

# technoir

PLAYER'S GUIDE



The Technoir Player's Guide is for use with the core rules found in *Technoir*, a high-tech hard-boiled roleplaying game by Jeremy Keller.

Visit [TechnoirRPG.com](http://TechnoirRPG.com) for more information and downloads.

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# GENERATION

## 1. Select three training programs

Pick three **programs** that your protagonist has undergone from the table below. You may pick the same **program** twice, but not for all three selections.

## 2. Determine verb ratings

Fill in the first box for each **verb** on your protagonist sheet. For each **program**, fill in an additional box for each of the three **verbs** it teaches.

## 3. Select adjectives

For each **training program**, select one of the listed **adjectives** that best describes your protagonist and write it on your sheet next to a **+**. Or you can come up with your own. Mark both boxes next to that **adjective** to indicate it is **locked**.

## 4. Select three connections

Pick from the starting **Transmission**. Note the name and city of each **connection**. You can also add your fellow protagonists to your **connections** list.

## 5. Assign relationship adjectives

Go around the table. When it's your turn, pick a **relationship adjective** from page "Relationship Adjectives" on page 5 and assign it to one of the characters on your **connections** list. Repeat as often as everyone can get a relationship **adjective**.

## 6. Purchase objects using kreds

You start with 10 Kreds. Buy **objects** from the catalog in this booklet by paying the listed cost. Write the **object** and its **tags** on your protagonist sheet. You can buy additional upgrade **tags** for 1 Kred each. Objects with the **implant tag** cost 5 Kreds to install. **Connections** with the **shark, fix, chop, or splice** favors can provide loans or discounts. Tell the GM whenever you call in a favor. 2 favors per **connection** max.

## 7. Finish the protagonist

Name your character. Write a short description. Start with three **Push dice**.

### TRAINING PROGRAMS

Program	Verbs (increase each by 1)	Adjectives (pick one)
Bodyguard	COAX, FIGHT, and TREAT	<i>alert, patient, or protective</i>
Courier	FIGHT, MOVE, and PROWL	<i>agile, fast, or healthy</i>
Criminal	HACK, PROWL, and SHOOT	<i>brutal, clever, or sneaky</i>
Doctor	DETECT, OPERATE, and TREAT	<i>attentive, smart, or steady</i>
Engineer	COAX, HACK, and OPERATE	<i>logical, obsessive, or technical</i>
Escort	COAX, MOVE, and TREAT	<i>limber, savvy, or sexy</i>
Investigator	DETECT, HACK, and PROWL	<i>intuitive, observant, or persistent</i>
Pilot	DETECT, OPERATE, and SHOOT	<i>ace, quick, or spatial</i>
Soldier	FIGHT, MOVE, and SHOOT	<i>brave, strong, or tough</i>

# VERBS

**Verbs** describe your protagonist's ability to perform actions relevant to the criminal adventures she will become involved in. They are used to create positive and negative **adjectives** on other characters and their **objects**.

Here are descriptions of the nine **verbs**. Listed with each are examples of **adjectives** it might be used to create.



## COAX

*Used to influence people through words and body language.*

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| ☒+ Eager     | Confused ☒☒    |
| ☒+ Supported | Embarrassed ☒☒ |
| ☒+ Confident | Shamed ☒☒      |



## DETECT

*Used to notice details and track people.*

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| ☒+ Watched    | Marked ☒☒   |
| ☒+ Recognized | Nervous ☒☒  |
|               | Paranoid ☒☒ |



## FIGHT

*Used to attack bare handed and with melee weapons.*

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| ☒+ Shielded | Stunned ☒☒ |
|             | Bruised ☒☒ |
|             | Severed ☒☒ |



## HACK

*Used to access and manipulate other's **objects** electronically.*

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| ☒+ Monitored  | Hacked ☒☒    |
| ☒+ Secured    | Glitching ☒☒ |
| ☒+ Firewalled | Crashed ☒☒   |



## MOVE

*Used to get around under your own power—run, swim, climb, jump.*

- |           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| ☒+ Pushed | Outpaced ☒☒ |
|           | Sprained ☒☒ |
|           | Broken ☒☒   |



## OPERATE

*Used to drive vehicles, pilot aircraft, and control mobile machinery.*

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| ☒+ Directed | Shaken ☒☒   |
|             | Dented ☒☒   |
|             | Totalled ☒☒ |



## PROWL

Used to sneak around and get into places you are not wanted.

☒+ Hidden

Distracted ☒-

☒+ Disguised

Oblivious ☒-

Blind ☒-



## SHOOT

Used to attack with ranged weapons, personal or vehicle mounted.

☒+ Covered

Shocked ☒-

Bloody ☒-

Maimed ☒-



## TREAT

Used to mend physical and psychological wounds.

☒+ Stimulated

Nauseated ☒-

☒+ Strong

Poisoned ☒-

☒+ Healthy

Diseased ☒-

# ADJECTIVES

**Adjectives** are traits that make you stand out.

Here are a list of potential positive **adjectives** you could use when creating a new protagonist. You're not required to use these, you can always make up your own.

ace	creative	large	seductive
aggressive	cute	light	sexy
agile	deadly	limber	short
alert	detailed	logical	small
analytical	determined	loud	smart
angry	discrete	meticulous	sneaky
artistic	empathic	musical	spatial
attentive	energetic	obedient	steady
authoritative	fast	observant	strong
bossy	fearless	passionate	stubborn
brainy	friendly	patient	stylish
brave	funny	persistent	tall
brutal	handsome	practiced	technical
calm	healthy	precise	threatening
careful	heavy	prepared	tough
charming	impulsive	quick	twitchy
clever	intuitive	ruthless	unpredictable
clinical	knowledgeable	savvy	violent

## Relationship Adjectives

affectionate	lustful	respectful
dependent	obsessive	sympathetic
loyal	protective	trusting

# CONNECTIONS

**Connections** are characters that your protagonist knows well. Well enough to do her a solid. They have two main functions within the game: info and favors.

## INFO

**Connections** can provide your protagonist with information. When you lean on a **connection**, the GM will have you roll a die and use the result to consult the Transmission for the city the **connection** is in.

## FAVORS

You can go to a **connection** for certain favors. Each **connection** can provide one or more of the following (as listed with their stats in the Transmission).

### Chop

*Sell you a stolen vehicle at an 8 Kred discount (add the **stolen** tag for free) or buy a stolen vehicle from you at an 8 Kred discount.*

### Date

*Attend a function with you, gaining you access somewhere you wouldn't be welcome otherwise.*

### Deal

*Provide a dose of drugs. First time is free, 1 Kred thereafter. Taking them gives you the negative sticky adjective of **high**. Once in the next contention, you can treat all the **Hurt dice** of a roll as positive results. Declare after you roll.*

### Fence

*Buy a bulk load of stolen merchandise for 5 Kreds.*

### Fix

*Sell you up to three **objects** in specified categories, each discounted by 2 Kreds. Add the **stolen** tag to each.*

### Ride

*Transport you, a friend, or illicit goods to a destination inside or just out of the city.*

### Shark

*Lend you 10 Kreds, expecting repayment. Mark this in the 'debt' column.*

### Splice

*Install a cybernetic **object** (or an **object** with the **implant** tag) for free.*

Note that the more you use a **connection** for favors, the more it will be revealed that he is involved in the ongoing plot. This may result in the connection needing you for a favor or maybe even cause him to turn against you.



# OBJECTS

**Objects** are your stuff. High-tech devices that gain you an advantage over the have-nots. Each **object** has a handful of **tags** that describe its capabilities.

## GUNS

### **ARX-21**

*An assault rifle.*

**Tags:** burst fire, large, long-range, loud, stock

**Base Cost:** 5

### **Barker**

*A heavy pistol.*

**Tags:** loud, powerful

**Base Cost:** 2

### **Duster**

*A shotgun.*

**Tags:** loud, scattershot

**Base Cost:** 2

### **Jaguar**

*A submachine-gun.*

**Tags:** burst fire

**Base Cost:** 1

### **Stinger**

*A light, concealable pistol.*

**Tags:** small

**Base Cost:** 1

**Gun Upgrades:** cam, derma-linked, explosive rounds, implant, laser-sight, linked, nerve-linked, scope, silencer

# WEAPONS

## Baton

*A non-lethal weapon often carried by security personnel.*

**Tags:** blunt

**Base Cost:** 1

## Katana

*A Japanese sword. Popular among ronin wannabes.*

**Tags:** deadly, sharp

**Base Cost:** 2

## Knife

*A small blade that can be easily concealed.*

**Tags:** sharp, small

**Base Cost:** 2

**Weapon Upgrades:** derma-linked, implant, linked, nerve-linked

# ARMOR

## Jumpsuit

*Padded overalls, covered in pockets.*

**Tags:** impact armor

**Base Cost:** 1

## Kevlar Vest

Standard issue armor for security personnel.

**Tags:** ballistic armor

**Base Cost:** 1

## Riot Shield

*Clear plastic, portable barrier.*

**Tags:** protective

**Base Cost:** 1

**Armor Upgrades:** condition monitor, derma-linked, linked



# CYBERNETICS

Each **object** listed here costs 5 Kreds or a **splice** favor to surgically install.

## Cyberarm

*An artificial arm replacement.*

**Tags:** nerve-linked

**Base Cost:** 1

**Upgrades:** agile, claws, compartment, detachable, gesture input, matched pair, quick, spring-loaded, strong, synthskin, tough

## Cyberear

*Electronic inner-ear replacement.*

**Tags:** nerve-linked, mic, sound

**Base Cost:** 3

**Upgrades:** high-frequency, low-frequency, matched pair

## Cybereye

*Electronic eye replacement.*

**Tags:** cam, display, nerve-linked

**Base Cost:** 3

**Upgrades:** infrared, matched pair, ocular screen, sonar-imaging, thermal-imaging

## Cyberhand

*An artificial hand replacement.*

**Tags:** nerve-linked

**Base Cost:** 1

**Upgrades:** claws, detachable, dexterous, matched pair, strong, synthskin

## Cyberleg

*An artificial leg replacement.*

**Tags:** nerve-linked

**Base Cost:** 1

**Upgrades:** agile, compartment, detachable, fast, matched pair, spring-loaded, strong, synthskin, tough

## Headjack

*A cranially implanted computing interface.*

**Tags:** cerebral input, experimental, linked, nerve-linked

**Base Cost:** 4

**Upgrades:** cochlear splice, derma-linked, encryption, firewall, gustatory splice, olfactory splice, optical splice, somatic splice

## Reflex Stimulators

*A series of nervous-system enhancers that improve reaction time.*

**Tags:** nerve-linked, quick, reflexive

**Base Cost:** 3

**Upgrades:** gesture input



# EXTERNAL COMPUTING

## Router Patch

*A chip worn against the skin that links a derma-only network to the Interface.*

**Tags:** derma-linked, linked

**Base Cost:** 2

**Upgrades:** encryption, firewall

## Specks

*Augmented reality Interface glasses, earbuds, and motion trackers.*

**Tags:** display, gesture input, linked, sound

**Base Cost:** 4

**Upgrades:** cam, derma-linked, encryption, firewall, mic

# GEAR

## Medkit

*Tools and supplies for performing first aid on the injured or otherwise afflicted.*

**Tags:** bandages, linked, stims

**Base Cost:** 3

## Descent Line

*A retractable cable designed to lower a harnessed person at a controlled descent.*

**Tags:** harness, linked, retractable cable

**Base Cost:** 3

## Stealthsuit

*A black bodysuit with coolant to fool thermal sensors.*

**Tags:** linked, thermal dampeners

**Base Cost:** 2

**Upgrades:** condition monitor, derma-linked

# VEHICLES

## aCar

*Fully automated street vehicle.*

**Tags:** automatic, linked, passengers, spheels

**Base Cost:** 14

## Goblin

*A high-performance muscle car.*

**Tags:** linked, passengers, spheels, turbo

**Base Cost:** 14

## Hauler

*Armored truck.*

**Tags:** armored, cargo, heavy, huge, linked, treads

**Base Cost:** 16

**Upgrades:** burst fire, cam, cow catcher, gun, long-range, plow, riot-hose

## SkyRabbit

*A high-speed dual-rotor-fan helicopter.*

**Tags:** cam, linked, rotor-fans, thrusters

**Base Cost:** 14

**Upgrades:** burst fire, gun, long-range

## Switchblade

*An agile, uni-speel motorcycle.*

**Tags:** 3D-shocks, linked, speels, turbo

**Base Cost:** 14

# DRONES

## Buzzer

*Rotor-powered drone.*

**Tags:** cam, linked, mic, rotorfan

**Base Cost:** 4

**Upgrades:** burst fire, gun, infrared, sonar-imaging, thermal-imaging

## Griller

*A mini-tank.*

**Tags:** armored, cam, linked, mic, robot arm, treads

**Base Cost:** 6

**Upgrades:** burst fire, gun, long-range

## Spyder

*Robotic arthropod.*

**Tags:** adhesive legs, cam, linked, mic, small

**Base Cost:** 5

**Upgrades:** syringe

# TAGS

Tags describe the capabilities and features of objects. Here are definitions of each of the tags listed with the objects in the previous section.

**3D-shocks:** a 2-axis suspension system  
**adhesive legs:** articulate limbs that allow drones to climb up walls (requires *small*)  
**agile:** flexible limb articulation that can perform complicated positioning  
**armor-piercing:** fires ammunition designed to penetrate ballistic armor  
**armored:** a thick shell that protects from ballistic and impact attacks  
**automatic:** designed to self-navigate city streets  
**ballistic armor:** protective garments designed to stop bullets  
**bandages:** cloth or spray to bind wounds  
**blunt:** a weapon designed to inflict crushing trauma on its target  
**burst fire:** sprays a cluster of bullets (requires *gun* category or *tag*)  
**cam:** bi-lens camera system capturing stereoscopic eyeRez video images  
**cargo:** can be used to transport large, heavy crates  
**cerebral input:** direct mental control of the Interface (trumps *gesture input*)  
**claws:** small blades that extend from the fingertips or knuckles  
**cochlear splice:** electronic connection to the ears (trumps *mic*, *sound*)  
**compartment:** a small, hidden storage space in an artificial limb  
**condition monitor:** sensors to track heart rate, pulse, and other vitals  
**cow catcher:** attaches to the front of a vehicle to push away obstacles  
**deadly:** a weapon designed to inflict fatal wounds  
**derma-linked:** personal network connection conducted by the skin  
**detachable:** can disconnect from a socket and be reconnected later  
**dexterous:** limb articulation with precise control  
**display:** high resolution imaging projected into the viewer's vision  
**encryption:** protects stored data from being read or manipulated  
**experimental:** state-of-the-art but untested technology  
**explosive rounds:** fires rounds that explode on impact  
**fast:** limb articulation for rapid movement over ground  
**firewall:** protective software to prevent hacking  
**gesture input:** captures body movement to interact with the Interface  
**gun:** adds a mounted firearm to a vehicle or drone  
**gustatory splice:** electronic connection to the nerves that handle taste  
**harness:** straps and rigging worn to suspend the wearer comfortably  
**heavy:** weighs more than other objects in its category  
**huge:** significantly larger than other objects in its category (trumps *large*)  
**impact armor:** protective garments designed to stop blunt and sharp attacks  
**implant:** an object not purposefully cybernetic is installed inside the body  
**infrared:** senses light beyond the human-visible spectrum  
**large:** bigger than other objects in its category  
**laser-sight:** projects a harmless laser for accurate aiming  
**linked:** wireless connection to personal and Interface networks  
**long-range:** fires projectiles over long distances (requires *gun* category or *tag*)  
**loud:** makes a high volume, imposing noise



Some **tags** mention that they trump other **tags**. This means the other **tag** can't be used to react against an action from the trumping **tag**.

**matched pair:** the object comes with an mirrored twin

**mic:** a sensitive omni-directional microphone

**nerve-linked:** network conducted via the nervous system (implanted **objects** only)

**ocular screen:** a high resolution video display on the surface of the eyes

**olfactory splice:** electronic connection to the nerves that handle smell

**optical splice:** electronic connection to the eyes (trumps *cam*, *display*)

**passengers:** can transport more people than just a pilot/copilot

**plow:** attached to the front of a vehicle to push away snow or other debris

**powerful:** a gun that fires high-caliber rounds

**protective:** a barrier to shield the user from attacks

**quick:** limb articulation that moves rapidly within one's personal space

**reach:** a melee weapon that is longer than most

**reflexive:** stimulates the user to react rapidly to stimuli

**retractable cable:** a length of steel cable that winds up with a small motor

**riot-hose:** a non-lethal weapon to push back pedestrians

**robot arm:** an articulate limb controlled remotely

**rotor-fan(s):** rotor blades housed in a cylindrical shell

**scattershot:** sprays projectiles in a widening pattern (requires *gun* category or **tag**)

**scope:** an aiming mechanism with zoom lenses

**sharp:** designed to cut or pierce a target

**silencer:** gun attachment that dampens noise (incompatible with *burst fire*, *loud*, *scattershot*)

**small:** reduced in size, generally concealable

**somatic splice:** electronic connection to the skin (trumps *touch feedback*)

**sonar-imaging:** emits and senses sound waves, presents data visually

**sound:** three-dimensional, immersive audio playback

**spheels:** spherical wheels that allow 360-degree maneuverability

**spring-loaded:** stores kinetic energy to be released at an opportune time

**stims:** a dosage of steroids to jumpstart the adrenaline system

**stock:** an attachment for a gun to help hold it steady against the shoulder

**strong:** limb articulation that can apply great force

**synthskin:** artificial dermal layer that imitates human skin

**syringe:** a needle that can deliver a dose of a drug

**thermal dampeners:** coolant used to fool thermal sensors

**thermal-imaging:** heat sensors displayed as a visual overlay

**thrown:** a weapon that is hurled at a target

**thrusters:** jets that provide increased speed in the air

**treads:** traction system to provide mobility over rough terrain

**touch feedback:** gives a tactile response to Interface interaction

**tough:** can endure large amounts of wear and impact

**toxin-filter:** scrubs harmful chemicals from airways or bloodstream

**turbo:** engine enhancement that provides increased speed over smooth streets

# CONTENTION

## 1. Recharge Push dice

- ⦿ The player starts an action with all of her **Push dice** charged.

## 2. Assemble the dice

- ⦿ The player gets a number of **Action dice** equal to her rating in the **verb** she is using.
- ⦿ She can add a **Push die** for each positive **adjective**, **object**, or **tag** that helps her.
- ⦿ She must take a **Hurt die** for each negative **adjective** she has.

## 3. Describe the action

- ⦿ The player uses her **verb**, **adjectives**, **objects**, and **tags** to inspire a narrative of the action that would assert the intended **adjective** on her target.

## 4. Roll the dice

- ⦿ The player rolls all of her **Action**, **Push**, and **Hurt dice**.
- ⦿ The **Hurt dice** cancel out any and all matching **Action** and **Push dice**.
- ⦿ The highest number on her surviving **Action** or **Push dice** is her **result**.

## 5. Determine Reaction

- ⦿ The **verb** the target uses to react determines his reaction rating.
- ⦿ For each, positive **adjective**, **object**, or **tag** that helps him, he can discharge a **Push die** and increase his reaction rating by 1.

## 6. Resolve the roll

- ⦿ If the player's result is higher than the target's reaction rating, her action is effective.

## 7. Apply the adjective

- ⦿ With an effective action, the player asserts a new **adjective** on the target.
- ⦿ By default the **adjective** is **fleeting**.
- ⦿ She can spend 1 **Push die** from her rolled dice to make it **sticky**.
- ⦿ She can spend 2 **Push dice** to make it **locked**.

## 8. Discharge Push dice

- ⦿ Any **Push dice** left in the player's roll are discharged.

## 9. Respect the adjective

- ⦿ Play continues with the new **adjective** representing a change in the narrative.

# LETHAL CONSEQUENCES

After any scene in which you received an **adjective** that describes physical damage, roll a **Hurt die** for each sticky or locked negative **adjective** that applies to your character directly. If you roll a 6, you receive the sticky negative **adjective** of **dying**. If you roll two or more 6s, you receive the locked negative **adjective** of **dead**. Both **adjectives** can be recovered from using the rules on the following page.



# RESTORATION

After a contention, use this procedure to mend negative **adjectives** and advance your protagonist's **verbs**.

## Fleeting Adjectives are immediately removed

- ⦿ After a scene is over, any fleeting **adjectives** go away right away.

## Sticky Adjectives require mending

- ⦿ To remove a sticky **adjective** that describes physical, emotional, or social damage to your protagonist, make a **TREAT** roll.
- ⦿ To remove a sticky **adjective** that describes damage to an **object's** hardware, make an **OPERATE** roll. For software, make a **HACK** roll.

## Locked Adjectives require replacement surgery

- ⦿ For a locked **adjective** that describes physical, emotional, or social loss to your protagonist, implant an **object** that replaces what has been lost. This downgrades the **adjective** to sticky, which can be mended as above.
- ⦿ For a locked **adjective** that describes damage to an **object**, pay half the **object's** full cost for replacement parts. This downgrades the **adjective** to sticky, which can be mended as above. (Or you can always obtain a whole new **object**.)

## Roll the dice

- ⦿ Whoever is making the roll adds a **Hurt die** for each of their own negative **adjectives** and one for each of the negative **adjectives** of their patient.
- ⦿ If the patient is attempting to improve one of their primed **verbs**, they should indicate which one before a roll is made.
- ⦿ The difficulty rating is 4.

## Resolve the roll

- ⦿ If the roll's result is higher than the difficulty rating, the **adjective** is eliminated.
- ⦿ If the roll's result is equal or less than the difficulty rating, the adjective remains. Another attempt cannot be made until the character received another sticky or locked **adjective**.
- ⦿ If one of the **Hurt dice** results is higher than the primed **verb** that is intended for advancement, the **verb's** rating increases by 1. Not to exceed 5.
- ⦿ If the **verb** increases, any and all prime marks are erased.
- ⦿ If the **verb** does not increase, all existing prime marks remain.

# RECOVERY TIME

- ⦿ When a replacement part is implanted to downgrade a locked **adjective** to sticky, the character needs about 48 hours of recovery time.
- ⦿ After a **TREAT** roll is made to remove a sticky **adjective**, the character needs about 24 hours of recovery time.
- ⦿ Repaired or reprogrammed **objects** only need a few hours to perform the necessary fixes.

# EXPOSITION

It's like we're living in the future...

## TECHNOLOGY

The city streets buzz with illusory neon lines, animated, playing out just over the grimy surface. The Internet's gotten too big for any screen, so they feed it right to your eyeballs. You see it everywhere. It spills out onto the streets. It guides self-driving cars through automated intersections. It's the cartoon some kid wears to school. It's your personal shopper. We wear the hardware that runs it: in the glasses that let you see it, the chip sewn into your jeans, the electronics of your prosthetic leg. They're all linked together in a living, thrumming network that spans the world. They call it the Interface. We call it the Big Lie.

## ENVIRONMENT

Under all those pretty graphics, the city is dirtier than ever. Soot floats in from the deregulated coal plant; it cakes over everything. The weather is less predictable than ever. Wind and rain, then a drought, then a blizzard, then a hurricane. Hell is swelling up around us and we don't seem to care. We'll burn those carbon fuels as long as the corporate-sponsored wars keep winning what's left of them. We'll do it until we choke on the smog.

## SOCIETY

The rich are opulent. The poor are decrepit. There isn't much left between. Record numbers of the city's population are unemployed. When robotics do the blue-collar jobs and software handles the white-collar ones, what's a flesh body to do? Join a corporate army and get shipped off overseas. Send the paycheck home so the family can buy useless, corporate crap or lose it to the rampant runs of criminals.

Criminals like you.

