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Hyperspace Messenger



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Hyperspace Messenger

The Hyperspace Messenger™ is a series of very short supplements for the White Star™ role-playing game (copyright James Spahn and Barrel Rider Games). The goal is to create quality usable content which can be completely explored within the scope of only six-to-twelve pages. Although this is only the first supplement in the series, we at Dwd Studios hope to release additional supplements in the years to come.

Although this supplement is designed to integrate to your White Star™ game, its concepts are fairly universal and you can, with very little effort, modify it for use in other games as well.

COVER ART
INTERIOR ART
AUTHOR

SKORTCHED URF' STUDIOS*
WAYNE PETERS
BILL LOGAN

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Not all commerce in the galaxy uses space ships. Space ships are expensive to build, require a lot of expertise to operate and maintain, and really make no sense within the scope of planetary transportation.

On any given world, you'll find vehicles. A lot of them. They ferry people and cargo everywhere. In many cases, adventurers will bring their owned vehicles with them. When hired to explore a planet or rescue survivors, it would be silly to fly out to a planet and expect that you'll land and walk around everywhere – especially when people's lives are on the line.

This supplement adds a list of vehicle classifications which might be encountered in the galaxy. Individual models will vary greatly, of course, but this might serve as a framework for Referees to design planetary vehicles of their own.

PILOTING/DRIVING CHECKS

Anyone can drive or pilot a vehicle without having to make any rolls. Under duress or while performing complex stunts or maneuvers, however, players might be forced to make rolls. Referees should decide ahead of time how to manage these rolls (ability checks, saving throws, or skill checks using previous Hyperspace Messenger skill system, etc.).

POWER PLANTS

This supplement mentions "Power Plants" in vehicle descriptions. A power plant is like a huge power cell for vehicles and robots. They are interchangeable. A new one costs 100 credits and is available everywhere. They recharge themselves but won't last forever. Large vehicles require more than one to function.

VEHICLE STATISTICS

On abstract level, vehicles have the following statistics. These are basic in nature and pertinent to game play only, and do not attempt to comprehensively define every technical aspect of a vehicle. In the next section, you'll find some tactical rules for using vehicles in a fight or chase.

PASSENGERS – Vehicles have two passenger ratings. First is the minimum crew needed to operate the vehicle. The second number shown in parenthesis lists how many additional passengers the vehicle will accommodate.

CARGO – Most vehicles carry cargo. The galactic unit of cargo is called the Cargo Unit, and is used by all vehicles and space ships throughout the galaxy. Space ships can carry a number of cargo units equal to their listed maximum hit point total (unless "Transport" is in its model name, in which case it's designed to carry twice that number). Vehicles carry fewer cargo units, as listed in their descriptions. Players might be hired to transport as the basis for an adventure.

MERCHANTS AND TRADERS

Assume 1 of following types of cargo is available for purchase at any location. Roll for the price where you buy it, and again at any site you go to see if you want to sell it there. You might turn a hefty profit. At star ports, roll the 1d20 three times for the type of goods for sale and multiply CU Available for each by 10!

Aristocrats are able to haggle. When buying (or selling), they may subtract (or add) their level from the Cost per CU in order to get a better deal.

1D20	GOODS	CU AVAILABLE	COST PER CU
1-3	Food	3d6	1d4 x10
4-5	Textiles/Furs	1d6	1d6 x10
6	Radioactives/Waste	2d6	1d4 x10
7-8	Livestock	2d10	1d4 x10
9	Liquor/Wines	1d4	1d10 x10
10	Luxuries	1d6	1d12 x10
11	Medicines/Pharmaceuticals	1d4	1d10 x10
12-13	Computer/Electronic Parts	2d6	1d12 x10
14-15	Robot/Machine Parts	1d10	1d12 x10
16	Weapon Components	1d4	1d10 x10
17-18	Minerals (processed or raw)	2d10	1d8 x10
19	Precious Metals	1d6	1d20 x10
20	Gem-stones	1d4	1d100 x10

ARMOR CLASS – Vehicles have an armor class, just like players. Since most of the vehicles listed in this book are made for civilians, the armor class isn't all that high. Additionally, vehicles are generally large and sluggish compared to a dodging character. To further militarize your vehicle, add plating using the Extras rules found at the end of this supplement.

HIT POINTS – Vehicles have hit points and will sustain damage as they crash into things or get hit by weapons. When a vehicle reaches 0 (or fewer) hit points, it's destroyed and unrepairable (it's "totaled"). Otherwise, vehicles can be repaired like any other type of technology using tool kits and time.

HANDLING – All vehicles have a handling rating. This is a modifier which applies to all piloting or driving skill checks associated with that vehicle. It's just a fact that some vehicles are easier to handle than others.

SPEED – Speed is measured in miles per hour. A vehicle has a listed top speed. Most vehicle pilots are not comfortable going this speed, and players are assumed (unless otherwise stating their speed) to be moving at half the listed speed most of the time (often referred to as "cruise speed").

COST – A vehicle costs the listed amount if fresh-from-the-factory. A used vehicle might cost less, while one designed with luxury in mind might cost more. Referees can assume a vehicle can be rented for one tenth its listed cost per game week, but a deposit must be given equal to half the vehicle's worth (player will get it back when he returns it, minus any damages).

TACTICAL VEHICLE MOVEMENT

This system assumes use of a tactical vehicle-scale map of some sort using a square grid. Where no grid is available, a square can be assumed to be 1 inch using a ruler. This tactical system can be used until Barrel Rider games comes out with something official, or if you like it use it even after such a release.

MOVE – Since the White Star game rules define a combat round as a minute of time, a square would have to represent 880 feet if we were to use real units of measure. That would make most weapons useless. Rather than compress combat round time, we will just use some abstraction. Each square represents an abstract unit of measure at vehicle scale. At such a map scale, characters move only one square per round (two if sprinting). Vehicles can move up to 1/10th their listed top speed. Pilots decide at the beginning of the round (when rolling initiative) what speed they'll go for that round.

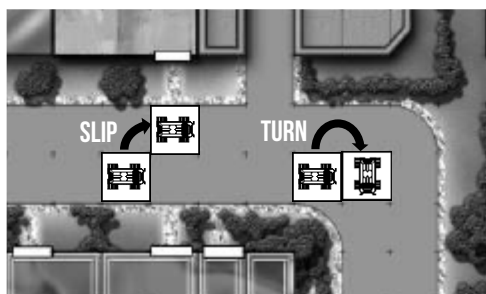
For instance, a ground cycle can move 120 mph as a top speed. When rolling for initiative, its driver must declare if he's going to move between 1 or 12 squares that round.

RANGE – Even though it is not technically accurate, assume each square represents 10 ft of distance for determining things like weapon range.

TURN – A vehicle can make one 90 degree turn for free during his move. Since a square is a large amount of space, he's technically turning far more gradually than this, but in the end his turn becomes a full 90 degrees. For each subsequent turn he must make, he must attempt a piloting/driving check to succeed, or risk losing control.

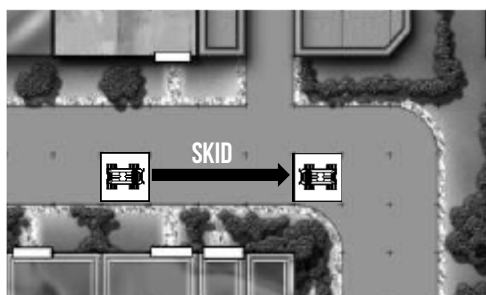
MANEUVERS – In addition to turning 90 degrees on a map, players in control of vehicles might want to do some additional tricks in their vehicles:

Slip – This is like changing lanes. The vehicle moves forward in the direction it's heading but slips one square to the left or right. This is much easier than turning 90 degrees twice and is only counted as one 90 degree turn.



Pivot – Any vehicle capable of hovering, walking, or on tractor treads can pivot up to 360 degrees while remaining in one spot. This cannot be done while moving, only while stationary. This doesn't require any checks; it's a basic maneuverability option available to hover and treaded vehicles.

Skid Turn – a ground vehicle (not hover or flying) can use its traction to skid itself into a reverse-facing change, a full 180 degree turn (also called a "boot leg turn"). It can only be done if travelling at 8 squares-per-round or slower.



The vehicle moves forward only half its designated speed (up to 4 squares) but ends the turn facing the opposite direction.

Stunts – Any time a vehicle’s pilot tries something unusual the Referee can call for a driving or piloting skill check. Examples include flying sideways through an alley, jumping a vehicle over a construction area, or driving through a barricade. Failure can result in loss of control

Collide – When a vehicle hits another vehicle or a building, use the following guidelines to resolve how much damage is sustained.

Swipe	1d6 to both the vehicle and its target.
Bump	2d6 to both the vehicle and its target.
Rear-Collision	3d6 to both the vehicle and its target.
Collision	4d6 to both the vehicle and its target.
Head-on Collision	6d6 to both the vehicle and its target.

This table is an abstraction. If you wanted to get physics involved you’d have to take relative speeds and material strength and mass into the equation, something which should be beyond the scope of fast & simple game play. In contrast to this statement, however, should be Referee fiat; use common sense. If a vehicle hits a building at 10mph, it’s a bump. If he hits it at 120 mph, it’s a collision.

Assume that larger vehicles won’t cause more damage, they can just take more damage. Personal weapons such as firearms, grenades, and laser pistols cause damage to vehicles normally. Further, treat any attempt by a vehicle to run over a character as either a Swipe, Bump, or Collision using the damage guidelines above. Characters should get a Saving Throw to dive out of the way, of course, just as a pilot/driver of a vehicle should get a skill check (with handling modifier) to avoid or reduce the effects of a Swipe, Bump, or Collision.

CONTROL

Any time your driver/pilot fails to control his vehicle, you’ll lose control. This might be a minor thing or might result in catastrophic consequences. Generally, the slower you’re going the easier it is to mitigate failure.

DAMAGE – Each time a vehicle takes 20 or more points of damage in one hit, the pilot/driver must make a piloting/driving skill check to avoid loss of control. If a vehicle loses control, roll on the following table and add the vehicle’s speed (in squares per round) at the time of the control loss.

LOSS OF CONTROL – Whenever a vehicle loses control, consult the following table. Add the vehicle’s speed during the round control is lost. Going fast is dangerous! Then consult the following page for an understanding of the effect rolled.

1D20+ SPEED	EFFECT
...10	Brake
11-15	Slipping
16-20	Skidding
21-25	Spinning
26-30	Rolling
31...	Rolling & Burning

Control and the Pilot Class

If the operator of the out-of-control vehicle is a Pilot character class, you may subtract his level from the 1d20 roll. This can allow the pilot to risk going much faster than someone not of his class!

- Brake** – Move one space more and stop movement for this turn.
- Slipping** – Perform an unintended slip maneuver in a direction appropriate to the direction of travel when the loss of control occurred.
- Skidding** – The vehicle is skidding out of control. Turn the vehicle 90 degrees to the left or right (Referee decides based on maneuver attempted) and then continue moving in a straight line (sideways) until the end of its movement that turn. If it strikes into another vehicle or building, treat as a collision. It ends its turn stopped.
- Spinning** – As skid, above, but vehicle will turn 90 degrees each square it passes through rather than just once. When done, its speed is reduced by half for the upcoming game round (the pilot may not control the speed next round) and the process continues at that stated speed until the vehicle stops.
- Rolling** – The vehicle skids sideways and starts rolling. It will roll a number of squares equal to half its movement speed (in squares per round). Each square it moves into, the vehicle and all occupants will sustain 1d6 damage (half that if they are wearing seat belts). Count how many squares the vehicle rolls through in order to determine what side it lands on (upside down, left side, right side, or on its wheels). The vehicle ends its roll stopped.
- Rolling & Burning** – Works like the Roll result above, but the passengers suffer an additional 1d6 damage every turn, even if they’re in seat belts! If they can succeed in a Saving Throw they can escape the vehicle while it rolls out of control. When the vehicle ends its roll, it will explode in 1d4 rounds and cause 4d6 damage to all within a 10 ft radius.



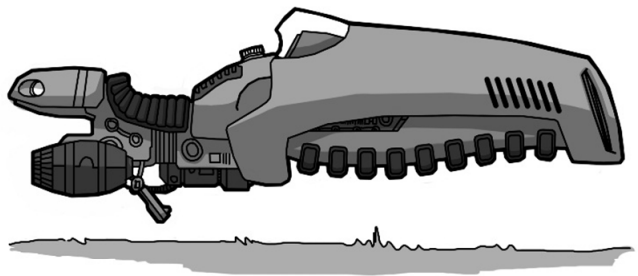
GROUND CYCLE

Passengers:	1 (+1)
Cargo:	0 cu
Armor Class:	8 [11]
Hit Points:	15
Handling:	+2
Speed:	120 mph
Cost:	250 credits
Extras:	--

A 2-wheeled ground vehicle which is highly maneuverable and able to handle a wide variety of terrain. Although small and lacking cargo capacity, it is very inexpensive and popular. Its power plant lasts a dozen years or more.

HOVER CYCLE

Passengers:	1 (+1)
Cargo:	0 cu
Armor Class:	7 [12]
Hit Points:	15
Handling:	+1
Speed:	150 mph
Cost:	350 credits
Extras:	--



Hover cycles use repulsor technology or hover fans to ride on a cushion of air over nearly any terrain (including calm water). They are popular everywhere and are superior in most ways to ground cycles, though their power plant needs replaced every year or so.



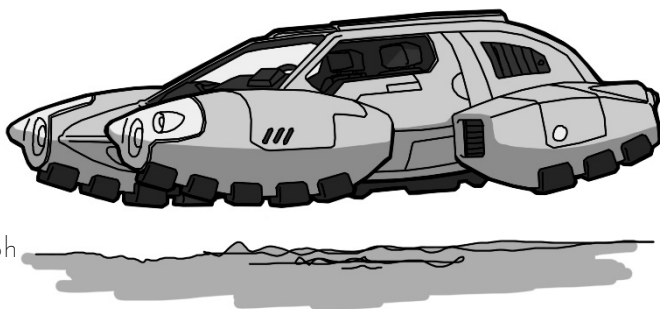
GROUND CAR

Passengers:	1 (+4)
Cargo:	1 cu
Armor Class:	6 [13]
Hit Points:	30
Handling:	+1
Speed:	150 mph
Cost:	500
Extras:	--

An extremely common four-wheeled vehicle. Most modern models come with a suite of environmental and luxury comfort options. Its power plant lasts for a few years.

HOVER CAR

Passengers:	1 (+3)
Cargo:	1 cu
Armor Class:	5 [14]
Hit Points:	30
Handling:	+0
Speed:	180 mph
Cost:	650
Extras:	--

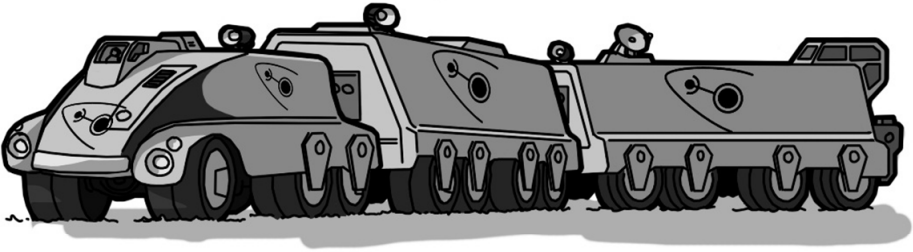


Riding on a cushion of air has its advantages. The ride is comfortable and smooth, and able to ignore most even terrain (including still water). The highly popular hover car can be found in most modern cities as well as in the wastes and badlands of the galaxy. Its power plant only lasts about six months, however, making it a little more expensive to operate.

GROUND TRANSPORT

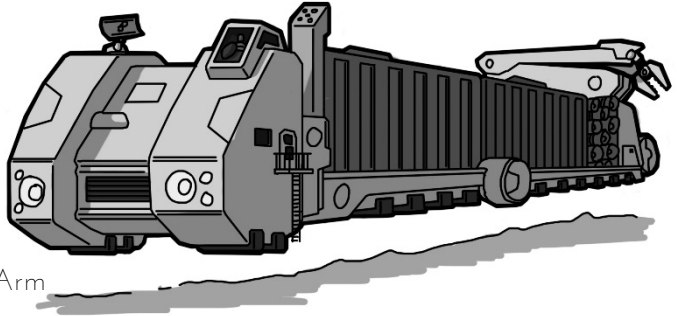
Passengers: 1 (+1)
Cargo: 20 cu (per module)
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Hit Points: 60
Handling: -2
Speed: 150 mph
Cost: 1,000
Extras: --

A ground transport is commonly used to transport bulk goods around a planet. It can have up to 2 additional transport modules attached, each adding 20cu to the cargo capacity, reducing Speed by 20mph and Handling by 1. A single power plant only lasts around one year.

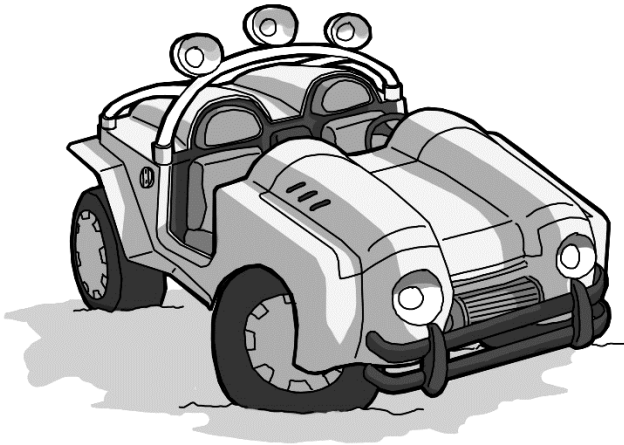


HOVER TRANSPORT

Passengers: 1 (+1)
Cargo: 40 cu
Armor Class: 7 [12]
Hit Points: 60
Handling: -3
Speed: 200 mph
Cost: 1,500
Extras: Loading Arm



These large freight-transport hover vehicles have small pilot compartments but a huge open-bed or enclosed cargo area. They include a loading arm to quickly load or unload. They are the best way to ferry goods around a planet. It has two power plants which expire after around six months of use.



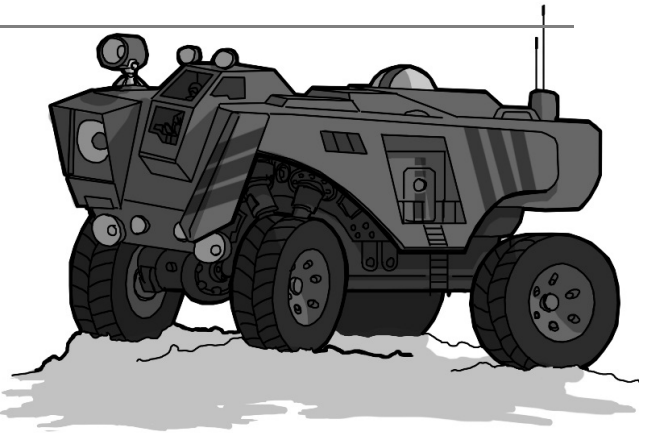
OFF-ROADER

Passengers:	1 (+1)
Cargo:	1 cu
Armor Class:	7 [12]
Hit Points:	30
Handling:	+3
Speed:	150 mph
Cost:	450
Extras:	--

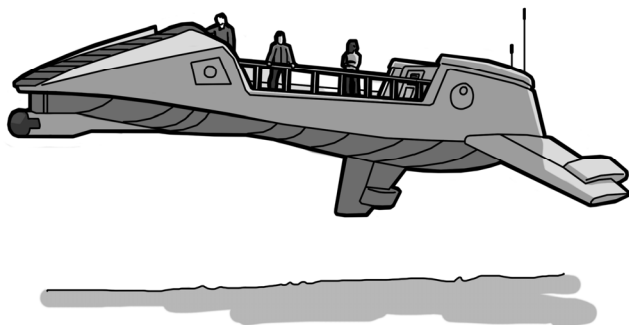
Designed for inexpensive off-road operation, the off-roader is fun to drive. It is highly maneuverable and can manage all types of terrain fairly well, even water levels which would cause the driver to wish he brought his boots. It has a roll bar to help protect occupants during maneuver failures. A power plant will last a couple of years of hard driving.

EXPLORER

Passengers:	1 (+3)
Cargo:	8 cu
Armor Class:	4 [15]
Hit Points:	50
Handling:	+1
Speed:	120 mph
Cost:	2,000
Extras:	Sealed System, Sensor Cluster, Comms System



Popular among scouts and wilderness explorers, the Explorer is a marvel of modern vehicle. It is a completely sealed recirculated system, allowing safe operation without a space suit or environmental rebreather for all occupants. It also includes built-in infra-red, light-amplification, and zooming camera systems, along with a host of radio and communicator gear. It's not fast, but its large tires and high body frame manage terrain very well. The only downside is that its twin power plants only last six months.



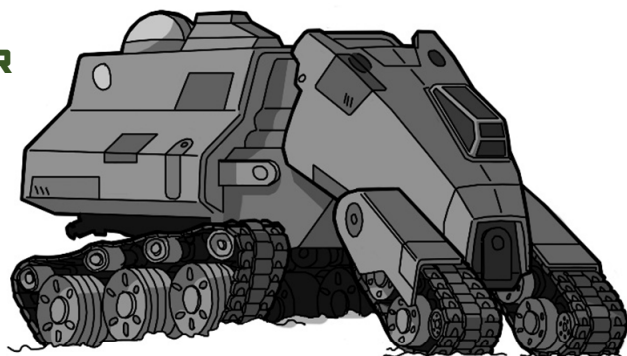
LAND SKIFF

Passengers:	1 (+11)
Cargo:	12 cu
Armor Class:	6 [13]
Hit Points:	40
Handling:	-2
Speed:	150 mph
Cost:	750
Extras:	Variable Hover

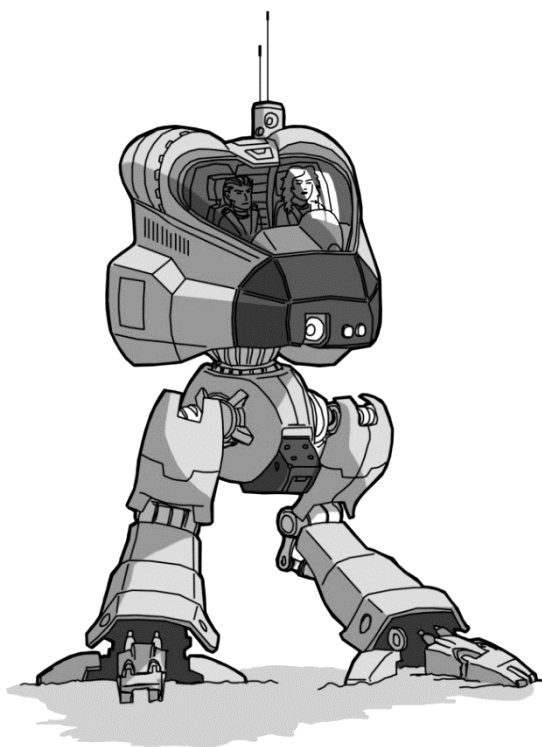
A long, flat hover vehicle often used to ferry people across deserts and other large expanses. Land skiffs are exceptional at altitude control, unlike many other hover vehicles which have a fairly fixed hover height. This allows them to get over cliffs and canyons that hover cars and cycles cannot. They are popular ferries used to get between cities on worlds which contain vast distances between them but hospitable atmospheres. Its twin power plants last around six months of use.

HEAVY EXPLORER

Passengers:	1 (+6)
Cargo:	30 cu
Armor Class:	2 [17]
Hit Points:	80
Handling:	+0
Speed:	100 mph
Cost:	3,000
Extras:	Sealed System, Sensor Cluster, Comms System, Sampling Suite



This thing is huge. A human doesn't even stand higher than an axle of its wheeled treads. Like the Explorer, it is completely sealed and protected, allowing transport on inhospitable worlds. It is highly maneuverable for its size. It can also take mineral samples and atmospheric readings with the push of a button. Its rugged construction makes it nearly impervious to anything but a highly concentrated attack from many opponents. It uses four power plants, which combined provide a full year of continuous operation.



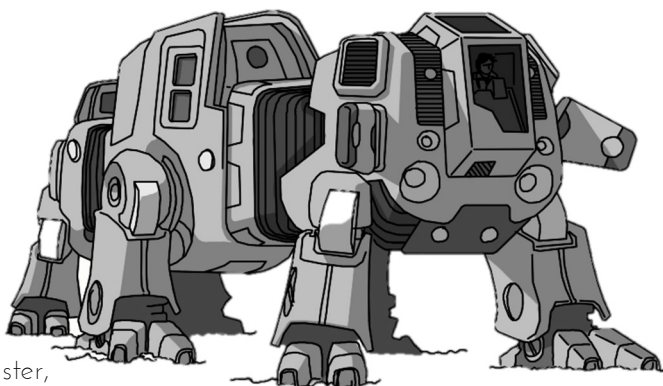
SCOUT WALKER

Passengers:	1 (+1)
Cargo:	1 cu
Armor Class:	3 [16]
Hit Points:	40
Handling:	+2
Speed:	100 mph
Cost:	2,500
Extras:	Sensor Cluster, Comms System

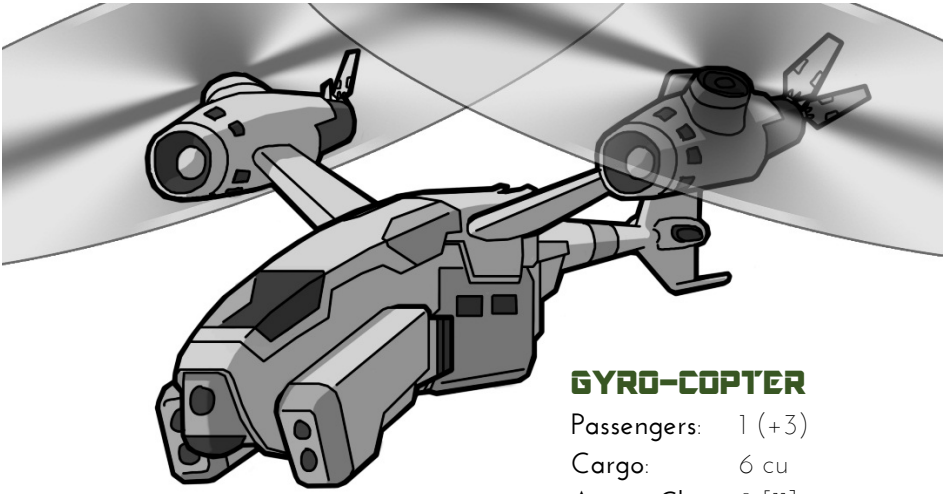
A two-legged walker unit which is very maneuverable and equipped with a host of sensor and radar equipment, the scout walker is a common component of advance military recon squads. Its power plant will last a full year of operation.

CARGO WALKER

Passengers:	1 (+0)
Cargo:	25 cu
Armor Class:	4 [15]
Hit Points:	60
Handling:	+1
Speed:	200 mph
Cost:	5,000
Extras:	Sensor Cluster, Comms System



Cargo walkers can also be converted as personnel carriers (eliminate cargo but increase passengers to 50). They can mitigate very difficult terrain and are difficult to topple or roll. They operate a full year off two power plants, but unlike other vehicles can operate at half top speed from a single power plant for an equal amount of time (other vehicles require the full payload of power plant even to power up and function).



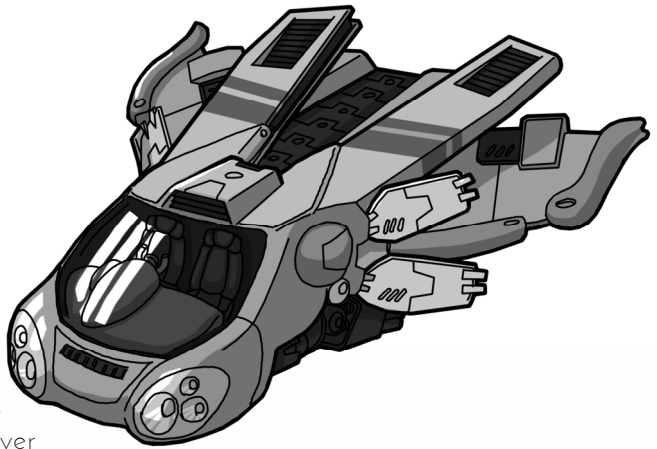
GYRO-COPTER

Passengers:	1 (+3)
Cargo:	6 cu
Armor Class:	8 [11]
Hit Points:	30
Handling:	+3
Speed:	600 mph
Cost:	1,250
Extras:	Variable Hover

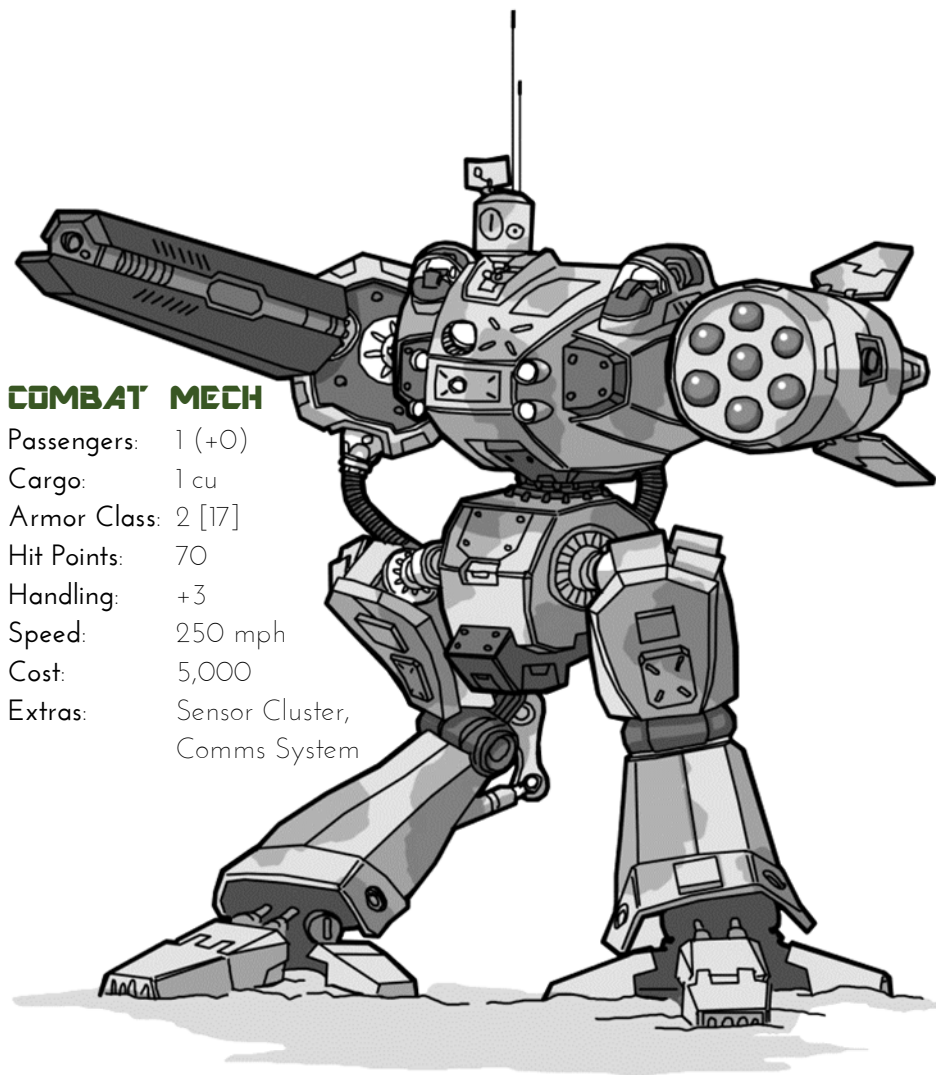
A highly maneuverable jet copter capable of hovering in place or moving at very high speeds. It is a popular and inexpensive flight solution. One power plant lasts six months of use.

JET CAR

Passengers:	1 (+3)
Cargo:	2 cu
Armor Class:	5 [14]
Hit Points:	40
Handling:	+1
Speed:	1,000 mph
Cost:	2,000
Extras:	Streamlined, Variable Hover



Using repulsor technology to hover jet around the skies, jet cars are popular and sleek. They race at more than the speed of sound, leaving thunder in their wake. They have sealed systems which allow use in toxic atmospheres, and can even operate in space with limited function. They require three power plants and will function for one year before needing them replaced.



COMBAT MECH

Passengers:	1 (+0)
Cargo:	1 cu
Armor Class:	2 [17]
Hit Points:	70
Handling:	+3
Speed:	250 mph
Cost:	5,000
Extras:	Sensor Cluster, Comms System

Combat Mechs serve as support artillery for small squads of soldiers patrolling an area on a planet, or might comprise the heavy mechanized division of an entire army. They often have a Laser Cannon (Range 200 ft, ROF 2, Damage 4d6) and a missile rack with seven missiles (Range 100 ft. ROF 1, Damage 8d6 in 10 ft radius). Some combat mechs have functional arms and hands instead and are able to pick up and use various things as weapons or tools (including portable versions of the weapons described above). Mechs with arms cost an additional 1,000 credits but require a copilot (add 1 to Passengers required). Two power plants are required (whether the mech has arms & hands or integrated weapons), and will last six months of use.

VEHICLE EXTRAS

Add some more functionality to your vehicles with any of the following. Some vehicle models already possess one or more of these extras.

ARMOR PLATING – Vehicles are already built of durable materials. Additional armor can be purchased in one of three levels. This upgrade cannot be given to walkers, which are already armored as much as they can be. Heavy armor cannot be given to hover or flying vehicles, because the mass is just too much.

- Light: -2[+2] to AC, Speed -10%, Handling -1, Cost 10 times HP
- Medium: -4[+4] to AC, Speed -20% Handling -2, Cost 20 times HP
- Heavy: -6[+6] to AC, Speed -40% Handling -4, Cost 50 times HP

COMMS SYSTEM – This adds a full communications suite into the vehicle. It functions as a communicator, but also picks up and transmits various frequencies of radio signals. Cost 200 credits.

EXTENDED CARGO – This simply adds an external cargo module with a capacity equal to one fourth of the vehicle's maximum hit points. It is attached to the vehicle in some manner. For ground vehicles, this attaches like a trailer with a towing hitch. For walkers, it's dragged along on wheels or pulled like a cart. This cannot be given to hover vehicles. It reduces the vehicle's top speed by 20 mph and its handling by 2. Cost equals ten times the number of cargo units added.

LASER CANNON – A large laser weapon linked to the pilot's cockpit. ROF 2, Damage 4d6, Range 200 ft. Cost 500 Credits. Reduce by half the expectancy of your power plant. Cannot be placed on any Cycle.

LOADING ARM – Adds an automated loading arm, allowing one person to load a full load of cargo into the vehicle in just ten minutes or so. Cost is equal to ten times the vehicle's cargo capacity.

LUXURY UPGRADE – This vehicle has all the most modern upgrades. Its seats are very comfortable and it has many forms of entertainment. It's no more functional, just more comfortable to use for extended periods. Increase overall cost 20%.

MISSILE RACK – A cluster of missiles linked to the pilot's cockpit. It can fire one missile per round, causing 8d6 damage in a 10 ft radius, at a range of 100 feet. Cost is 300 Credits, plus 50 credits per missile added to the rack. Maximum rack size is equal to the vehicle's hit points divided by 10.

PASSENGER CONVERSION – This upgrade reduces the cargo capacity by half, but adds a number of passengers equal to twice the amount of cargo capacity reduction. Cost equals 25 credits times the amount of cargo area converted.

RESERVE POWER – This adds support for an additional power plant and reconfigures the power sharing couplers of the vehicle. This increases by 50% the expected longevity of the power plant(s).

SAMPLING SUITE – Perfect for geologists and ecologists, the sampling suite includes deployable gear designed to take and analyze mineral, biological, and atmospheric samples. Equipment adds a lot of mass to the vehicle and reduces handling by 1. It cannot be added to a “cycle” vehicle. Cost 1,000 credits.

SEALED SYSTEM – A completely sealed passenger compartment and can operate in areas with toxic (or no) atmosphere. Adds one to the number of power plants required for the vehicle. Cost equals five times the vehicle’s hit points.

SENSOR CLUSTER – This adds infra-red, ultra-violet, light-amplification and zooming cameras to the vehicle. It allows normal night use without illumination. Cost is 300 credits.

SPEED BOOST – This upgrade allows the vehicle to perform a burst of speed, allowing it to double its top speed for 1 turn (10 rounds). It requires its own power plant to be added to the vehicle, which is privately coupled to its circuitry. It can be used only once and depletes its power plant when used. Cost equals ten times the maximum speed of the vehicle, plus the cost of the power plant (100 credits).

STREAMLINED – This makes a more maneuverable vehicle, adding +2 to the Handling of it. It cannot be added to ground vehicles, only hover and flying vehicles. It costs ten times the vehicle’s hit points.

VARIABLE HOVER – This can only be added to flying or hovering vehicles, and permits the vehicle to hover in place at variable altitudes (normal hover technology operates at a fixed altitude). Cost equals ten times the vehicle’s hit points. This reduces the expectancy of the vehicle’s power plant by half.

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FROM HOVER CYCLES TO GYRO-COPTERS TO A COMBAT MECH, THIS SUPPLEMENT CONTAINS FIFTEEN VEHICLE MODELS FOR USE IN YOUR WHITE STAR ROLE PLAYING GAME, ALONG WITH SOME LITE RULES FOR TACTICAL MOVEMENT AND COMBAT. YOUR MERCENARY CHARACTER IS ALREADY AMAZING AT WHAT HE DOES. IT'S TIME TO LET THE PILOT BE AMAZING AT WHAT HE DOES!

AS AN ADDED BONUS, THIS SUPPLEMENT ALSO INCLUDES A LITE SYSTEM FOR USE IN BUYING AND SELLING CARGO WHEREVER YOU GO, SO YOU HAVE SOMETHING MORE TO DO WITH YOUR NEW VEHICLES. AND HAGGLING PRICES LETS THE ARISTOCRAT HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE.

EVERYONE WINS!

THE HYPERSPACE MESSENGER IS A SERIES OF SHORT SUPPLEMENTS DESIGNED FOR USE WITH THE WHITE STAR ROLE-PLAYING GAME, THOUGH IT USES SIMPLE CONCEPTS WHICH CAN EASILY BE INTEGRATED INTO ANY OSR-STYLE SCIENCE FICTION GAME. THE GOAL IS TO DELIVER QUALITY SUPPLEMENTS EXPLORING A SINGLE NEW CONCEPT ALL WITHIN THE SPAN OF ONLY SIX-TO-TWELVE PAGES. OKAY, I WENT OVER A LITTLE IN THIS ONE. SORRY ABOUT THAT.

