Space SF Setting Generator 1.1

This set of tables is used for generating a science-fiction setting set in space. The end result should be similar to the setting of Miles Vorkosigan books, Stellaris, or Warhammer 40k.

You need a 10-sided die (d10) which you roll once per each table column unless instructed otherwise. Under each table there are notes that explain how to roll on that table or the entries in it.

PARANORMAL PHENOMENA

Die roll	Amount
1	No paranormal phenomena.
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	Minor paranormal phenomena present.
8	
9	Major paranormal phenomena present.
10	

"Paranormal phenomena" is anything that cannot be clearly explained by science or by handwaving it as "high-tech that's currently unavailable in real life." For example, in Star Wars, a lightsaber would be a normal piece of technology that simply doesn't exist in real life, while the Force would be a paranormal phenomenon.

PRECURSOR CIVILIZATIONS

Die roll	Amount of precursors	Precursors' appearance	Precursors' influence
1	No precursor civilizations.	Human-like	No influence on younger civilizations.
2	No precursor civilizations.	Human-like	No influence on younger civilizations.
3	No precursor civilizations.	Reptilian	No influence on younger civilizations.
4	No precursor civilizations.	Reptilian	Observation of younger civilizations.
5	One precursor civilization.	Amphibian	Observation of younger civilizations.
6	One precursor civilization.	Equine	Observation of younger civilizations.
7	One precursor civilization.	Plant	Minor influence on younger civilizations.
8	Two precursor civilizations.	Monstrous	Minor influence on younger civilizations.
9	Two precursor civilizations.	Blobs	Major influence on younger civilizations.
10	Three precursor civilizations.	Mechanical	Major influence on younger civilizations.

If you roll "no precursor civilizations," do not roll on the "precursors' appearance" and "precursors' influence" columns. If you roll anything else:

– roll on the "precursors' appearance" column once per each individual precursor civilization,

– roll on the "precursors' influence" column either once for all precursors as a whole or once per each individual precursor civilization.

MODERN CIVILIZATIONS

Die roll	Numbers of races	Number of major empires	Number of minor empires
1	One	One	Zero
2	One	One	Zero
3	Two	Two	Zero
4	Two	Two	Three
5	Three	Three	Three
6	Four	Three	Five
7	Five	Four	Five
8	Six	Four	Seven
9	Seven	Number of races / 2	Seven
10	Eight	Round down, minimum one.	Number of major empires + 2

There are three tiers of empires, based on strength: major empires, minor empires and single-planet civilizations.

First assign races to major empires. Afterwards, all remaining races should be assigned to minor

empires. If there are leftover races after that, turn those races into powerful single-planet civilizations that are on the brink of developing their own empires.

If you roll more empires than races, assign existing races to several empires instead of just one.

FTL TRAVEL

Die roll	Method of travel
1	Warp drive
2	
3	Hyperdrive
4	
5	Wormholes
6	
7	Jump gates
8	
9	Otherealm
10	

Warp drive – starship's engines bend the space during travel. Example: Star Trek.

Hyperdrive – starship enters a fixed, naturally-occuring hyperlane and uses it for travel. Together, hyperlanes form a network similar to car roads. Example: Stellaris.

Wormhole – starship uses a wormhole to reach its destination. A wormhole can be natural or artifical, if appropriate technology is available, and permanent or temporary.

Jump gates – starship uses a series of special space installations called jump gates, "jumping" from one to another. New jump gates can be constructed and existing ones can be destroyed. Example: Mass Effect.

Otherealm – a starship physically enters another dimension, travels inside it, and returns to "our dimension" at the destination. A short distance in the otherealm corresponds to a long distance in "our dimension." Travel speed is not entirely predictable and can oscillate. Example: Warhammer 40,000.

Differences between warp drive and hyperdrive:

- Warp drive can be used anywhere, whereas hyperdrive is limited to hyperlanes that are not available everywhere. This applies both to starting locations and destinations.

Differences between hyperdrive, wormholes and otherealm:

- Travel time in a hyperlane or a wormhole is predictable. In the otherealm, it is not entirely predictable.

- Hyperlanes and wormholes are a part of "our dimension." Otherealm is its own dimension.

- Hyperlanes and wormholes are always largely empty and safe. Otherealm can potentially contain its own phenomena and sentient entities that can futher affect the travel and interact with the ship, and enter "our dimension."

- Hyperlanes and the otherealm are always present. An individual wormhole can be but also does not have to.

- Hyperlanes and the otherealm are natural phenomena. Wormholes can be either natural or artificial, if appropriate technology is available and used.

- Entering and exiting: hyperlanes cannot be used everywhere as they are not available everywhere, wormholes can be used anywhere where they don't endanger planets and otherealm can be used anywhere.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TWO EMPIRES

Die roll	Diplomacy stance	Open empire's relationship	Closed empire's relationship	Hostile empire's relationship
1	Open	Neutral	No diplomacy	Hostile
2		Friendly		
3		Alliance		
4		Unfriendly		
5		Hostile		
6		Personal union	Neutral	
7		Vassalage	Vassalage	
8	Closed	Reroll if same tier.	Reroll if lower tier than the open empire or same tier.	
9		Unfamiliarity		
10	Hostile	Roll again		

First, roll on the diplomacy stance for each empire and then roll for each empire pair's relationship based on those empires' stances.

Diplomacy stances:

- open – the empire is open to diplomacy with other empires. **If both empires have this stance, roll on the "open empire's relationship" column.**

- closed – the empire is xenophobic enough to be, for the large part, closed to majority of diplomacy with other empires. **If at least one empire in the pair has this stance and the other one does not have the hostile stance, roll on the "closed empire's relationship"**

column.

– hostile – the empire is openly hostile to all other empires and would rather see them destroyed than engage in diplomacy with them. **If at least one empire in the pair has this stance, roll on the "hostile empire's relationship" column, regardless of what the other empire's stance is.**

Relationship:

– neutral – the empires do not have strong feelings about one another one way or another. There may or may not be official bussiness between the two besides the basic diplomacy, but they largely do not care about the other one.

– friendly – the empires maintain a good relationship. Not only do they have various deals with one another, but their citizens may also be able to freely cross from one to another or there may be some additional benefits.

– alliance – the empires formed a military alliance and will likely come to the other's defense if one of them is attacked in a war. They might also have a lot of other deals.

– unfriendly – there are some minor hostilities between the two empires and their mutual deals and diplomacy are at the barest minimum, if they even exist. The threat of escalation to something worse is rather small, but exists.

– hostile – the empires are openly hostile to each other. Diplomacy is virtually non-existant and an incident could easily spark a war.

– personal union – the empires formed a personal union with one another. Their branches of government might be separate and independent, but they're united in having the same monarch as their ruler.

– vassalage – the lower-tier empire is a vassal of the higher-tier empire (overlord). Overlord pledges to protect its vassal and in return, the vassal is obliged to join its overlord's wars and pay some sort of tribute (money, resources, manpower, technology, etc.), and its external policy is dictated by the overlord. The overlord can sometimes even get involved in its vassal's internal affairs. Over time, the overlord could try to integrate the vassal directly into itself, thus terminating the vassal's existance as a separate entity completely, or the vassal could break free (or at the very least try).

– unfamiliarity – the empires either didn't meet yet or they have only met recently.

EMPIRE'S SOCIETY

Die roll	Type of government	Political leaning *Hive mind is considered to have no leaning.*
1	Democracy	Left-wing
2	Oligarchy	
3	Dictatorship	
4	Monarchy **Take automatically if empire is in personal union.**	Center **Take automatically if empire is mega-corporation.**
5	Hive mind	
6	Mega-corporation	
7	Committee-governed	
8	Political unrest/Civil war See description.	Right-wing
9	Roll again	
10		

"Type of government" marks what kind of government is currently in charge of the empire.

Description:

- democracy – the empire is either a direct democracy, where the population votes directly on all laws and issues, or a representative democracy (a republic) where the population votes for politicians who then vote on laws and issues in the name of the population.

- oligarchy – the power is held only by a certain class such as clergy (theocracy), military (military junta) or merchants (merchant republic), or a single party that outlawed all other parties, while the general population has little to no real power.

- dictatorship – the empire is controlled by a single person with high or unlimited power, for either a fixed amount of time or until their death. This position is not inheritable but instead, the previous dictator's successor is somehow either elected or appointed.

- monarchy – the power is held by a king or an emperor who rules with absolute power. In vast majority of cases, the ruling title is inherited (by either a child or a close family member of the previous ruler), but in some cases, an empire might be an elective monarchy, where the next ruler is elected from children or close family members of the previous ruler, or from the nobility.

- hive mind – the entire population shares a single mind and there are no independent individuals, with the entire race effectively acting as a single organism. Maybe the race evolved to have a single mind or the population joined the individuals' minds into one by

some technological or paranormal means. Maybe it's a race of AI machines and computers that developed a single mind on the software level.

– mega-corporation – the empire is actually a singular gigantic corporation. A board of executives has the power on the empire level and oversees branch offices that have some limited power on the local level. The empire is capitalistic in nature and the profit is the company's highest priority.

– committee-governed – the empire is governed by a single committee-like group of anywhere between half-a-dozen to dozen individual members. The empire is still political in nature and the committee's highest priority is either the well-being of its citizens or just keeping the power for itself. It is highly bureaucratic and might require doing paperwork to accomplish a lot of things.

– political unrest/civil war – the empire is experiencing a political turmoil or a full-on civil war, and might be about to change its type of government. Other empires might be interested in using this moment of weakness for their own gain. **For an empire that has this type of "government", roll two dice on the same column again. The first die represents the current government, while the second one represents the potential new government. If any die shows 8 again, reroll it. If both dice show the same government, reroll one or both of them.**

"Political leaning" marks the general leaning of the empire's society on the political spectrum. Options:

– left-wing – most of citizens hold liberal values.

– center – the empire is carefully balancing between the two sides. Maybe it's split and neither side is particularly dominant, or it genuinely believes in this balance.

– right-wing – conservative values dominate the society.