

**FASTER THAN LIGHT: NOMAD**

# **SYNTHOIDS**



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# **FASTER THAN LIGHT: NOMAD SYNTHOIDS**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Ethics	6
World Classifications	7
Biology	8
Synthoid Creation	9
Options	13
Synthimals	22
Synthoids as Characters	24
Worked Example	24
Synth Equipment Packages	25
Synthoid Technologies	28
Additional Examples	30



# INTRODUCTION

Synthoids question the kind of stories you want to tell. Some science fiction settings fall into the standard, trading, good mercs beat the bad mercs, do some shady work for credits, or hunt treasure.

AI whether robots or Synthoids change that up. They pose questions: what is to be human or self-aware? How will humanity treat their children?

Given our history as a race, the outcome is not encouraging. We've enslaved and oppressed other humans. Non-humans should be wary. Dystopian societies may view them as slave or even merely cannon fodder. Send the Synthoid out to see how the monster works! Or stick a gun in their hands and you have a soldier at a lower price than drafting and training a human.

More enlightened worlds may welcome Synthoids as partners in their glorious progress, designed to survive and thrive while doing jobs that would break a human. Of course, Synthoids will resist oppression, they were based on a human design. There will be escapes, riots and perhaps revolts. Humans may learn to late that their servants were really replacements.

Where can player characters find themselves? They have to ask themselves these hard questions. Are these Synthoids human? Do they have rights? Will they suppress the Synthoid Revolt or aid it? What about the Synthoid stowaway they find, trying to escape their brutal handlers? Do they turn in the Synthoid for the finder's fee, or help them to a more enlightened planet?

Slavery is terrible, in any form. Creating beings to be slaves is doubly so. It will automatically mark groups as EVIL. Slavery is just the tip of the iceberg, there's designing Synthoids to be medical donors, using them for experimentation and lab testing (they work even better than white mice). Characters encountering these outrages have a chance to be heroes, helping the downtrodden or maybe their fellow Synthoids!

Or the Synthoid Revolt already occurred! Perhaps they're too human? The humans lost. The survivors are just trying to survive and escape their tormentors. Did humanity have this coming? Did everyone deserve it? More questions.

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## REQUIRED MATERIAL

This supplement requires the *Faster Than Light: Nomad* rules for use. These are available from Stellagama Publishing through DriveThruRPG and Lulu.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Robert Garitta* has played role playing games almost from the start. After retirement he started writing them just to prove he wasn't completely harmless. He resides in Brooklyn USA with his lovely wife and a very spoiled Yorkshire terrier. He published several role-playing games, settings, and supplements, including being one of the authors of the *FTL: Nomad* science fiction RPG rules.

## ETHICS


The ethics surrounding the creation and use of Synthoids are thorny and divide many worlds. Those who defend the creation of Synthoids say that their DNA is compiled via algorithms, not by using human or other natural sources. Further, this DNA is truncated. Introns are not used. This makes the Synth less human biologically. This is enough to convince many that the beings are not human. Moreover, Synthoids are force grown and educated mostly via imprinted memories using cybernetics and specialized RNA injections. This absence of a natural childhood and pre-programmed behaviors also distances a Synth from their human creators.

Synthoids are force grown and educated mostly via imprinted memories using cybernetics in part and specialized RNA injections. The lack of a natural childhood and pre-'programmed' upbringing distances a Synth from their human creators.

Those who oppose the existence of Synthoids point out that Synthoids still look and act very human. These detractors point out: are Synths not artificial humans created to satisfy the material and emotional desires of those who ordered their bespoke human? They can be slaves and servants, never really able to break free of their pre-programmed shackles. Synthoids can even serve as substitutes for real humans: childless couples could adopt a Synth child (omitting the forced growth stage of development). They could be designated as inheriting their 'parents' worldly goods. Grieving relatives could even replace lost family members for that matter. Synths could even serve as the ultimate mail-order companions and be forced to marry their human owner; at least, detractors say, reproduction is not possible.

Perhaps Synthoid Ethics is a contradiction in terms. Synth human relations can take a very dark turn. Referees should be careful.

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Most planets curtail Synth rights, saying because of their nature and background they are not capable of the responsibilities of full citizenship. Other worlds believe that while they are not human, they deserve the same treatment other non-humans, like aliens, enjoy. Otherwise, creating a being to be your servant, slave or soldier would be wrong.

Some worlds allow Synthoids to buy back their cost and become free agents. Others will never see them as more than pieces of property that dream and have feelings. They say their actions and choices are programming in a wetware network analogous to a human brain, not free will.

## WORLD CLASSIFICATIONS

Depending on the world, Synths may or may not be welcomed or accepted at all. Some worlds exploit them. Others allow basic rights. Some planets grant Synths complete freedom after a term of servitude.

All worlds hold owners responsible for the actions of their Synthoids, who are in a legal position analogous to minors or pets. Synthoids and their owners/handlers/friends are urged to familiarize themselves with all local attitudes and laws.

Other worlds circumvent the moral dilemmas by making Synthoids that are only semi-sentient: these Synthimals provide obedient pets, security, and war beasts for use on many worlds.

Worlds are classified to minimize unpleasant surprises for Synthoids and their handlers. It won't do for your Buddy to be terminated for a minor affront on one world, or to successfully apply for asylum on another. Either way: you're out a Synth.

There are numerous interstellar treaties, laws, and agreements restricting the types and uses of Synthoids. The most common among these are agreements not to use Synthoids as soldiers. However, some worlds that are classified as Class IV employ vast Synthoid armies that are commanded by human officers.

**Class I:** Sentient Synths are recognized as citizens with full rights. These worlds generally have a period of service the Synth is required to fulfill before getting full citizenship. They may or may not be allowed to vote or hold office.

**Class II:** Synths are treated like minors, protected under the law but with restricted rights. They may not vote, own property, or their own weapons. Their handler/guardian is responsible for their actions.

**Class III:** Synths are indentured servants, who are rarely emancipated as minors (see Class II, above). However, killing a Synth is still regarded as murder. Using violence to discipline or punish a Synth is permitted, within limits. Synths require a handler who is responsible for their actions. Synths may be created for psychological experiments or training for especially dangerous missions.



Class IV: No rights. Only capital crimes against a Synth might be punished or actionable. Synths are legally property that has been tricked into thinking. If someone kills a Synth, the owner may sue the killer for damages. Synths will be used in jobs too abhorrent or dangerous for humans, they will be used as raw materials for medical or experimental purposes.

## **BIOLOGY**

Synthetic Humanoids, Synthoids, or vat-grown people, appear in the Late Space Tech Age. Unlike clones that require an organic source of DNA, Synths have their DNA compiled artificially using computer algorithms. While it may mimic certain genes for a given ability, this synthetic DNA is not a close copy of any lifeforms. Naturally occurring organic life has a genetic code with numerous 'junk' sequences and repetition called introns. These introns provide redundancy, allowing an organism to breed despite genetic damage from various sources. Synths lack these introns.

Synthoids are also known as Synths, Mates, Gadgets, Buddies, Vats, and Wireheads. The term Synthetic properly refers to a Synthoid created by the ZZR Corporation. Androids are not Synthoids but robots built to mimic humans and other organic life. They are covered in the core Nomad rules.

Synthoids generally eat, drink and sleep like humans. They are somewhat harder than humans. They cannot reproduce though some enjoy going through the motions. Synthoids can't have Psionics. Synthoids deal with cybernetics the same way humans do.

Synthoids are mediocre likenesses of humans by the Late Space Age and may not pass a visual inspection. A Knowledge throw is required to identify a Synth. Apply a -1D penalty when attempting to identify Late Interstellar Age Synths, and -2D when attempting to identify Late Galactic Age Synths. Multiscanners give +1D to this roll. Bioscanners give +2D to the roll.

A dose of radiation may cause a human's cells to mutate, producing cancer cells. In the case of a Synth, exposure to radiation prevents the cell from reproducing. Synths have no long-term health issues from radiation. A sufficient dose will still kill them, but they will survive and recover from smaller doses.



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## SYNTHOID CREATION

A laboratory (slang: vat farm) to create Synthoids will cost at least 5 million credits for each Synth that can be developed simultaneously. Growing a Synthoids takes one month for a prototype, and two weeks for a 'standard' model. Both types of Synthoids can be rushed in half the time. This doubles the cost. The materials for a Synth cost 10,000 credits, or 20,000 credits for a rushed production. A prototype Synthoid further doubles these costs. The maintenance costs of a lab run at 200,000 credits per year for each Synth it can grow simultaneously for maintenance. This includes 50,000 credits for a technician's yearly salary per Synth grown.

A vat optimized to only produce a single type of Synth can produce one in a week. The type of Synth must be specified when the lab is bought. This type of Vat still costs 5 million credits. Mass produced Synths are often sold in lots at reduced cost (typically reduced by 10%-50%.)

A Synthoid is a living being. As with natural evolution, each benefit or ability in a body plan involves concessions in other areas. Body size and musculature may be reduced to increase skills and Talents. A huge brain requires a voracious metabolism to support it!

## SYNTHOID CREATION OVERVIEW

To create a Synthoid, start at the top row in each column of the Synthoids Design Table. Improving the Synth's ability in a specific column moves you down one row within that column. Lowering a Synthoid's abilities moves you one step up. Synthoids begin with a certain number of improvement Steps, depending on the Tech Age in which they are built:

Synthoids built with **Late Space Age Tech** have four steps to add to these stats.

**Late Interstellar Age** Synthoids have five steps to add.

Late Galactic Age Synthoids have six steps to add.

**Base Synthoid production** costs the buyer 50,000 credits. Creating a prototype cost at least 100,000 credits (Referee's call). Cheaper Synthoids are 10,000 credits cheaper per Step lowered. Up to two steps may be reduced in this manner. Synthoids designers may purchase an extra Step: this adds 20,000 credits to the cost.

At the **Galactic Age**, all costs are halved (as well as the purchase or sale of Steps). For example, a Late Galactic Age Synthoid with five steps costs 25,000 credits.

**Synth Design Table**

	<b>Muscle</b>	<b>Acuity</b>	<b>Loss</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Controls</b>
Default	Physical 1 Stamina 17	-1D to unskilled throws. 3 Skills Max Level 2	0	Basic	Special Meds
+1 Step	Physical 2 Stamina 20	-1D to unskilled throws 3 Skills Max 1 Level 3		1	Special Food
+2 Steps	Physical 3 Stamina 23	4 Skills Max Level 3	2	2	Recharge
+3 Steps	Physical 4 Stamina 26 Protection 2	5 Skills Max Level 3	3	3	Remote
+4 Steps	Physical 5 Stamina 29 Protection 4	-0D to unskilled throws. 6 Skills Max Level 3 Archetype	4	4	Direct Orders

## CATEGORIES AND BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

The **Default** row is the characteristic for a Synthoid with no specially developed abilities.

Each improvement Step moves a Synthoid's characteristic one row down on the chart. For example, a Synth has Physical 2, Stamina 20. This costs one Step.

**Sterile:** Synthoids are usually made sterile and asexual. Why do you want your merchandise to make shoddy knock offs? Some do choose to pursue physical relationships and even love. Some worlds (generally Class III and IV) outlaw this.

**Unusual Appearance:** Some worlds require Synths to have a common feature for easy identification. Synthoids are clearly not human due to skin coloring, markings, or other features (fur, pointed ears, cats' eyes etc.). This is often required on Class III worlds and always necessary for Class IV worlds. It doesn't affect cost or cost steps.

**Basic Benefits:** All Synthoids have +1D to Physical throws to resist disease and toxins. They can also breathe some marginal atmospheres that require breathing masks for humans (referee's call). Synths can absorb more radiation than humans without ill effects. Ignore the first 20 rads the Synth is exposed to up to once per week.

**Synthaliens:** Synthoids can be based on alien DNA templates. These Synths receive the special abilities of the alien copied but do not start with a Talent and are penalized one step on the Design Table.



## MUSCLE

Muscle refers to the Synthoid's Physical skill and Stamina. Synthoids start out a bit stronger than humans. Increasing Steps in this category can make Synths capable of incredible feats of strength and the ability to resist melee attacks and small firearms.

## ACUITY

This represents the depth and width of the Synth's education provided by memory implants. It identifies the number and levels of skills provided and a penalty (for less advanced Synthoids) for unskilled throws. If an Archetype is implanted, the Synth may possess some memories of the person 'donating' the memories for the implant.

## LOSS

This refers to the amount of Cyber Loss a given Synthoid can take. Synths resist the adverse effects of Loss using the Social skill normally (FTL: Nomad p. 90). In general, Synthoids have a lower capacity for cyberware than humans, but they do get bioware options.

When a Synthoid's total Loss exceeds their Loss rating, they are at risk of cyber-dissociation or even a full cyber-psychotic break. Upon installing implants that cause cybernetic Loss to exceed their Loss threshold, the Synthoid must make a Social skill check. If successful, the Synthoid must apply a -1D penalty to Social skill checks when attempting to be friendly or trustworthy. This is a permanent result. If the Social skill check is failed, roll on the following table, and apply the result. If more cybernetics are implanted, make the same Social skill check. If successful, the -1D penalty to Social skill checks is NOT reapplied (but it remains). On failure, roll on the table again.



### Synthoid Loss Table

1d6	1d6	Result
1-3	1	<b>Death Wish:</b> The Synthoid is prone to increasingly risky behavior and does not have any fear of death: for themselves or their compatriots. They will skip required meds, special food, or recharge sessions.
	2	<b>When I Nod My Head, You Hit It:</b> The Synth will obey every order or instruction to the letter, misinterpreting slang, vague wording, and ambiguous meanings. They will do this in a way to inflict the most harm.
	3	<b>Hoarder:</b> The Synthoid will collect items of use to them. This can be anything, clothes, food, weapons, equipment, Collectable Card Games, hiding their stash or even booby trapping it.
	4	<b>Cyberfreak:</b> The chrome makes the character feel invincible. They will depend on their cyberware to settle any and all problems. Cyber weaponry makes this extremely dangerous.
	5	<b>Adrenaline Addict:</b> Extreme sports, dangerous speed, fights, and similar risky behavior are irresistible to the Synthoid.
	6	<b>Cyber Loathing:</b> The Synthoids hated their mechanical devices and will go out of their way to damage and destroy them.
4-6	1	<b>Lack of Human Empathy:</b> Humans are bags of flesh to the Synth, who will prefer Synthoid and Cyborg company.
	2	<b>Sadistic:</b> The Synth enjoys hurting things.
	3	<b>Uncontrolled:</b> The Synth quickly uses force when they confront any obstacles. A stuck door will be kicked. A slow robot will get pushed out of the way. Anyone looking for a fight will find one.
	4	<b>Catatonia:</b> a certain trigger, a word, gesture, sound or even scent causes the Synth to become paralyzed and unconscious for 1d3 rounds.
	5	<b>Denial:</b> The character is NOT a Synthoid. They will deny all evidence to the contrary! They will become violent if presented with enough evidence!
	6	<b>Passive:</b> Nothing matters very much. The Synthoid must be exhorted, strongly to take any action, even fighting in their defense.

## OPTIONS

Synthoids can be created with various anatomical and mental features, using animal and Synthoids DNA. The following Options are available. Minor options cost one point and major options cost two points.

Options marked with a \* are only available in the Late Interstellar Age and later. Options with \*\* are only first available in the Late Galactic Age.

## CONTROLS

Weaknesses and security features built into the Synthoid.

## OPTIONS

Synthoids can be created with various anatomical and mental features, using animal and Synthoids DNA. The following Options are available. Minor options cost one point and major options cost two points.

Options marked with a \* are available in the Late Interstellar Age. Options with \*\* are available in the Late Galactic Age.

### Synthoid Options

Minor	Major
Amphibious	Cling*
Armor	Cool Temperature
Attractive	EMF Sense*
Brachiator	Fast**
Carapace*	Fur/Hide
Claws/Teeth*	Hyper Touch
Climb	Initiative
Cold Tolerance	Iron Stomach
Enhanced Hearing	Medicinal Properties*
Heat Tolerance	Nimble
Hibernates	O2 Storage
Mimic	Hive Mind*
Motion Sensor	Quadruped
Night Vision	Rad Tolerance
Pheromone Communication**	Reaction Time*
Poisonous	Regenerates**
Prehensile Tail	Shapemorpher**
Rapid*	Sonar
Stealth	Thermal Sense
Talons/Fangs	Vacuum Rated**
Tracks Scent	Whip Tail

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## MINOR OPTIONS

**Amphibious:** The Synthoid is equally at home on land or in the water. It suffers no disadvantages in water and can breathe air for 1d6x10 minutes. Normal move in water.

**Armor:** +4 Protection subdermal armor. This armor will be obvious to a medical scan or if the Synthoid takes their outer wear off.

**Attractive:** The Synth is designed to look, sound, and feel appealing to their owners. These models are usually companions, spokespersons, or even personal servants. They get +1D to Social throws unless they are dealing with anti-Synthoid extremists (usually the inhabitants of Class IV worlds and some Class III) in which case they get no benefits.

**Brachiator:** Move from Far to Near with two combat actions if trees or other elevated terrain is present. Rolls for climbing get +1D.

**Carapace:** Redundant organs and durable flesh impose a -1D penalty to damage rolls from all attacks hitting this Synth.

**Claws/Teeth:** +1d6 to damage. This is an increase in dice of damage, not an Advantage. The claws and teeth retract at will. Observers can roll Knowledge to notice these weapons when they are retracted.

**Climb:** The Synthoids can scale any suitably rough surface: rocks, a brick wall, or a bank of machinery, clinging like a gecko. They move at their normal movement rate. Only sheer surfaces require a Physical throw to scale.

**Cold Tolerance:** Freezing temperatures are of little concern to these Synthoids. They innately gain the same benefits as wearing Arctic clothing.

**Enhanced Hearing:** The Synthoid can hear extremely faint noises. People attempting to surprise the Synth suffer -1D.

**Heat Tolerance:** Synthoids can endure temperatures up to 100 degrees centigrade with this option. They take half damage from flame attacks (though not lasers). The Synthetic will consume a lot of water in such hostile environments.

**Hibernates:** The Synthoids can spend one week in hibernation for each point of Physical. They need virtually no food or water and one hundredth as much atmosphere. They are very cranky if woken prematurely.

**Mimic:** The Synthoid can duplicate noises, or even mimic human voices.

**Motion Sensor:** The Synthoid has an acute awareness of air currents or vibrations and may use them to track any movement. Characters trying to surprise the Synthoids suffer a -1D penalty. Darkness penalties are reduced by 1D.



**Night Vision:** The Synthoids can see in dim light. It ignores penalties for all but total darkness, which is reduced to -1D.

**Pheromone Communication:** The Synthoid uses chemical markers to be aware of events. Killing one will alert all others in the vicinity. The Synthoid can convey their emotional state through their pheromones and leave a log of such markers.

**Poisonous:** The Synthoid is just bad eating to most life forms, and lethal to many. This is very handy in some hellish ecosystems: predators take one sniff and avoid the Synth.

**Prehensile Tail:** The character possesses a tail, useful in climbing and balancing (+1D for rolls involving either). The tail can support the Synth's weight and grab small (one item) objects or open a door.

**Rapid:** The Synthoid may take two moves for each action.

**Stealth:** The Synthoid gains +1D to Stealth throws. Attempts to track the Synth are penalized by -1D. This also applies -to tracking by scent as the Synth has a sanitized metabolism that produces only the faintest of scents.

**Talons/Fangs:** +2d6 to damage. This is an increase in dice of damage, not an Advantage. Talons/Fangs do not retract fully and can be identified on sight.

**Tracks Scent:** The Synthoid is like a bloodhound, able to follow prey by scent. They have a +1D to Knowledge throws for scent tracking. Prey can try to escape it by traveling through water. Even vehicles can be tracked. In fact, vehicle types, like prey species, may be differentiated by scent with a Knowledge throw.

## MAJOR OPTIONS

*Major Options cost two slots.*

**Cling:** The Synth can use nails, sticky pads, or similar features to scale sheer surfaces. This requires at least one available hand and bare feet.

**Cool Temperature:** The Synthoid reduces their heat emissions to match the environment for one to three turns. It will not show up on thermal sensors. Attacks using thermal sensors are made at -1D to hit.

**EMF Sense:** The Synthoid can detect radio waves and eavesdrop on audio conversations.

**Fast:** The Synthoid gets three actions per round!

**Fur/Hide:** The character has a very thick hide or fur and receives an additional 4 Points of armor Protection.





**Hive Mind:** Synthoids with this option act as a single force, swarming opposition, clearing all obstacles, and working tirelessly together. They never check morale, fighting to the last. They do not share direct thoughts/communications. They must be within Near range to use this ability.

**Hyper Touch:** The Synth can sense others moving by ground vibrations. The Synthoid doesn't suffer penalties from darkness against moving targets. The ability is useless against flyers and swimmers.

**Initiative:** The Synthoid gains +1D to Initiative rolls.

**Iron Stomach:** The Synthoid can eat and live on nearly anything organic (Referee's call).

**Medicinal Properties:** A rare medical drug can be produced from these Synthoids, one of their organs, or byproducts. They are universal donors. This assures a high price for the model, be they living specimens or otherwise. Synthoids usually take a dim view of whoever coded this option into their bodies.

**Nimble:** There is a 1-in-6 chance that the Synthoid dodges any successful attack.

**Oxygen Storage:** This ability allows the Synthoid to function in an otherwise unbreathable atmosphere or underwater for 1 turn (10 minutes) per point of Physical.

**Quadruped:** The Synth has four legs and double movement. Its forelegs end in clumsy hands. Obviously, the Synth cannot hold things or use equipment while moving. It can rise from a prone position as a free action. It is also possible to make sentient Synthoids resemble animals using the Quadruped option.

**Rad Resistance:** The Synthoid can safely absorb up to 100 rads per week without ill effects. Ignore the first hundred rads when rolling for effects.

**Reaction Time:** The Synthoid gets a free action at the start of combat if they succeed at a Combat roll with a -2D penalty.

**Regenerates:** The Synthoid has a 2-in-6 chance of healing a wound the round after it is inflicted. This is rolled once per wound and the character can take no other actions during that round. The wound is canceled and doesn't modify the Triage Table roll.

**Shapemorpher:** A shapemorpher can modify its size sufficiently to be able to slip between bars, gratings, or air ducts. They can also alter the texture of their skin to match surroundings, which gives it a +1D bonus to Surprise rolls.

**Sonar:** This Synthoid uses sound waves to locate objects or life forms. This ability works in darkness, smoke or muddy waters. It does not work in a vacuum. The character suffers no penalties from darkness or similar conditions.





**Thermal Sense:** The Synthoid can sense heat sources: a warm body, a recently fired weapon, a campfire, or recently heated food. It may attack without penalties in darkness.

**Vacuum Rated:** Genetically engineered lichen covers the Synthoid's skin. These absorb all kinds of radiation in order to recycle the Synthoid's wastes into usable oxygen, water and food. The Synthoid rarely has to eat, usually only to absorb vitamins. Such Synthoids have tiny, underdeveloped mouths and no external ears or nose to further seal against vacuum. They are very uncomfortable in atmospheres and are at -1D to any actions.

**Whip Tail:** This tail can make melee attacks as a normal action. Any melee attack that hits a target will knock it to the ground unless the target succeeds at a Physical roll.

## QUIRKS

Synthoids are often created with some odd features due to the difficulties of tailoring a life form. These are usually trivial and merely add color to the model. All Synthoids in a series may have the same Quirk, or a quirk may be unique to an individual. The referee may roll or choose a Quirk. A Synthoid may 'buy' off their Quirk by sacrificing an Option slot.

Some Quirks may interfere with a Synthoid's intended purpose. A Synthoid built to be an attractive spokesperson might have a horrific odor. An ultimate soldier might be too small. These models are often available at half cost. Some may simply be turned out and seeking a home and friends.

Synths created with Space Age technology have 1d3 Quirks. A Synthoid created with Interstellar Age technology has 1d2 Quirks. Galactic Age Synthoids do not have unexpected Quirks, however, they may have one chosen by their creators at no extra cost. A Synthoid may suppress their Quirk with a successful Knowledge roll for a turn. Creators may make a Technology roll with a prototype to eliminate the Quirk(s). This requires another Synthoid to be created. This Technology roll is penalized -2D in the Late Space Age and -1D in the Late Interstellar Age.





### Synthoid Quirks Table

d66 Quirk	Description
11 <i>Yes Synth</i>	The Synth will go along with anything and everything their humans suggest. They will bend over backwards to avoid contradicting any humans.
12 <i>Liar</i>	The truth is the last resort for this character. They will lie to cover themselves. They can also be convincing con men if their group needs one.
13 <i>Vain</i>	The Synth is incredibly attractive (in their own mind at least). They will take any opportunity to fix their hair and apparel to always look their best. This is a minor problem for, say, bridge crew, but will impair productivity in a sewer worker.
14 <i>Glutton</i>	The Synth likes food and a lot of it. Left alone, they would snack almost continuously.
15 <i>Shy</i>	This character has a -1D penalty to Social throws around strangers. They're uncomfortable with close scrutiny and any public attention.
16 <i>Meticulous</i>	The most saintly person would be a chain smoker after 10 minutes with the Synthoid. They are pedantic, obsessive, and an all-around pain to work with.
21 <i>Fuzzy</i>	The Synthoid is covered in fine soft hair or fur. Some people may find this attractive or cute. Others may cry, 'Werewolf!' The fur provides 1 point of Protection against melee attacks.
22 <i>Uncanny Valley</i>	Perhaps their eyes are a touch too large, or their mouths a drop too small. Either way, some minor features mark the Synthoid as non-human and can cause a -1D to Social throws in some situations.
23 <i>Unusual Voice</i>	This character has a grating, whiney, deep, squeaky, or otherwise abnormal voice. A hulking bodyguard might be a soprano or speak in tones only dogs might hear when excited.
24 <i>Unusual Hair/Eye Color</i>	The Synthoid has purple, yellow or mismatched eyes, purple, pink, or zebra striped hair or something else that is visually memorable. This doesn't necessarily mark the person as a Synth, but it makes them more easily recognizable.
25 <i>Alopecia</i>	The Synth is completely hairless. Some find this attractive.
26 <i>Spindly</i>	Gravity is not a friend of this Synthoid. They take an additional +1D damage from falling and roll on the Triage table with -1D if they take a wound.
31 <i>Lightweight</i>	One drink causes the Synthoid to become inebriated. Why are you buying a Synth drinks?
32 <i>Allergies</i>	The Synthoid is prone to sneezing in the presence of a common substance such as fur, dust, or pollen.



### Synthoid Quirks Table, Cont.

d66	Quirk	Description
33	<i>Motion Sickness</i>	The Synthoid needs a window seat in vehicles or will certainly vomit. This does not apply to space flight.
34	<i>Zero G Sickness</i>	The Synthoid has Fatigue and needs to stay near a toilet for 1d6 hours when first exposed to weightlessness.
35	<i>Sexually Active</i>	The Synth pursues romance and more, unlike most of their kind.
36	<i>Compulsive Eater</i>	The Synthoid enjoys eating a particular substance that may not even be food (soap, paper, cloth).
41	<i>Large</i>	Tight spaces penalize the Synthoid by -1D on Physical rolls. Most people will find this Synth incredibly unattractive. This may help them with intimidation (+1D) or hurt them with persuasion (-1D) rolls.
42	<i>Ugly</i>	The Synthoid can't swim or tread water and may break a few chairs. They require at least two people to carry them if incapacitated.
43	<i>High Density</i>	The Synthoid is in the minority of handedness. They may find some equipment is not easy or possible to adapt to their needs.
44	<i>Left-Handed</i>	The Synthoid has a prominent odor, even to human noses. "Prominent" is a polite term for it. Regular hygiene does nothing to reduce this stink.
45	<i>Distinct Smell</i>	The Synthoid is 1-1.3 meters tall. Tight places are not a problem. They may have trouble reaching stuff on the top shelf or climbing (-1D to such Physical rolls).
46	<i>Small</i>	The Synth is argumentative. They will disparage the plans of humans and others or take matters into their own hands.
51	<i>Rebellious</i>	The Synthoid gains the Directives Control (see above) in addition to any other feature to enforce discipline. If they already have the Directives Weakness, they take double the damage from refusing an order.
52	<i>Obsequious</i>	The Synthoid has emotions but does not show them. -1D to Social rolls when trying to be empathetic to people.
53	<i>Aloof</i>	The Synth is in denial of their true nature and thinks they are human. They will ignore evidence to the contrary. Their recharge station is a normal bed!
54	<i>Too Human</i>	Any climbing or similar acrobatics requires a handler or friend to make a Social throw -2D to convince the Synthoid to continue. Directives, or Remotes do not work on the Synth in this situation.
55	<i>Fear of Heights</i>	The pinkies of both hands are stiff and generally stick out in an odd way. This will tip off people with a Knowledge throw +1D that the person is Synthoids.
56	<i>Disfigured Hands</i>	



### Synthoid Quirks Table, Cont.

d66 Quirk	Description
61 <i>Sharp Eyes</i>	the character gets +1D to notice things. If their group is surprised the Synthoid can dive for cover by making a Physical throw at -2D. The Synthoid is also very jumpy.
62 <i>Alert</i>	
63 <i>Sharp Nose</i>	Good, though still human, level senses of smell and taste. Excellent cook.
64 <i>Rhythm</i>	Innate rhythm, and a great dancer!
65 <i>Compass</i>	Great sense of direction. Never gets lost, well hardly ever: gain +1D for navigation Knowledge rolls.
66 <i>Light Fingered</i>	Sharpened sense of touch, +1D to make delicate repairs or pick locks.

## CONTROLS

Several riots, uprisings, and mutinies taught humanity to build their sentient creations with an off switch of some sort. Thus, Synthoids always have one or more weaknesses. A Synthoid may be created with several weaknesses that are less severe than the step used. For example, a Synth that uses a Remote may also require a Recharge or special Vat-amins. There is no extra charge for this. You can't be too careful, after all.

**Special Meds:** The Synthoid requires medication that must be taken twice a day. The medication is usually in an inhaler or capsules. Missing their meds causes glow tattooing to become visible after 12 hours. Failure to take meds causes one point of damage per hour after the tattoos become visible. This damage can't be healed until the Synthoid takes the medication. These medications are often called 'vat-amins'.

**Special Food:** The Synthoid requires a special diet or dietary supplement—available from the manufacturer! After failing to eat the food for 24 hours, the Synthoid will take one point of Stamina damage per hour. This damage can't be recovered until the Synth begins eating their special food. Avoid third party products.

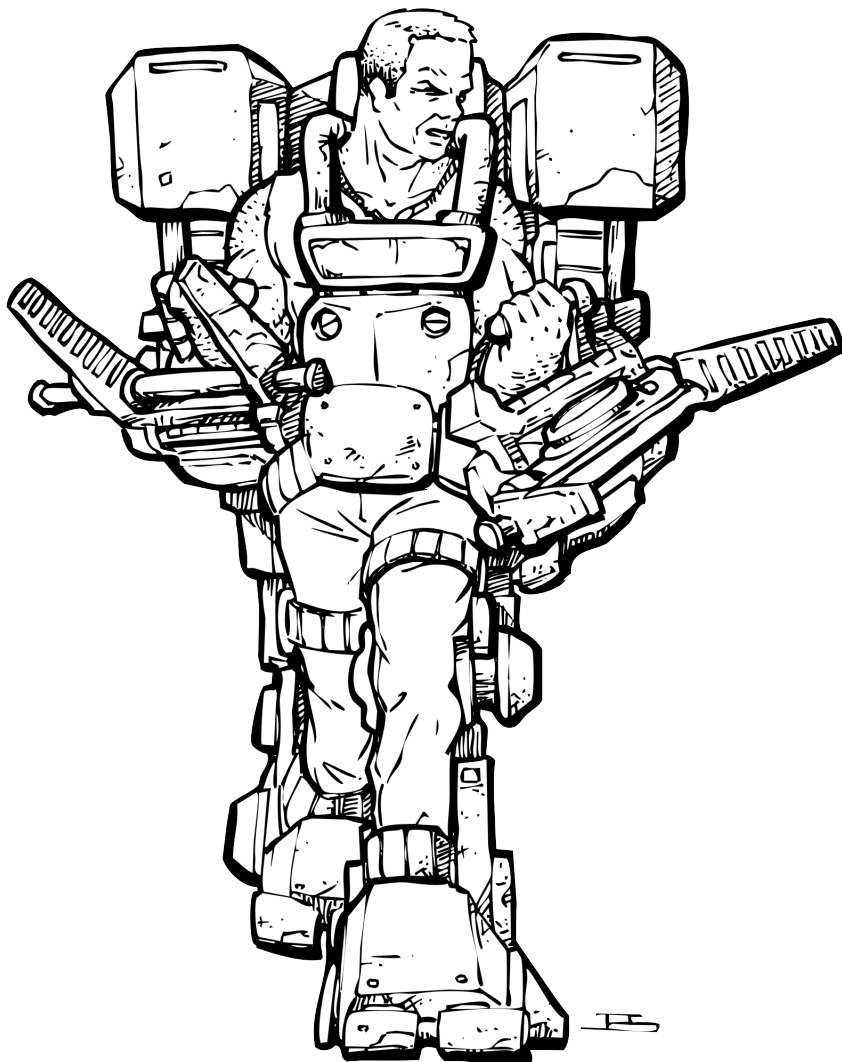
**Recharge:** The Synth has cybernetic implants in their body that require 4-6 hours of recharge. Failure to do this causes the character to lose the use of their Options: one every 12 hours and then lose a point of Physical every 12 hours. When the Synthoid reaches Physical 0, it is almost immobile. It may only crawl at half speed and take an action every other round. A full recharge cycle removes these penalties. Synthoids that require recharging are often called Gadgets or, more crudely, Wireheads.

**Remote:** A small communicator is linked to a receiver implanted in the Synthoid. Orders given over this Remote must be obeyed. Failure to do this causes 1d6 of damage to the Synthoid. This happens every time the control is used, and an order



is disobeyed, even if it is the same order given multiple times.

**Directives:** The Synthoid must obey any orders from a designated handler. The handler must be designated at the point of purchase. Failure to obey a direct order causes 1d6 of damage to the Synth. This happens every time an order is given, even the same order. Any non-handler human (or other organic life form) can attempt to order the Synthoid by making a Social throw -2D.



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# SYNTHIMALS

Synthimals create a Synth without the drawbacks of sentience. Synthimals can be smaller than a human, further reducing their cost. A Synthimal can have Physical, Combat and Stealth skills. They automatically get the Basic Synth benefits and one Option.

Some worlds only allow the creation of non-sentient Synthimals. They may be upright and humanoid, but unintelligent.

## DESIGNING SYNTHIMALS AND STEPS

Designing a Synthimal is similar to designing a Synthoid. Use the Synthimal Design Table below and add or remove Steps like when designing a Synthoid. Begin on the top row, but like Synthoids, Synthimals start with a number of Steps to purchase upgrades based on their Tech Age.

Synthimals built with **Late Space Age** Tech have two Steps to improve these stats.

**Late Interstellar Age** Synthimals have three Steps to spend on improvements.

**Late Galactic Age** Synthimals have four Steps to use for improvements.

Creating a prototype Synthimal costs at least 50,000 credits (referee call). Cheaper Synthoids are 5,000 credits cheaper per step lost. Up to two steps may be lost in this manner. Synthoid designers may purchase an extra step—this adds 20,000 credits to the cost.

Synthimals built in the **Galactic Age**, costs are halved (as well as the purchase or sale of steps.) A Late Galactic Age, Medium sized Synthimals with four steps costs 10,000 credits. An additional step costs \$10,000.

## MUSCLE

Synthimals have Stamina based on their size. The Physical skill adds a variable amount of Stamina per point in Physical, based on the Synthimal's size. For a Tiny Synthimal, the base Stamina is 6 and each level of Physical skill adds one point of Stamina. A Tiny Synthimal with Physical 2 would have Stamina 8. Unlike Synthoids, the Physical Skill is bought like other skills.

## COST

The price for a particular size of Synthimal.



**Synthanimal Design Table**

	<b>Muscle</b>	<b>Cost (Credits)</b>	<b>Acuity</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Controls</b>
Default	Tiny Stamina 6/+1 per Physical point	10000	-1D to unskilled throws. 1 Skill.	Basic	Special Meds
+1 Step	Small Stamina 10/+2 per Physical point	15000	-1D to unskilled throws. 2 Skills.	1	Special Food
+2 Steps	Medium Stamina 14/+3 per Physical point	20000	-1D to unskilled throws. 3 Skills. Max Level 2	2	Recharge
+3 Steps	Large Stamina 18/+1 per Physical point	30000	-1D to unskilled throws. 3 Skills. Max Level 3	3	Remote

## ACUITY

The number of skills and their maximum levels. Synthimals may only have Physical, Combat, and Stealth Skills.

## OPTIONS

Options for Synthimals are the same as those for Synthoids. All Synthimals start with the Basic package and one slot for Options. They may buy any Options open to Synthoids. Synthimals may be Quadruped at no additional cost but lack the crude hands a Synthoid has with this option.

## SPECIAL OPTIONS

**Hands:** (Minor Option) The Synthimal has rudimentary hands. The fingers are flexible, but the thumbs don't quite work right.

**Proto Sentient:** (Minor Option) A proto Sentient Synthimal can have Social skill. They can assess human emotional states and communicate on a simple level with a Social throw.

**Domesticated:** The Synthimal is designed to be especially affectionate and ingratiating with humans like a dog, cat, or rat. They have Social 0.

## QUIRKS

Synthimals can have Quirks like Synthoids. However, they tend to express them in a more basic fashion. A Meticulous Synthimal might drive its owner to distraction by constantly sniffing around and patrolling, or staying nearby to guard for threats despite the owner's desire for privacy.



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# SYNTHOIDS AS CHARACTERS

Synthoids may be viable player character options. We suggest that Late Interstellar Age Synthoids be a starting point for interested players. Synth characters have some advantages, offset by the weaknesses and quirks (designed or accidental). Synthoid characters will have to deal with prejudice, fear, and ignorance in some places. Due to the nature of their accelerated growth and memory implants, Synthoids do not start with an Archetype but may still choose one Talent.

Synthoids may also start with a debt they must pay off to get full freedom. This is usually 10% of their cost every year for 20 years. Many Synths take up an adventurer's life as part of a spaceship crew, indentured to the ship's captain. In this case they can work out payments whatever way they choose.

## WORKED EXAMPLE

Jimmijon Rog-Bergeron is an upper-level executive, and purchasing a Synthoid is a status symbol for his social group. He also has a young son, Beta, who may need a bodyguard. He decides to commission a Synthoid as a Nanny Guard. Jimmijon is from a Late Interstellar Age planet that is considered Class III when dealing with Synthoids: Synths are indentured servants, who are rarely emancipated as minors. Jimmijon purchases a basic +5 step Prototype package for 100000 credits.

Jimmijon increases the Synth's Muscle to Physical 2 and Stamina 20. This costs one Step.

He doesn't spend steps to upgrade the Synth's memory implants. The default is 3 skill levels with a maximum of 2. The Nanny will have Combat 1 and Social 2 (to deal with the toddler). Nanny will be -1D making any unskilled throws.

Jimmijon spends no Steps on Loss since he considers cybernetic implants to be gauche. The Nanny has a Loss of 0.

Jimmijon spends four Steps on Options! Nanny has four Option points. The Nanny gets Carapace, and Rapid, for a point each, and Reaction Time for two points.

Under Control, the Nanny has no Steps left to spend and must take special medicines on a regular basis.

The Referee rolls a Quirk for the Nanny: the result is 3, 5: Sexually active. The Referee decides Nanny has a romantic interest in Beta's father. The referee keeps this a secret and decides to spring this on Jimmijon at some point. On a Class III world this sort of thing could become a major scandal,

Jimmijon decides Nanny will be 160 cm tall and deceptively slim despite her physical strength. Her physical features are neither beautiful nor homely. The Referee decides Nanny will be an important NPC, giving her the Charming Talent.





## Nanny

Physical 2, Combat 1, Social 2

**Model:** *Physical +1, Skills 0, Loss 0, Four Options +4, Special Meds 0. Quirk: Sexually Active.*

**Talents:** Charming. Loss: 0 **Options:** Carapace, Rapid, and Reaction Time.

**Stamina:** 20

**Encumbrance:** 14

**Equipment:** Social Kit. 700 credits.

Nanny was built by the rising executive Jimmijon Rog-Bergeron, to look after his young son, Beta. Nanny was designed to be deceptively slim and short, a feature which hides her considerable strength. More than once she has thrown an assailant or undesirable into a wall. She also has taken a bullet meant for one of the Jimmijons, saved by her Carapace feature. Nanny is combat trained and usually carries discreet weapons designed by Rog-Bergeron's firm.

Nanny is incredibly personable and able to charm a toddler or a sullen adult executive into doing what is best for them. Nanny knows best.

## SYNTH EQUIPMENT PACKAGES

Synths have starter equipment packages available. This is an assortment of gear for the Synthoid to carry out their assignments in a variety of environments and a few spare credits. The packages are based on their primary skill. A Synth assigned a role in the military would take the Combat package.

### Combat Kit (analogous to a Soldier)

Ceramic Plates (8 Protection)

Pulse Rifle (3d6+3, 4 reloads)

Semi-Auto Pistol (2d6, 2 reloads)

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm

Medkit

Chameleon Suit

Credits: 2d6x100 credits





### **Social Kit (a diplomat or spokesperson)**

Bulletproof Vest (4 Protection)

Stealth Pistol (2d6, 2 reloads)

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm

Medkit

Omnicom

Disguise Kit

Multiscanner

Credits: 2d6x100 credits

### **Technology Kit**

Envirosuit (4 Protection)

Gyrojet Pistol (2d6+2, 2 reloads)

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm

Medkit

Omnicom

OmniTool

Credits: 2d6x50 credits

### **Knowledge Kit (assistant/ bodyguard to an academic)**

Envirosuit (4 Protection)

Semi-Automatic Pistol (2d6, 2 reloads))

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm





Medkit

Multiscanner

Omnicomp

Credits: 2d6x50 credits

**Stealth Kit (a rogue Synth living as an outlaw)**

Ceramic Plates (8 Protection)

Shotgun (4d6, 2 reloads)

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm

Medkit

Chameleon Suit

Disguise Kit

Credits: 2d6x50 credits

**Vehicle Kit (co-pilot or driver)**

Envirosuit (4 Protection)

Gyrojet Rifle (3d6+2, 2 reloads)

Backpack

LED Flashlight

OmniComm

Medkit

Multiscanner

Credits: 2d6x50 credits

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## SYNTHOID TECHNOLOGIES

Some critics have said Synthoids are more dangerous than antimatter. After making artificial humans, it became clear that equipment would be needed to ensure that they remained subjugated. As more methods of control were developed, criminals and Synthoid advocates found ways around them.

More Synthoid technology was introduced to allow some more extreme models, like the aquatic and the vacuum dwellers to operate better in a standard atmosphere. Further concessions were made to the Synthoids' health and comfort. On some worlds this was regarded as humane, on others it was considered to be a cost-effective way of maintaining your property.

**Breaker (5,000 credits, Late Interstellar Age):** A breaker is extremely illegal technology. It's used by rogue Synthoids and their sympathizers. A breaker is actually a kit of medical supplies and specialized neural probes that can stop a Synth's Direct Order or Remote Control from affecting them. Breaking Control requires a Technology roll with a -2D penalty. A failed roll inflicts a wound on the Synthoid. The Technology roll can only be re-attempted once the Synth has fully healed the damage.

**Lock Chip (500 credits, Late Space Age):** Lock chips scan for trace elements common to Synths. If a Synthoid tries to use such a chipped device or weapon, the chip will shut the equipment down. A Technology roll with a -2D penalty can override the chip.

**Pressure Suit (2,000 credits, Late Interstellar Age):** Vacuum-rated Synthoids may wear this outfit to negate their -1D for operating in an atmosphere. It counts as two items of encumbrance and may be worn with armor.

**Recharge pack (2,000 credits, Late Space Age):** This belt-mounted pack contains high density batteries allowing a Synth to recharge in the field, if needed. The pack will keep its wearer in good health for a week before needing a recharge.

**Recharge Station (3,000 credits Late Space Age):** This is a non-portable (250kg), multi-purpose station that serves as a recharging station, cryo-berth, med-bay, or regular quarters for a Synthoid. A Synthoid who uses a Recharge Station gains the equivalent of eight hours sleep in only four hours.

**Remote Tablet (1,000 credits, Late Space Age):** This tablet can be installed in an Omnicomp and functions as a remote control for a Synthoid. It can be used to issue orders by voice or text. It also allows the user to track the Synth out to Far range and read their medical status.

**Shock Collar (100 credits, Late Atomic Age):** Shock collars are an inhumane means to handle unruly Synthoids. A controller with a range of 30 meters will trigger the collar to deliver a neural shock causing 3d6 of damage. The collar can be used until



the Synthoid is wounded or dead. They are often used as a backup security measure for controlling Synthoids, especially in the military. They are banned on Class I or II worlds.

**Vat-ameals (5 credits, Late Space Age):** These Control Foods look similar to human field rations and are unappetizing to say the least. They require some mixing with water. Twenty-five Vat-ameals count as one item and can be stored for 1d6 decades.

**‘Vat-amins’ (50 credits, Late Space Age):** The special medicines some Synths require can be disguised as human pharmaceuticals for Synths keeping a low profile at no extra cost. One batch of Vat-amins provides medicines for a month.

**Vat Slops (10 credits, Early Mechanical Age):** Class IV and some Class III societies require Synthoids to wear special uniforms. They are derogatorily referred to as Vat Slops or dust covers. Their materials are often substandard. They usually do not have pockets, though some Synths improvise them.

**Water Mask (200 credits, Early Atomic Age):** This mask allows aquatic Synthoids to function in an atmosphere for 2d6 hours + Physical skill. It recirculates water, drawing oxygen from the atmosphere to freshen it. It counts as two items of encumbrance.

**Wiper (5,000 credits, Late Interstellar Age):** A Memory Wiper, or more commonly, Wiper can remove a Synthoid’s memories. The device is a metallic cap which is worn on the Synthoid’s head. A Wiper can remove the last ten minutes, an hour, or a day from a Synthoid’s memory. It is often used to repress memories of sensitive or stressful events. Wipers do not work on humans, except to cause severe headaches. Using a wiper knocks out the Synthoid for approximately a minute. The wiped memories can’t be retrieved normally, though some events may trigger them (Referee’s discretion for the trigger.)



## ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

All these are made in the Late Interstellar Age (5 Steps, 50,000 credits). It is assumed they escaped from servitude and all manner of abuse. They can be used singly or form their own group seeking a home or payback. Referees may allow players to pick a Synthoid and issue them a kit based on their skills or backstory.

*Italics track the use of steps on the Synth Design Table.*

### Howard

Physical 2, Combat 2, Technology 2

**Model:** *Physical +1, Loss 0, Skills +2, One minor Option +1, Special Meds 0. Quirk: silver hair.*

**Talents:** Maverick. Loss: 0 **Options:** Armor 4 points.

**Stamina:** 20

**Encumbrance:** 14

**Equipment:** Knowledge Kit, 700 credits.

Howard was a combat engineer and medic. Constant combat caused his officers to constantly wipe his memory. Eventually he snapped under the strain. Along the way he discovered how to fabricate the Vat-amins so many of his peers needed. He makes them available in inhalers. Acquiring the materials required him and his colleagues to perform criminal acts.

### Dhanna

Physical 1, Stealth 2, Combat 2

**Model:** *Physical 0, Loss 0, Skills +2, One major Option +3, Special Meds 0. Special Meds Quirk: Rhythm.*

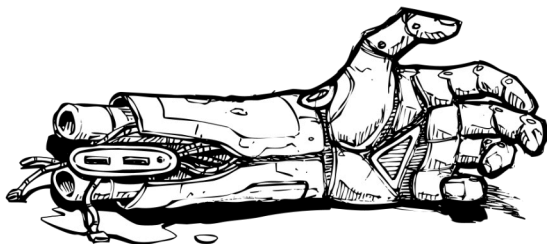
**Talents:** Evasive Action. Loss: 0 **Options:** Fast.

**Stamina:** 17

**Encumbrance:** 12

**Equipment:** Social Kit, 700 credits.

Dhanna was an executive's plaything. Besides numerous sordid duties she was tasked with guarding him from all dangers. Unfortunately, she failed, and an assassin killed her owner. While her owner's body was still warm, she looted his accounts and made her escape. Dhanna is very graceful and enjoys doing complex dances and gymnastics. Dhanna is not particularly violent and actually likes humans. She tries her best to pass as one while living off her dwindling funds and constantly moving.





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### Lexo

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Physical 3, Combat 2, Tech 1

**Model:** *Physical +3, Loss 0, Skills 0, One Minor Option +2, Special Meds 0. Quirk: Large*

**Talents:** Berserker. Loss: 0 **Options:** Armor 4 points protection, Carapace -1D damage.

**Stamina:** 23

**Encumbrance:** 16

**Equipment:** Stealth Kit, 350 credits.

Lexo is a blunt instrument, bred to fight and little else. Possessing a dense frame and subdermal armor, he is a dangerous opponent. He enjoys throwing people against walls to kill them. However, Lexo is not as dumb as he looks: he also has training in repairing gear and basic engineering. Unfortunately, violence is his default behavior when he is caught off guard.

Lexo was dumped unceremoniously on a backwater by a commanding officer who felt he was too much trouble.

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### Dorah

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Physical 3, Combat 2, Knowledge 1, Social 1

**Model:** *Physical +2, Loss 0, Skills +2, Option +1, Special Meds 0. Quirk: Rhythm.*

**Talents:** Charming. Loss: 0 **Options:** Attractive.

**Stamina:** 23

**Encumbrance:** 16

**Equipment:** Social Kit. 700 credits.

Dorah was an assassin for her world's government. She was excellent at getting close to a designated target and terminating them. She eventually rebelled: she no longer kills for any government. Now she kills to survive and maintain her freedom.

Dorah is pretty and will use her looks to manipulate people and gain their trust.

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### Roxanne

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Physical 2, Combat 1, Stealth 1, Knowledge 1, Social 2

**Model:** *Physical +1, Loss 0, 5 Skills +3, Option +1, Special Meds 0. Quirk: Vain.*

**Talents:** Broker. Loss: 0 **Options:** Rapid Attack.

**Stamina:** 20

**Encumbrance:** 14

**Equipment:** Social Kit. 700 credits.

Roxanne hails from a Class II world and would have eventually earned her freedom, while working as a mid-level manager for a large company. Hidden fees and taxes made her despair of ever earning enough to purchase her contract and she skipped off-world to earn a living as a freelance spokesperson in big business. Roxanne worries that one day someone will come looking for her and bring her back to pay off her service contract.

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## Rich

Physical 1, Combat 1, Knowledge 1, Technology 1, Stealth 1, Social 1

**Model:** Physical 0, Loss 0, Skills +3, Option 0, Recharges +2. Quirk: Too Human.

**Talents:** Deduction. Loss: 0 **Options:** Basic.

**Stamina:** 17

**Encumbrance:** 12

**Equipment:** Knowledge Kit. 350 credits.

With the high number of Synthoids escaping their contracts, law enforcement decided to create a Synth to catch a Synth. Enter Rich. As a cruel joke, Rich was designed with the delusion he was human. His creators even went as far as giving him memory implants of a childhood, career, and a failed marriage. With a recharge station hidden in his bed, Rich's implanted personality quirks do not let him to realize or acknowledge his true nature.