Entertainer: You make your living as a singer, dancer, or holoivid actor.

Skills: Entertain (choose) +4, Impersonate (Stage Acting) +3, Craft +1, Gaming +1, Sleight of Hand +1, Gymnastics +2, Influence (Charm, Fast-talk, or Seduce) +4

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Blunt Attack, Competitive, Confident, Cultural Flexibility, Dodge, Fame, Likeable, Skill Focus (Eloquent or Seductive)

Pick 1 Flaw: Addiction, Arrogant, Coward, Dark Secret, Familiar Face, Reckless

Journalist / Reporter: You may work for the Federation News Service, or freelance as a writer, holophotographer, documentary holoographer, or "whistle blower".

Skills: Investigate (Research) +4, Computer Use (Retrieve) +3, Inquire (Interview) +2, Observe +1, System Operations +1

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Competitive, Curious, Eidetic Memory, Meticulous

Pick 1 Flaw: Arrogant, Infamy, Rival, Enemy

Rogue

Gambler: You are an expert at games of chance, and likely make your living at the Dabo tables.

Skills: Any one Armed Combat skill +1, Gaming (choose) +3, Conceal (Weapon) +2, Observe (Spot) +2, any one Ranged Combat skill +2, Stealth (choose) +2, Streetwise +2

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Alert, Ambidextrous, Competitive, Exceptional Concentration, Friendly, Likeable, Lucky, Shrewd

Prostitute: You make your living by "selling your charms".

Maybe you work in a brothel at a tolerant frontier space station. Maybe you ply your trade on your own, taking your chances with the local constabulary.

Pick 1 Skill: Influence (Charm) +2, Influence (Seduction) +2, Knowledge/Trivia (Erotic Arts) +2

Pick 3 Skills: Knowledge/Trivia (Massage) +1, Entertain (Dance) +1, any one other Entertain skill +1, Business +1, any one Language skill +1, any one Unarmed Combat skill +1

Pick 1 Edge: Contacts, Ally, Skill Focus (Seductive), Friendly, Likeable, Meticulous

Scientist

Starfleet Liaison: Although a civilian, you have worked closely with Starfleet (or the appropriate military group for your species and background such as the Klingon IDF) throughout your career and become something of a "de facto officer" and are treated as such by your comrades and co-workers in military circles.

Edge: Provisional Rank – see above (level 1 / Ensign acquired free. More levels must be purchased normally)

Skills: Computer Use +3, First Aid +2, any one Knowledge skill +2, any one Science skill +4, System Operations (Sensors) +3, System Operations (Mission Ops) +3, Energy Weapons +1, Unarmed Combat +2

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Alert, Eidetic Memory, Meticulous, Exceptional Concentration, Provisional Rank (one level)

Pick 1 Flaw: Arrogant, Argumentative – see above, Pacifist, Rival

Teacher: Having a strong background in one or more fields of study, you have chosen to pass on what you learned; either to children by teaching in a civilian school, or by teaching a course or two at the Academy.

Skills: Computer Use +2, any Craft skill +1, Enterprise; Administration (School) +1, First Aid +1, Influence +2, Inquire +2, Knowledge (any 2, +2, or any 3, +1), Persuade +1, any 1 Science skill +1

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Ally, Coordinator, Cultural Flexibility, Friendly, Meticulous, Skill Focus (Eloquent), Thinker

Pick 1 Flaw: Low Energy Level, Pacifist, Proud

Soldier

Bodyguard: You specialize in protecting the wealthy and powerful. While not a full-blown Mercenary, as a Bodyguard you travel with your elite employer, acting as a companion, guardian, adviser, or even a human(oid) shield if necessary.

Skills: any 1 Armed Combat skill +2, Demolitions +1, Enterprise; Streetwise (any specialty) +1, First Aid +1, Influence (Intimidate) +2, Persuade +1, any 1 Ranged Combat skill +1, Stealth +1, Survival +1, any 1 Unarmed Combat skill +2

Pick 5: +1 to any professional skill

Pick 1 Edge: Alert, Blunt Attack, Courageous, Dodge, Everyman, Fit, High Pain Threshold, Martial Artist, Quick Shot, Resolute, Shrewd, Thick Skull

Pick 1 Flaw: Bloodlust, Dark Secret, Devotion (*Employer*), Reckless

NEW ELITE PROFESSION

ARCHAEOLOGIST: Archaeologists are Explorers, with a very specific goal as to what they search for and where they explore. It is the aim of the Archaeologist to find history, in a very physical form. Ancient artifacts that shed some light on the cultures, customs, and histories of lost peoples and civilizations. Archaeologists search for evidence of ancient space-travelers, intergalactic colonists, lost cultures, and other elements of living history in the form of ruins, forgotten items of art, and even long-discarded weapons and other items used in warfare.

Missions: Archaeologists often travel with Starfleet, or other space-faring groups; working from a base of operations aboard a ship that can carry them from dig to dig. Ferengi archaeologists are more treasure hunters than historians, content on selling any objects they find and keeping the profits for themselves. Klingon archaeologists are mostly interested in ancient weapons and forgotten ways of making war. Vulcan archaeologists are most fascinated by catching a glimpse into a “dead” civilization, long since vanished from the Alpha Quadrant. Human archaeologists seem most fascinated by finding relics of lost civilizations and comparing their cultures to those of humanity.

Background: Archeology has existed as an established field of science for centuries, and normally precedes the development of other, more advanced sciences. Most known civilizations have a form of Archaeology as a base-science in their culture. Human, Vulcan, Romulan, Klingon, Cardassian, Bajoran, and even Ferengi have produced well-respected Archaeologists. And all Archaeologists seem to share a common bond of curiosity, and fascination with the ancient universe; whether it be for the advancement of their own knowledge, scientific discovery, or even personal gain.

Role: Archaeologists can play an important part in any crew, or team of merchants and adventurers traveling the spacelanes of the four quadrants. In the Alpha Quadrant, archaeologists often work with Starfleet. And there is a marked difference between an Archaeologist working alongside Starfleet officers, and a Starfleet Science Officer who specializes in Archaeology. The latter will be skilled in a wide variety of scientific applications as per his Starfleet training, while a civilian Archaeologist will have specialized training, in a broad field of knowledge concerning history, ancient civilizations, and even languages. An Archaeologist can add valuable skills and abilities to any crew, by working with Explorers, Envoys, and Starship Officers on exploration missions, first-contact assignments, and other missions of discovery.

Prerequisites: Curious Edge, Intellect 8+, Vitality 6+, Perception 7+, Knowledge (History) skill with at least 2 Specialties, Social Science (Archaeology) 4+, one additional Science skill 3+, Survival 3+, Investigate 2+

Professional Skills: Investigate, Knowledge (History),

Knowledge (Culture), Observe, Science (Social Science), Survival, Languages

Professional Abilities: The following abilities are characteristic of Archaeologists. A character automatically gains one Tier-1 professional ability upon entering the Archaeologist profession. Additional abilities can be chosen through advancement (see *Player's Guide*, p. 152), provided the character meets the ability prerequisites.

Tier-1 Professional Abilities

Antiquary: Archaeologists are experts in analyzing, cataloging, and estimating the value of artifacts. Either their market-value, or their historical value. When making an Appraise (Antiquities) skill test, the Archaeologist may add either his Social Science (Archaeology) or History skill modifier (whichever is more appropriate to the situation).

Excavator: Archaeologists work long and hard to find artifacts and other evidence of ancient cultures and life-forms. When working on an archaeological dig, Archaeologists gain a +5 bonus to Stamina reaction tests made to resist Fatigue.

Tier-2 Professional Abilities

Linguist: To understand the ancient writings often found on or with various antiquities, Archaeologists study a wide variety of languages. And they can often read, translate, or even speak bits and pieces of a myriad of vocabularies and dialects. When attempting to translate an unfamiliar language, an Archaeologist can apply his History, Culture, or Social Science (Archaeology) skill-modifier to any Language, Intellect, or Perception test. Affinities can also apply, and modifiers can be stacked at the discretion of the Narrator.
Prerequisite: at least 2 Language skills, 4+ each.

Dig Up Facts: Archaeologists not only, literally unearth valuable artifacts, but they are also excellent researchers. Even when investigating things outside of their usual field of study. When an Archaeologist conducts an extended Investigate (Research) test he may apply his History, or Culture skill-modifier where applicable. Also when an Archaeologist spends a Courage point on an Investigate (Research) test he gains a +5 bonus instead of the usual +3. If an Archaeologist scores a Superior success on a Research test, he gains knowledge of one additional fact regarding the subject of his research. On an Extraordinary success, he gains knowledge of 2 additional facts. Thus, if the Narrator has determined that an Archaeologist must uncover 4 separate facts about an item he is researching to unravel the mystery of an Episode, with an Extraordinary success the Archaeologist has already solved half the mystery.
Prerequisites: Investigate (Research) 4+, History and/or Culture Knowledge skills, 2+ each.

Tier-3 Professional Ability

Expedition Grant: By relying on his name and reputation, an Archaeologist can obtain grants, funding, and other official sanctioning to allow him to pursue important digs. To obtain such a grant the Archaeologist must make a successful Administration test (TN10, +5 if attempting to obtain rights to dig in any restricted area, +1 per 1,000 credits needed to finance the dig). With a successful grant, an Archaeologist can mount the desired dig; but some governments, or financing institutions will require the Archaeologist turn over all findings to them after the expedition. Failure to do so enables representatives of the government(s) involved, or

the financiers to make a recognition (with a +5 TN bonus) to identify the Archaeologist as a thief of antiquities. If so identified, the Archaeologist's Administration TN doubles for all future attempts to obtain a grant from that particular institution or government. **Prerequisites:** Renown 11+, or Doctorate or Breakthrough (*Scientist* professional abilities); or Discovery (*Explorer* elite profession ability).

CHARACTERS WITH NO PROFESSION

Although most player-characters in the Star Trek Roleplaying game will begin the game with at least one basic Profession – and Starship Officers will usually begin with an additional Elite Profession representing their duties aboard a ship; it is, or should be possible for a character to begin with no Profession at all.

This is especially true of civilians who are thrown into adventure due to circumstances beyond their control. Or children, living on or in the main base of operations of the series cast, who become heavily involved in the events of the series, and either become, or even start out as player-characters.

Creating characters with no Profession can be accomplished easily by following the guidelines on *page 79* of the **Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game** core-book, by Decipher, and also powered by the CODA gaming system.

Simply create a character and make all the appropriate species, and personal development picks for skills, edges, etc. Then, decide which Profession you intend your character to get into over the course of the series. Let your Narrator know, so she can make a note of this Profession and create plot-devices and story-elements that should lead the character to his or her chosen Profession.

A good example of this in Star Trek is, of course, Wesley Crusher, becoming a Starfleet cadet, and later an officer as a result of his experiences as a teenager aboard the Enterprise. Over the course of the series, as the character has the opportunity to learn, the Narrator should dole out the skills, Edges, etc., available through his chosen Professional Development package until he has acquired them all.

This should create a functional character who is ready to step into his chosen Profession when the time comes, but who is also able to start the game with no Profession. And the acquisition of skills, and Edges can occur at any rate the Narrator sees fit. If, after the events of one episode, the character would naturally be ready to assume his Profession, so be it.

If, on the other hand, the character must experience several episodes, or even “seasons” of adventure, as Wesley Crusher did, before actually becoming part of a Profession, then a slower progression should be allowed.

In either case, the Profession-less character can still gain experience and use advancements to purchase new skills, upgrade attributes, etc. The only thing a character with no Profession cannot do with an advancement that other characters are able to do is purchase Professional Abilities.

ARTILECTS

Optional rules for running Android, Hologram, and other Artificial Intellect characters as Player Characters in the Star Trek

Roleplaying Game.

Based on the *Artilects* supplement written by Scott Rhymer & Daniel Potter. To use these additional rules with the CODA system for Star Trek roleplaying, the original *Artilects* material is required. And it is suggested by this writer that *Artilects* is an essential part of the Star Trek Roleplaying Game. No one wanting the thrill of adventure in the universe of Star Trek should be without this excellent volume.

ADDITIONAL ANDROID RULES:

Androids may add their Strength modifier to any Unarmed attack test made to throw, or toss an adversary.

An Android also doubles their Strength modifier when making non-combat Strength tests, but does not do so for skill modifiers, or when calculating Health levels. An Android's Vitality modifier is *always* doubled, except in attempts, by the Android, to resist a power overload into its system.

Android characters receive an extra level of Healthy, for a total of 7 wound-levels, rather than the usual 6. An Android will also have a type of “built-in body-armor” resulting from their normally sturdy, durable construction. An Android's body-construction can absorb damage equal to 3+ the Android's Strength & Vitality modifiers. In this case the Android's Vitality modifier is *not* doubled.

This “armor” deflects all types of damage, with the exception of an electrical surge, or other energy surge passing directly into or through the Android's body. In the case of this type of damage, and Android must make a successful Stamina reaction test (TN15) or suffer a systems overload, and be shut down (equivalent effect of Heavy Stun).

Optional: Androids spending courage in a non-combative Strength attribute test may, at the Narrator's discretion, receive a +5 bonus for each courage point spent, rather than the usual +3. This reflects an Android, or at least *Lieutenant Commander Data's* seemingly infallible physical strength.

ADDITIONAL HOLOGRAM RULES:

Holograms are invulnerable to unarmed attacks, as it is tantamount to punching a low-intensity forcefield when one takes a swing at a hologram. But, even a knife can do some damage by penetrating the forcefield encasing the holographic projection, and wearing down its power supply by forcing it to increase its own intensity to compensate for the disruption of the holomatrix's cohesion.

The forcefield encasing the holographic projection can deflect a certain amount of damage, similar to the physical structure of an Android. However, this forcefield will fluctuate in it's integrity, creating a random level of protection equal to 1d6+ the Hologram's Vitality modifier.

A Hologram may increase the intensity of it's forcefield with a successful Stamina test (TN15) modified by an affinity from Systems Operations (Holographics) skill. Upon success, the Hologram's forcefield integrity is doubled (2d6+ Vitality mod) for a duration equal to the Hologram's Vitality modifier in rounds.

A Hologram will have two additional Wound-levels – one of *Healthy*, and the second, an additional level of *Dazed*, for a total of 8 Wound-levels.

A surge of energy of any type capable of dissipating, or disrupting a holographic matrix does the equivalent damage of an energy weapon on setting-5. A Hologram that is “stunned” is deactivated, and must be reinitialized unless the Hologram is programmed with autonomous controls and is capable of activating and deactivating itself.

When fighting a Hologram projected from a Mobile Emitter, an opponent may disable the emitter, if they can find it. *Observe (Spot) TN 15* to find, *Unarmed Combat attack (-5)* to disable. A successful hit deactivates the Hologram. The Hologram is not damaged, but the mobile emitter may be damaged in the attempt.

Optional: Both Androids and Holograms regain courage points at the end of the round in which they are used if they possess the *Emotionless* flaw. This reflects the fact that an emotionless being cannot become frightened, or lose their courage when facing a challenge, or a dangerous situation. But the character must possess the full Emotionless flaw, and not simply be *Emotionally Immature*.

THE PRIME DIRECTIVE

In the Star Trek lexicon, the *Prime Directive*, also known as *General Order 1*, is well-known, and supersedes all other laws, directives, or general orders with the exception of the *Omega Directive*.

“No starship may interfere with the normal development of any alien life or society.”

It is the opinion of this player-group, that the *Star Trek* roleplaying game, using the **CODA** systems could benefit from a Prime Directive of it's own.

“Fortunately, the only inviolable rule in a roleplaying game is this: Do whatever makes the game the most fun for you and your group. If that means changing the rules, change them ! They're not written in stone. You bought the game and can do with it what you like, just like you customize a computer that doesn't do everything you want it to.”

From the *Narrator's Guide*, page 69, column 2, paragraph 3.

This is actually written in the official rules to the *Star Trek* roleplaying game published by *Decipher, inc.* in 2002.

And yet, some players seem to derive pleasure from ruining the fun of the game for others.

In a decade of playing the game I've seen players bullied by other players for creating characters that were “min-maxed” (despite the fact that this is what professional writers from J.R.R Tolkien to Naren Shankar do to make their protagonists the larger-than-life heroes we all come to love).

I've seen both male and female characters ridiculed as “Mary Sue”. And yet aren't James T. Kirk, Buffy Summers, James Bond, Batman, and MacGyver all “Mary Sue” to some degree ?

I've seen female players bullied away from the gaming table in general, and teenaged players not allowed to play at all, and I've even seen players gang up a player over mathematical calculations.

Some players enjoy being a “rules lawyer”; someone who's greatest joy is to force other players to stick to the rules, as written, no matter what.

Granted, the *CODA* system, and especially the *Star Trek* incarnation of that system leaves it's self wide open for rules-lawyering.

Roleplaying, like any other game or pastime, is supposed to be fun. Telling another player her favorite character is “min-maxed”, is just wrong. It's petty meanness. And it destroys everyone's fun at the game-table, or on line.

In my day-to-day life away from *The Table*, I'm a Middle School teacher. So, I speak from experience when I say that my 26 sixth and seventh-graders treat each other with more respect than I've seen some adult players treat their gaming compatriots.

If this volume of Rules Mods helps anyone enjoy their game, we are happy to have helped. But, I do not expect even one person to use these Mods, unless they really want to.

No pressure. No stress.

Play the game the way you and your group want to play it. Not my way, or anyone else's way but the way that feel best to you.

Forget “min-max”, and “Mary Sue”, and “over-rated” characters. Enjoy your game, and let everyone else do the same.

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