# SYSTEM SHOCK 2®

## WARNING: TO OWNERS OF PROJECTION TELEVISIONS

**STILL PICTURES OR IMAGES MAY CAUSE PERMANENT PICTURE-TUBE DAMAGE OR MARK THE PHOSPHOR OF THE CRT. AVOID REPEATED OR EXTENDED USE OF VIDEO GAMES ON LARGE-SCREEN PROJECTION TELEVISIONS.**

### EPILEPSY WARNING

**PLEASE READ BEFORE USING THIS GAME OR ALLOWING YOUR CHILDREN TO USE IT.**

Some people are susceptible to epileptic seizures or loss of consciousness when exposed to certain flashing lights or light patterns in everyday life.
Such people may have a seizure while watching television images or playing certain video games. This may happen even if the person has no medical history of epilepsy or has never had any epileptic seizures.
If you or anyone in your family has ever had symptoms related to epilepsy (seizures or loss of consciousness) when exposed to flashing lights, consult your doctor prior to playing.
We advise that parents should monitor the use of video games by their children. If you or your child experience any of the following symptoms: dizziness, blurred vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of consciousness, disorientation, any involuntary movement or convulsion, while playing a video game, IMMEDIATELY discontinue use and consult your doctor.

### PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE DURING USE

- Do not stand too close to the screen. Sit a good distance away from the screen, as far away as the length of the cable allows.
- Preferably play the game on a small screen.
- Avoid playing if you are tired or have not had much sleep.
- Make sure that the room in which you are playing is well lit.
- Rest for at least 10 to 15 minutes per hour while playing a video game.

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# PLAYING SYSTEM SHOCK 2

System Shock™ 2 combines the immediacy and graphic immersion of first-person 3D-rendered shooters with a full-fledged role-playing game experience. At the start of the game, you can customise your skill set through a choice of career missions. Throughout the game, you have opportunities to guide your character's specialisation through the use of cybernetic modules and upgrade units. Characters can progress in their combat skills, including standard, heavy, energy and exotic weapons. They can increase their technical prowess, including hacking, weapons modifications and research. Alternatively, they may learn increasingly powerful psionic abilities. System Shock 2 game play is open ended, and characters with different specialities will be able to find different ways around obstacles. A Marine, trained in combat skills for years, might fight past several enemies to reach an important switch, while an OSA agent with psionic talents might hide himself from his enemies to walk past them. A UNN naval officer might use his technical skills to hack into a nearby gun turret and let it destroy the enemy.

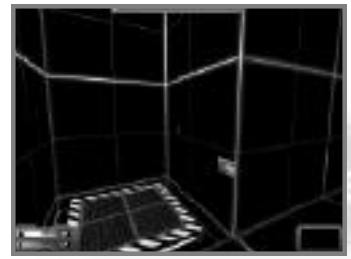
## QUICKSTART



Your adventures start humbly enough, travelling by tramway to the section of the city where the UNN has its recruitment facilities. No jerky escalators here: take the right hand upward-bound gravshaft to street level.



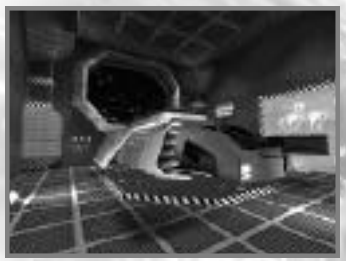
The UNN facility directly across the street is one of five principal recruitment facilities on Earth for its three military branches: the Navy, the Marines and the OSA. The most recently built of the five facilities, it is said to use holographic artificial personalities and cutting-edge training simulations.



Once you've gone inside, the training simulations are a must-visit experience: some of the highest-quality cyber-simulations available, including not only sight and sound, but tactile feedback as well. Rumour has it that the protocol droid is principally on duty to keep the local teenagers from using the trainers as free entertainment.



After your training runs in the simulators, you'll be offered your choice of the three military branches. The UNN Navy and the Marines both have long and proud histories, dating back to the days of pre-corporate national militaries. The OSA is a newer branch, grounded in the recently established psionic disciplines, and already it's acquired a rather dark reputation as a group of "spooks."



Once you've made your choice, there's no turning back - you're about to be sent into space! A shuttle will drop you off at the orbital station for your first choice of mission postings.



Each year, you'll be offered three different choices for a tour of duty - each one offers different skills and bonuses for you to pick up, and after three years in the service of the UNN, you'll have picked up quite a few useful talents.



Your fourth year's tour of duty will be aboard the UNN *Rickenbacker*, the military adjunct to Earth's first faster-than-light ship, the TriOptimum ship *Von Braun.* Corporate types aren't necessarily the most capable of space hands, but still, shepherding a bunch of suits and scientists through space and back ought to be pretty simple... right?

system shock 2™



# MOVEMENT

In exploring the *Von Braun*, the first thing you will need to know is how to move about the ship. Your default key commands are:

| Command | Keyboard | Arrows | Keypad |
|---|---|---|---|
| Run forward | W | UP | 8 |
| Walk backwards | X | DOWN | 2 |
| Turn left | A | LEFT | 4 |
| Turn right | D | RIGHT | 6 |
| Crouch | S | | 5 |
| Slide left | Z | | 1 |
| Slide right | C | | 3 |
| Lean left | Q | | 7 |
| Lean right | E | | 9 |
| Look up | T | PgUp | |
| Look down | G | PgDn | |
| Look forward | V | | |
| Jump | SPACEBAR | | |

You may also look around using the mouse: moving the mouse turns you and points your view up and down, so you can also navigate by running forward and steering with the mouse.
The *Von Braun*'s layout includes:

- Access crawlways , which can only be navigated by moving while crouched down. The default crouch movement mode toggles crouch ON and OFF when you hit S, but you can change this in the options panel so that you must hold down a key to crouch.
- Ladders , which can be climbed by moving close to them, looking in the direction in which you mean to climb (either up or down) and moving forward.
- Gaps and catwalks , which require jumping from spot to spot. To jump forward, run forward and then hit jump. Be careful jumping when you're high above the floor - falling from a sufficient height can hurt or even kill you.
- Short ledges , which can be mantled up by walking into them while simultaneously pressing and holding jump.



## BASIC MODES: SHOOT/USE

You have two principal modes of interaction with the world: Shoot Mode and Use Mode.

- Shoot Mode offers a minimal set of extra displays, and mouse movement changes your view of the 3D world. Left-clicking in shoot mode fires or swings your current weapon, while right-clicking in shoot mode uses a highlighted object.
- Use Mode offers a larger number of display windows, and mouse movement moves a cursor around these windows. Right-clicking in use mode uses the object under the cursor; left-clicking an object picks it up. More detailed descriptions of the functions available in both modes can be found on the following pages.

## AFFECTING THE WORLD

The *Von Braun* is full of items to pick up, computers to reprogram, ship's systems to repair or disable and various other objects that you can use. When you are close enough to a usable item to interact with it, centre the item in your view and the item is highlighted. Square brackets highlight the item, indicating that it is *selected*. The appropriate action is displayed next to the selected item; for example, "Push button", "Search container" or "Use replicator". To perform this action, right click. This may bring up action-specific windows, such as the contents of a container or body that you're searching, or a training screen if you are using a trainer.



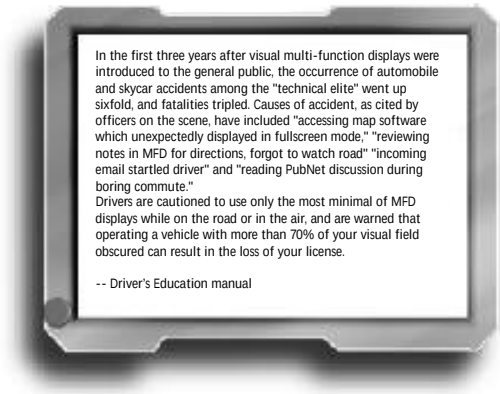

## QUICK SAVE/LOAD

When you transit between decks of the *Von Braun* or the *Rickenbacker*, your game will automatically be saved in a "quick save" slot. You can load this saved game with ALT-L. Additionally, you can save the game yourself in the quick save slot by hitting ALT-S. Keep in mind that any quick save overwrites the previous one, including both your own saves and saves upon level transition.



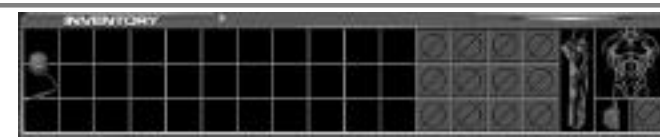
# MULTI-FUNCTION DISPLAYS

Hitting I or TAB brings up a set of auxiliary windows, called MFD (multi function displays). While the MFD windows are displayed, moving the mouse moves a cursor around the window, and your view of the world does not rotate. Individual MFD windows may also be called up by using selected items, such as information terminals and keypads. When this happens, you have an item-specific window, in addition to the standard MFD windows. To close all the MFD windows, left-click in the world view, press TAB/I or click on the middle button at the bottom of the screen.




## TOP WINDOW: INVENTORY

The top MFD window is your inventory. Empty spaces (on the left) indicate spaces that can be used to store items (some items will take up more than one square). Squares which are marked with a "Ø" symbol are not available for use as inventory. Greater strength allows you to carry more items, decreasing the number of "Ø" spaces. On the right of the inventory window are slots for your equipment: weapon, armour and implants. An extra implant slot is initially marked with a "Ø", as it is only available if you have the "Cybernetically Enhanced" OS upgrade.
Left-click on items to move them from your general inventory slots into the individual slots in order to equip them. Picking up an individual item places it in an appropriate inventory slot; searching a container or a body opens a separate window and left clicking on the contents picks them up.




Some items must be used in order to have an effect. To use an inventory item, right-click on it. For things such as hypos, this uses it up, removing it from your inventory and initiating the appropriate effect. For other items, such as weapons, using them gives you a new MFD window of settings you can use with the item.

To equip Weapons, armour and implants, left-click and drag them into the appropriate inventory slots. To reload an empty gun, left-click and drag the ammunition of your choice onto it. Other options for reloading include hitting the R key (which reloads with the most recently used type of bullets) or clicking on the ammo icon in the lower right status bar and pressing the B key to cycle through different types of ammunition.
Some items in your inventory, such as medical hypos and ammunition, "stack": multiple units are listed in the same inventory space, with a counter indicating how many there are.

To separate individual units away from the stack:

- Hold down the ALT key. The cursor changes to a "SPLIT" icon.
- Left-click the stack and drag away individual units.




## LOWER LEFT: RESEARCH, MAPS AND ADVANCEMENTS

The lower left MFD window includes the hit point and psi point bars which are always present as part of your status bar. Additionally, there are buttons for research (the test tube), help ("?" icon), map and icons indicating the number of nanites and upgrade points you have available. Selecting the research icon brings up an MFD window containing an update on your ongoing research, as well as reports on any previously completed research. Select the "?" icon (also available by holding down CTRL) and then left click on the selected item to display an information screen describing that item. Selecting the map brings up a map of the level. Your current location is indicated on the map by a circle with an arrow through it (the arrow indicates the direction); important objects are indicated by icons and letters. Some areas of the map, such as upper and lower sections, are displayed as insets away from the main area of the map, and the connections are indicated by numbers. You can make annotations on the map by clicking on any marked object (brackets appear around it) and typing in your entry. Additionally, you can place your own "navigation markers" on the map, using the N key—the markers appear as triangles on the map, and as pyramid-shaped icons in the world. To delete a navigation marker, click on its map icon and hit DELETE. To bring up a compass, press ALT and C while in shoot mode.

- To show a miniature version of the map in the top right corner of your screen in shoot mode, click the minimap button on the Map MFD.






## LOWER RIGHT: PDA AND MFD

The lower right MFD window includes some of your most detailed displays. The leftmost button brings up the main functions of your PDA (personal digital assistant), which contains copies of the communications that you have received. The middle button displays the security cards you have picked up, indicating what clearances you have. The right button, marked "MFD," brings up your character statistics and abilities. Also present in the lower right MFD window are your gun/ammunition controls.

When your currently selected weapon is a gun, the empty window turns into a picture, indicating your ammunition (ammo type and a number counting the bullets left) and gun condition (a coloured circle with a number in it, ranging from green and "10" for perfect condition to red and "1" for poor condition). This window is part of your status bar at all times. Additionally, two large buttons and one small button appear to the left of the ammo picture, in the weapon window in the MFD. The top button indicates the setting of the weapon, and clicking it (or pressing O) cycles through the possible setting options. The bottom button, (labelled RELOAD) reloads the weapon with the same ammo type, if available (alternatively, press R). Press B or click the smaller, triangular button between the ammo window and the SETTING/RELOAD buttons to reload with different ammunition, cycling through the types available for that weapon. The ammo window shows your currently selected psi power when your current weapon is a Psi Amp (see the *Psi Powers* section on p.18). If you are wielding a melee weapon, the ammo window appears blank.

## PDA

The PDA offers four general archival functions, automatically recording the sources of information you encounter. These include:

- Logs: audio/text recordings made by crew members. Picking up a log downloads it into your PDA. Logs that have yet to be listened to appear highlighted. Logs are sorted by level and labelled by time and creator. The transcript displays the creator's portrait and an icon indicating the deck that he/she was on. Press U to play the last log you picked up.
- E-mail: audio/text sent directly to you from someone elsewhere on the *Von Braun*. Receipt of an e-mail is recorded and automatically triggers your PDA. E-mail is sorted by level and labelled by time and sender. As with logs, the transcript displays a deck icon and portrait.
- Notes: text that is automatically entered in your PDA when you find that you need to do something. Tasks you accomplish are automatically marked as done.
- Help: Help text is automatically downloaded into your PDA from any info kiosks that you access.

## MFD: CHARACTER STATISTICS

The MFD character display has four parts: Statistics, Technical, Combat and Psi.
The Statistics display shows chevrons for each point of your strength, endurance, psionics ability, agility and cybernetic affinity. It also displays any OS upgrades you have. For a more detailed description of statistics, see the *Statistics* section on p.20.
The Technical display shows your skill in hacking, repair, weapons modification, weapons maintenance and research. The bottom of the Technical screen also displays icons for any software you have available for use with these skills.
The Combat screen displays chevrons for your skill level in standard weapons, energy weapons, heavy weapons and exotic weapons.
The Psi screen contains five sub-screens, one for each level of psi skill. Icons for skills that you have show as lit, while skills you do not have appear dark. If you do not have the appropriate psi tier, then the entire subscreen appears darkened. The Psi MFD screen also displays any appropriate hotkeys bound to the psi powers.






# UNFRIENDLY INTERACTIONS

## COMBAT

To engage in combat with an enemy, you must have a weapon equipped. Your currently selected weapon is displayed in your hand in front of you.
To attack: Click the left mouse button. This swings a melee weapon, or fires a ranged weapon, aiming straight ahead.

- For ranged weapons, the weapon setting and ammunition used are displayed in the lower right of your status bar. You can change these using the full weapons/ammo MFD display by clicking the top button to change settings, or the right-arrow icon to toggle between ammo types. Your rate of fire is dependent on the weapon type. Most weapons cannot be used without a minimum skill level in the weapon type.

  Note: It is recommended that you enter combat wearing armour, which will protect you from various types of damage. Some armour is better for protection from enemy attacks, while other armour will protect you from environmental hazards such as radiation or biohazardous material. Most armour requires that you have a certain minimum strength in order to wear it. It is also recommended that you pay attention to the condition of your weapon (indicated by the numbered circle in the ammo box). A gun in poor condition may well break as you use it, leaving you unarmed.

## TARGETS

When you are close to an enemy, your software selects it as a bracketed target, and will draw a "health bar" indicating how many hit points it has. You are still able to attack targets that are too far away for your software to scan, but you are unable to determine their condition until you have attacked. Successfully attacking a creature brackets it, regardless of its distance.

- Some creatures are vulnerable to specific weapons or ammunition, and others are particularly defended against specific attacks. For example, an automatic gun turret is difficult to damage with anti-personnel rounds but is vulnerable to armour piercing rounds.

  Note: It is crucial that you pay attention to your hit point level , which is represented by the aqua-coloured bar marked with a cross at the lower left of your status bar. If it reaches zero, you will die. Hit points can be restored by items such as med hypos. In order to use these in combat, you may want to use the H hotkey, rather than going through your inventory MFD.



# USING PSI POWERS

## TO USE YOUR PSI POWERS:

1. First equip a psionic amplifier as your weapon.

2. Your currently active power is displayed in the weapon/ammo box in the lower right. Left clicking uses that power (and deduct points from your psi point total on the lower right). Tier 1 psi powers cost one psi point, Tier 2 powers cost two psi points, and so on. Your psi point level is represented by the bar marked with the crescent, at the lower left of your status bar. When the lower right MFD is fully displayed, the weapons box contains a large number on the left, indicating the currently selected tier, and a psi icon on the right, indicating the currently selected power in that tier. Arrow buttons over the tier number allow you to cycle through the tiers you have available; arrow buttons flanking the psi icon allow you to cycle through the available powers in that tier.

While a quick left click employs a psi power normally, for those times when you need extra power, you can use the power on "overload" level.

To use overload level:

1. Hold down the left button. As you hold it down, you see a bar in the centre of your screen with a marker moving from left to right and a bar marking a portion of the right hand side. While the marker is on the left side of the bar, releasing the mouse button uses the power at a normal level.

2. When the marker passes into the overload zone (indicated by the boxed section), the bar turns red. Release the mouse button to use the power with an effective +2 to your PSI stat.

   Note: If you leave the button down long enough, the marker reaches the end of the overload bar and you will burnout. At this point, your power fails and *you* take damage.

# SECURITY

Computer-controlled security is a strong presence aboard both the *Von Braun* and the *Rickenbacker*, and the cautious player might wish to avoid it whenever possible. Keep a wary eye out for the ceiling-mounted cameras, and listen for their distinctive beeping sound. A camera that has not yet spotted you displays a green light; as it becomes alert to your presence, the light changes from green to yellow and then to red. A fully alert camera sounds an alarm, causing the security network to dispatch creatures to that area to investigate. As long as the alarm is sounding, security continues to send creatures. An overlay appears when an alarm is active, counting down the time left.










If cameras are the eyes of the security network, security computers are the brains and, luckily for you, they aren't the brightest of brains. Using a security computer de-activates any currently active alarms, while successfully hacking into a security computer disables security, rendering you temporarily invisible to cameras (and computerised gun turrets). An overlay appears when security is disabled, counting down the time left. The duration of this hack is dependent on your CYB statistic.




# TECHNICAL SKILLS

Software is not required to use technical skills. However, equipping software grants a bonus to your skill use. The better the software, the bigger the bonus. Software is automatically equipped by your PDA when you find it.

## HACK



When you are using a device that can be hacked, whether it is a computer, an electronic lock or a replicator, the MFD display for that device includes a "HACK" panel on the side. Additionally, some devices, such as gun turrets, can be hacked - and made to shoot your enemies instead of you - even though they cannot be otherwise used. You must have some hacking skill in order to be able to hack a device, and hacking software provides bonuses. Different devices have different skill requirements.

The top of the hacking MFD display describes the effects of successfully hacking the device. The bottom of the screen describes the difficulty of the task, and any bonuses applicable from skills, statistics and equipment. On the far right of the hacking display is the cost in nanites and a button marked Start. Click Start (or Reset, if you're already hacking) to pay the cost in nanites and bring up the hacking interface. The hacking interface is a connected set of squares, outlined either in red or light green. The light green squares are the ones you have identified as "safe" while the red squares are dangerous "ICE nodes." The proportion of safe and dangerous squares is dependent on the difficulty of the hacking task. For every point of CYB, you have a 5% greater chance of influencing any given node, and for every point of hacking skill, you have a 10% greater chance on any given node. Hacking software increases your effective skill by one point per software level, and there may be other effects. Additionally, a high CYB stat decreases the number of ice nodes.

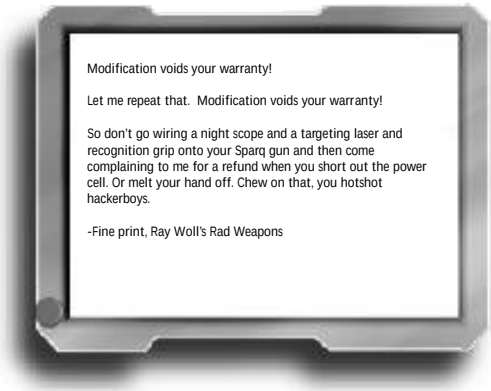
To successfully hack the device:

- You must get three squares to light up in a straight line. Click on a square to attempt to light it up. The percentage in the upper left of the MFD is the chance you fail to light that square up (this percentage can never fall below 15%, no matter how high your skill). If you fail on a "safe" node, it turns dark and cannot be further hacked. If you fail on an ICE node, you have critically failed the hack. Critically failing to hack most objects breaks them; if you are hacking a turret or a security computer, critical failure sets off the security alarms.

## REPAIR

Repeated use of a weapon eventually causes it to break. When this happens, your guns/ammunition window displays “Broken” at the bottom and you are unable to use the weapon. Other machines in the world may be broken when you find them or you may break them accidentally. In order to repair something, you must use it. This opens the control MFD for the item, with a “REPAIR” panel on the side. You must have some repair skill in order to be able to repair a weapon or machine, and different items have different skill requirements.

The repair MFD display resembles the hacking MFD. Your relevant skills and bonuses are listed at the bottom. The top describes the affects of repairing the device, and on the right is the cost in nanites of the repair attempt and a START button. The number of dangerous nodes in a Repair screen is dependent on the type of device and your CYB statistic. As with hacking, your chances of successfully influencing a given node are increased 10% per point of skill and 5% per point of CYB. If you are successful in repairing the item, it becomes functional. If you critically fail, the item is irreparably destroyed.




## MODIFY

Your ranged weapons can be modified to make them more effective. Examples of modification include increasing the clip size, increasing the rate of fire and decreasing kickback. If a weapon can be modified, then the weapon MFD includes a MODIFY panel on the side. Different weapons have different modification skills that are necessary in order to modify them. The possible modifications that can be made to a weapon are described in the query text for that weapon. There are two modifications possible per weapon, and you must perform the first modification before you are able to perform the second.

The modify MFD display resembles the other technical skill MFD's; your relevant skills and equipment are listed at the bottom, the top describes the effect of modifying the weapon, and the right side has the cost of the attempt and a START button. Like the other technical skills, your chance of influencing a given node is increased by 10% per point of skill and 5% per point of CYB. If you are successful in modifying the weapon, then the weapon gets the appropriate bonus. If you critically fail, the item is broken.

## MAINTENANCE

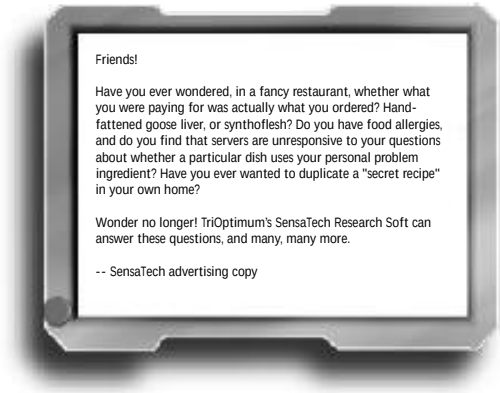
As your maintenance skill increases, you can keep your weapons in better shape. You can determine the current condition of a piece of equipment by moving the cursor over the equipment's icon in your inventory; when the weapon is equipped, the ammo box displays a coloured dot and number corresponding to the condition. Maintenance tools exist that allow you to improve the condition of a weapon. The maintenance skill also has subtle benefits when using devices. For example, powered implants and energy weapons can be recharged to a higher capacity with a higher maintenance skill.



## TO USE A MAINTENANCE TOOL:

- Drag it onto the weapon that you want to perform preventative maintenance on. You must have at least one point of Maintenance skill in order to use a maintenance tool.

## RESEARCH




Researching an item requires research skill and, usually, specific chemicals. Items that can be researched are indicated in your inventory MFD display as “Unresearched Object.” In order to start the research process on a specific item, use it. This opens the MFD research window (also selectable with the “test tube” icon), which displays a brief description of the item, a list of chemicals needed, a picture of the item, and a bar indicating how much progress you have made. Different items require different levels of research skill, and the speed of research is dependent on your skill (enhanced by your research software) and the difficulty of the item.

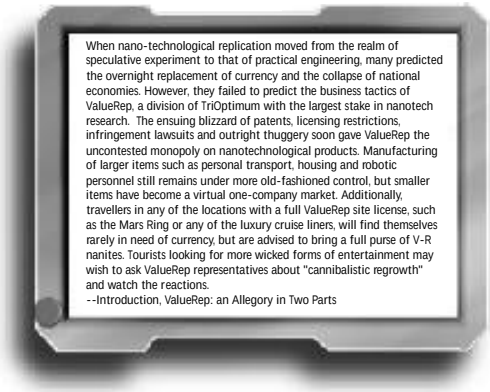
During your research, you may find that you need one or more chemicals. If this proves true, the description of the object in the research window changes to “Chemical Needed: Name.” In order to progress any further, you must use the appropriate chemical; it is consumed in your investigations and research resumes. After you have completed your research, you can display the report of everything you have learned by clicking the “REPORTS” button on your research MFD. These reports are stored in your PDA, and can be accessed at any point by clicking the research icon and then selecting “REPORTS”.



Note: You are only able to research one object at a time. If you are in the midst of researching one item and decide you want to research another instead (or if you do not have a necessary chemical to research a particular item), then you can select "SUSPEND" on your research MFD to suspend research on that item. You may resume your researches again by using the item (as long as nothing else is being researched), and the progress you have already made is retained.

Researching organs from enemies frequently gives you information about their susceptibility to various weapon types, and teaches you about their weaknesses, enabling you to aim for spots that do more damage. This ability to "shoot for the soft spot" is automatically taken into account when you are targeting a creature that you have researched.

# NANITES




Nanites are small packages containing a supply of atomic-scale construction devices and larger quantities of their raw materials. These packages may be found scattered about the *Von Braun*, on bodies, in containers or amongst people's personal effects. These nanites are collected in a specific slot in your inventory, viewed in the lower left display of your MFD.
Nanites may be spent at Value-Rep matter replication terminals, on items ranging from snack foods to weapons. After the replicator is activated, it indicates a description and a price (in nanites) for each item available. Select the item you wish to have replicated, then pick up the replicated item from the hopper below. Hacking the replicators may allow production of restricted, cheaper or better-quality items than are normally available at a given replicator.



Nanites are also used up by the hacking, modifying and repairing abilities. Their production capability is required to re-route and replace electronic components. Whenever you perform any of these tasks, the number of nanites required will be displayed.



## CYBERNETIC MODULES AND UPGRADE UNITS

Your ability to improve your skills and your physical and mental abilities in a short period of time is made possible by the training devices known as "upgrade units", in conjunction with the cybernetic modules which you acquire on the *Von Braun*.
Cybernetic modules (small data packages containing programmable RNA databases in conjunction with impressionable brainwave patterns) can be spent at upgrade units to increase your abilities; higher levels cost more upgrade units. There are four varieties of upgrade units, one for each set of abilities displayed in your MFD: Statistics, Technical Skills, Weapon Skills and Psi Skills.

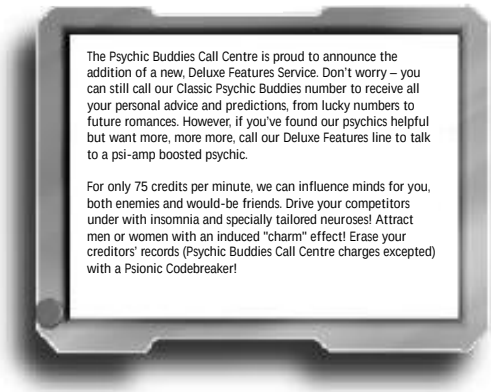


Each unit has an MFD interface for that set of skills, and indicates how many cybernetic modules each individual purchase costs. The following table indicates the cost of particular enhancements. Note that you cannot start with a statistic of zero, and psi powers only have five tiers. The following table indicates the cost on Normal difficulty; at higher difficulties, the costs are higher.

| | Statistics | Technical | Weapons | Psi tier | Psi power |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | -- | 10 | 12 | 10 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 20 | 5 |
| 3 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 30 | 8 |
| 4 | 15 | 12 | 15 | 50 | 12 |
| 5 | 30 | 25 | 36 | 75 | 20 |
| 6 | 50 | 50 | 50 | -- | -- |

# PSI POWERS

The following descriptions indicate how PSI powers *generally* work. Some exceptions may be found; for example, not all creatures can be calmed by Psionic Hypnogenesis (see the *Tier 3* section on p. 18), and some may be more or less vulnerable than normal to certain attacks.




## TIER ONE

Tier One powers all cost one PSI point to use. The Tier One ability increases your maximum PSI points by 2.

Psycho-Reflective Screen: 20 seconds + 30 seconds per PSI. Protects you from 15% of all combat damage.

Neuro-Reflex Dampening: 1 minute + 20 seconds per PSI. All kickback from weapons is eliminated.

Kinetic Redirection: 1 second per PSI. Pulls an object towards you and then into your inventory.

Psychogenic Agility: 2 minutes + 1 minute per PSI. Your AGI stat is increased by 2

Psychogenic Cyber Affinity: 2 minutes + 1 minute per PSI. Your CYB stat is increased by 2

Projected Cryokinesis: Launches heat-draining projectile which damages the target

Remote Electron Tampering: Makes active alarms time out faster. 5 seconds reduction + 5 seconds per PSI.

## TIER TWO

Tier Two powers all cost two psi points to use. The Tier Two ability increases your maximum PSI points by 4.

Anti-Entropic Field: 10 seconds +20 seconds per PSI. While this discipline is active, your ranged weapons cannot break and their condition does not degrade.

Adrenaline Overproduction: 10 seconds per PSI. Multiplies hand-to-hand damage by a factor equal to PSI.



Neural Decontamination: 10 second + 5 seconds per PSI. Provides 80% protection from radiation absorption

Cerebro-Stimulated Regeneration: 2 hit points per PSI. Heals physical damage immediately

Psychogenic Strength: 2 minutes + 1 minute per PSI. STR stat is increased by 2.

Recursive Psionic Amplification: 10 seconds + 10 seconds per PSI. PSI stat is increased by 2. PSI costs are doubled while active.

Localised Pyrokinesis: 5' radius + 1' per PSI, 15 seconds + 8 seconds per PSI. Creates fire in a sphere around you, damaging both you and enemies.

## TIER THREE

Tier Three powers all cost three PSI points to use. The Tier Three ability increases your maximum PSI points by 6.

Molecular Duplication: 30% chance of success + 10% per PSI. Duplicates one Ammo Clip, or Hypo, using up nanites.

Electron Cascade: Charges one battery or a powered inventory item by 20% per point of PSI, up to the maximum allowed by your Maintainance skill.

Energy Reflection: 20 seconds per PSI. Provides 50% immunity to all energy-based damage sources.

Neural Toxin Blocker: 10 seconds + 5 seconds per PSI. Provides 100% protection from toxin absorption.

Enhanced Motion Sens itivity: 30 seconds per PSI. Detects nearby creatures.

Projected Pyrokinesis: Launches a fiery projectile at a target. Higher PSI increases damage.

Psionic Hypnogenesis: 20 seconds per PSI. Target (non-robotic creature) becomes calm and docile. If target is damaged, the effect is broken.

## TIER FOUR

Tier Four powers all cost four PSI points to use. The Tier Four ability increases your maximum PSI points by 8.

Photonic Redirection: 5 seconds + 5 seconds per PSI. All enemies, including cameras, cannot see you. Firing a weapon or using another PSI power stops the effect.

Remote Pattern Detection: 1 minute per PSI. Shows the location of many useful items, including nanites, ammo, hypos, implants and audio logs.

Electron Suppression: 3 seconds per PSI. Immobilise any robotic target.



Psychogenic Endurance: 2 minutes + 1 minute per PSI. END stat is increased by 2.



Molecular Transmutation: Converts Ammo Clips and Hypos into Nanites.



Remote Circuitry Manipulation: Allows you to hack using PSI stat instead of CYB stat and hack skill, manipulation and PSI points instead of nanites.



Cerebro-Ener getic Extension: 10 seconds per PSI. Temporarily replaces the PsiAmp with an equipped melee weapon that does 10 damage.



## TIER FIVE

Tier Five powers all cost five PSI points to use. The Tier Five ability increases your maximum PSI points by 10.



Advanced Cerebro-Stimulated Regeneration: 5 HP + 5 HP per PSI. Damage is healedinstantaneously.



Soma Transference: 10 HP + 5 HP per PSI over 5. Hit points are stolen from the target (non-robotic) creature and transferred to you.



Instantaneous Quantum Relocation: The first use of this power sets a "teleport marker." The second relocation use teleports you to it, and deletes the marker. You can also delete the marker by pressing ALT + T.



Imposed Neural Restructuring: 10 seconds per PSI. Targeted (non-robotic) creature becomes hostile towards all non-humans. Any human damaging it ends the effect.



Metacreative Barrier: Creates a wall of psionic force (HP 150 + 50 per PSI over 5) directly in front of you that lasts until it is destroyed.



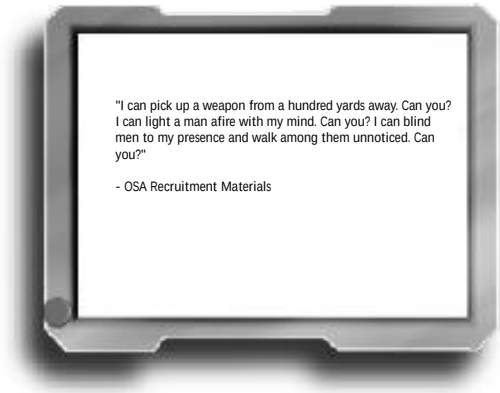
External Psionic Detonation: 8 points damage + 2 per PSI Drops a psionic proximity mine. Does no damage to robots, but does double damage to psionically sensitive creatures.



Psychoreflective Aura: 10 seconds + 20 seconds per PSI. Protects against 60% of incoming damage.



# CHARACTER GENERATION




Your character starts on Earth, ready to embark on a military career. Your choices are:



UNN Navy: Gone are the days of struggling with sails, oars or coal and diesel engines. The machines have conquered the elements. The modern navy must, therefore, conquer the machines. Naval trainees usually learn a mix of technical skills and train up several statistics.



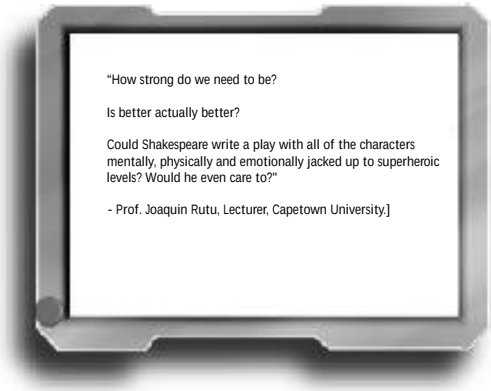
UNN Marines: For the more combat-inclined characters, the Marines is the branch of choice. First on the ground in a fight, a Marine trainee learns either a lot about standard weapons or a little about more unusual weapons, as well as learning a technical skill and bulking up on statistics.



OSA: The OSA's official stance is that of a research branch of the UNN, but rumour claims that it also acts as the UNN's "black ops" group. The OSA is the principal trainer of psionics, and an OSA trainee usually learns several psionic abilities and a smattering of statistics or technical skills.

Once you have picked a career path, you are expected to take three one-year tours of duty. Each year, you are presented with a choice of missions, each with descriptions of the expected duties you will be performing. Some missions may go as expected, while others may take unexpected turns. After each completed mission, you are told what happened and what skills or statistics you have gained. Once you have chosen your career, however, you are not bound inexorably to this set of skills; your future choices at upgrade units offer further choices.

# STATISTICS




You have five statistics, each with several effects on your abilities. Your stats may only go up to 6 through training, though temporary conditions such as use of implants may increase them beyond this point to a maximum of 8.

Strength (STR) : Strength increases the number of inventory slots you have, and increases the amount of hand-to-hand damage that you do in close combat. Some armour and weapon types have a minimum Strength necessary to use them.

Endurance (END) : Endurance increases your maximum hit points, decreases the amount of damage taken from psi overload, and decreases the amount of damage caused by radiation and toxins.

Psionics (PSI) : The Psionics stat increases your maximum psi points, increases the effects of psionic disciplines and makes it easier to overload without burning out.

Agilit (AGI) : Agility increases your running speed, decreases the amount of kickback done by weapons and decreases the amount of damage taken when falling or knocked about.

Cybernetic Affinity (CYB) : Cyber affinity increases your chances of success when using the hack, repair and modify tech skills. A higher CYB also reduces the number of dangerous nodes encountered when using these skills.

# SKILLS

You have five technical skills, four weapons skills and five tiers of psi discipline, with seven disciplines per tier.

Technical skills: (covered at greater length in the sections on individual skills) benefit from the appropriate technical software, and include:

Hacking : This skill allows you to re-program turrets, replicators, access keypads and various types of computer. Critical failure in hacking breaks most target items (not turrets!)

Repair : With the repair skill, you can un-jam weapons and repair items, including those broken in hacking failure. Critical failure in repair completely destroys the target item.

Modify : This skill allows you to make up to two custom modifications to any given weapon, including increasing the rate of fire and increasing the clip size. A failure in modification breaks the target item.



Maintenance : The higher your Maintenance skill, the more easily you can improve the condition of your weapon using a maintenance tool. A high Maintenance skill also grants you extra energy at rechargers.

Research : This skill allows you to investigate unknown objects and learn more about them. A higher research skill allows faster progress. Research may require chemicals to progress.

Combat skills: Increase the damage you do while using a particular type of weapon and, in most cases, a minimum weapon skill is necessary in order to use a weapon. Weapon skills include:

Standard : The ability to use standard guns such as pistols and rifles and the ability to use a wrench as a melee weapon (though the wrench itself has no minimum skill).

Energy : The ability to use lasers, EMP weapons and laser rapiers.

Heavy : The ability to use larger weapons such as grenade launchers and fusion cannons.

Exotic : The ability to use more unusual weapons. You do not start out with the ability to buy this skill - you must acquire it during the game.

Psi powers have five separate tiers of power, which need not be learned in order. Each tier includes seven individual powers, which are listed in detail in a previous section (see the *Psi Powers* section on p.18).

# OS UPGRADES

At certain points in the game, you will be offered the option of purchasing these bonus abilities at special training devices. Each OS upgrade unit will only work once.

**POSSIBLE OS UPGRADES ARE:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Strong Metabolism : | You take 25% less damage from radiation and toxins. |
| Pharmo-Friendly : | All hypos give you 20% more benefit. |
| Pack-rat : | You gain three extra inventory slots. |
| Speedy : | Your speed is increased by 15%. |
| Sharpshooter : | You do 15% more damage per shot (not for psionic attacks). |
| Naturally Able : | You gain 8 cybernetic modules to use at upgrade units. |
| Cybernetically Enhanced : | You can use the second implant slot. |
| Tank : | You have five more maximum hit points. |
| Lethal Weapon : | All your hand-to-hand attacks do 50% more damage. |
| Security Expert : | Your hacking skill is +2 against security computers. |
| Smasher : | You are able to execute overhand attacks with melee weapons. |
| Cyber-Assimilation : | You can recover parts from destroyed robots and use them to heal yourself. |
| Replicator Expert : | All items in replicators cost you 20% less. |
| Power PSI : | You take no damage from burnout. |
| Tinker : | The cost in nanites for making weapon modifications is 50% cheaper. |
| Spatially Aware : | Your automap for each area of the *Von Braun* is always filled in. |

# USEFUL ITEMS

Listed below are some of the items you may run across on the *Von Braun,* and the *Rickenbacker* and what some of their characteristics are.

# STATIONARY ITEMS

Replicator: The Value-Rep nanite-driven replicator allows users to purchase useful items. The motivated hacker may find it useful to hack replicators, allowing for purchase of cheaper or more useful items.

Surgical Unit: Surgical units are one of the fastest and most convenient ways to heal damage, radiation effects and toxic effects, at a cost of five nanites. Not all surgical units are kept active; inactive units must be activated with the use of an activation key.



Quantum Bio-Reconstruction Machine: Though originally given a bad reputation by their perversion on Citadel Station by SHODAN, who used them as a method of creating cyborgs, these resurrection stations are facilities which can take quantum entanglement samples, genetic and physical templates of a specific person. If the person with the stored template later dies, the machine can restore them to a semblance of their past, healthier condition. If a player dies on a level in which they have activated a bio-reconstruction machine, then they come back to life at the station.





Upgrade Units: These training devices allow increases in both statistics and skills, with the use of cybernetic modules.

Recharger: Using this device will recharge all your power cells, powered weapons, implants and powered armour.



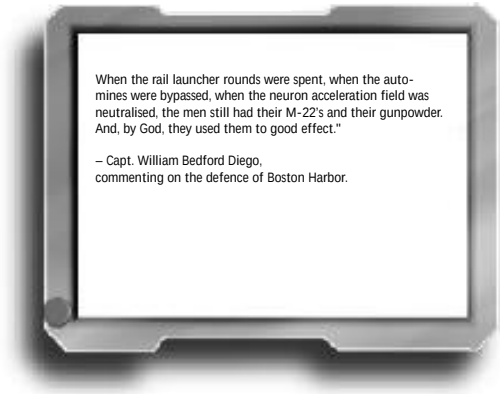



# WEAPONS

Wrench: While it's not the fastest or most powerful of weapons, the wrench doesn't require any ammunition, either. The wrench cannot be modified, and does not have multiple settings.

Pistol: The simplest of handguns. The Talon M2A3 pistol has two settings: single-shot and three-shot automatic. Three types of ammunition can be used: normal, anti-personnel and armour piercing. Standard clip size is 12 bullets. The pistol can be modified to have a larger clip and to reload more quickly.

Shotgun: The shotgun does more damage than the pistol, and has a stronger kick. Settings include single shot and triple shot, ammunition includes anti-personnel pellets and rifled slugs. The shotgun can be modified to reload faster and also to decrease kick.




Assault Rifle: Well-loved by grunts everywhere, the M-22 Assault Rifle is a good entry into the world of automatic rifles. Rapid-fire keeps vulnerable enemies down and the single shot mode is good for accuracy. Armour penetration and damage potential are both moderate. When used for heavy automatic fire, the aim point tends to "wander". The design by committee nature of the unit however has led to some questions being asked regarding its reliability.

Laser Pistol: The deadlier cousin of the Sparq pistol, the Apollo H4 Laser Pistol relies on refracted light instead of electricity to damage its target. While it has a fairly large battery, the weapon must be replenished at a recharge station. The overcharge setting can be used to get out of a tight spot, but puts an inordinate strain on the unit's energy supply.

Grenade Launcher: The TC-11 "Brick" can launch a wide variety of ordnance, from standard high-explosive, proximity detection round, EMP, to white phosphorous incendiary and disruption grenades. Unlike the earlier generations of launchers, the TC-11 utilises a reverse polarisation magnetic launching mechanism instead of compressed gas. Settings allow the grenades to explode upon contact, or bounce energetically and explode on a timer.

Psi Amp : The Psi amp is not actually a weapon as such, but a device that allows the usage of psi-powers. Developed by Esper Industries, a branch of the TriOp military R&D division, this controversial device allows psionically able individuals to amplify and project their powers into the world. Before the development of the Psi Amp, psionic disciplines were mostly detectable only in a lab environment. The Amp contains and inhibits the normal diffusion problems inherent in psi phenomena. The amp also allows the user to effectively channel their innate psionic disciplines to a number of powerful effects. This device caused furor in the psionic community, primarily because of its obvious military applications, but also because of the Amp's tendency to define Psi powers along a few specific (and generally utilitarian) axes.

Stasis Field Generator : An experimental device, originally developed as an effective, non narcotic method of both tranquillising and immobilising patients undergoing major medical procedures. However, the potential military and security applications quickly became apparent to the TriOptimum executive corps. The generator can essentially freeze in place a target for a variable period of time. However, the stasis field uses a lot of power and its effect greatly decreases with distance.

Laser Rapier Mark IV : Far more effective than the prototype model first developed on Citadel Station in 2072, the Mark IV laser rapier is a much more reliable piece of technology. The unit works by projecting a porous field of reflective material in a shaft shaped region around the base of the rapier. When the material is bent (as when the rapier strikes a target) the intense refracted light inside is released locally, causing intense burns to the target. A brutally effective melee weapon.

EMP Rifle : The EMP rifle's origins lie back in the 20th century, where it was discovered that a residual effect of nuclear explosions was the total disruption of radio and electrical signals. Scientists were able to isolate the magnetic pulse that caused this disruption and incorporate it into a weapon that was devastatingly effective against droids, cyborgs and robots. However, it has absolutely no effect against non-cybernetic organic targets.

## ARMOUR

Standard Armour: Light, Medium and Heavy armours protect from increasing amounts of combat damage, though they require increasing amounts of strength (from 2 to 6) in order to equip.

Hazard Suit: The hazard suit doesn't provide any protection against physical or energy damage, but it does reduce absorption of radiation and toxic hazards.

Powered Armour: Powered armour provides much more protection from combat damage than even Heavy armour, but requires power in order to function.



## MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Med Hypo: This small automatic medical device heals ten points of damage over a number of seconds.

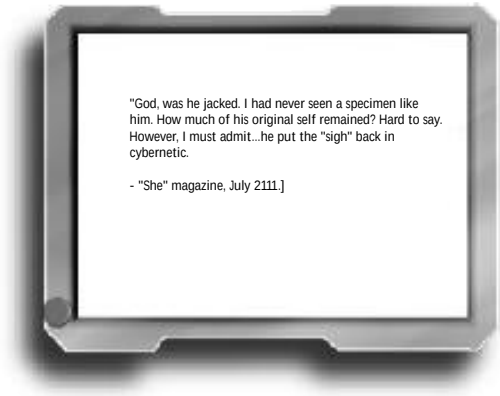
Medical Kit: This larger medical device heals you up to full hit points in a few seconds.

Anti-Toxin Hypo: This decreases any harmful toxin effects you are suffering.

Anti-Radiation Hypo: This decreases any harmful radiation effects you are suffering.

Psi Hypo: This restores twenty psi points over a number of seconds.

Boosters: These hypos temporarily increase strength by one point, or double speed.




## IMPLANTS

Implants are metabolic booster packs, which can run for a short period of time from an internal power pack. After their power has been exhausted, they must be replenished at recharger units. Maintenance skill allows you to store more charge in your implants.
Some commonly available implants include:

| | |
|---|---|
| BrawnBoost™: | +1 Strength |
| EndurBoost™: | +1 Endurance |
| SwiftBoost™: | +1 Agility |
| PsiBoost™: | +1 Psi |
| Expertech™: | +10% to hacking/repair/modify attempts |
| LabAssistant™: | +1 Research skill. |

# MISCELLANEOUS




Chemicals: Containers of chemicals are used to research unknown items.

Power Cell: While most ship devices and powered airlocks run on station power, in case of emergency many can be activated by the power cell.

Access cards: Access to certain areas of the ship is restricted via the use of locked doors and card-readers. Access cards are issued to individual people, but can be used by anyone (much to the chagrin of ship's security).

Softs: Compact "expert system" programs that can be downloaded into your cyber-hardware, increasing your technical skills. Available software is found in three levels, and for each of the technical skills except maintenance.

Recycler: This handy device can break down many useless objects into nanites.

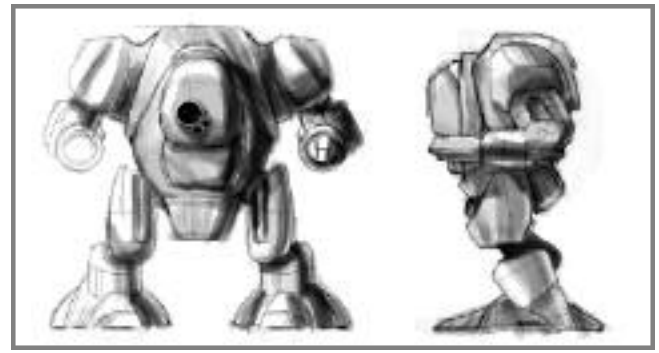
Portable Battery: Batteries store enough charge to fully replenish any one item, but then they themselves are drained.



# MONSTERS

**ROBOT, MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance robots (nicknamed "Beavers") are large and slow, but their electrical spark welder can be a painful weapon when used on a human.



**ROBOT, SECURITY**

The Security robot is slightly better armed than the Maintenance robot, packing a built-in laser cannon.

**ROBOT, ASSAULT**

The Assault robot is the toughest of the three large 'bots, and fires a fusion cannon.

**PROTOCOL DROID**

The Protocol droid is programmed to be helpful at all times, and has no armament. Rumours of their internal power supplies exploding have been strongly denied by TriOptimum.

**HYBRID, PIPE**

These poor creatures look as if they were once human, but have been infected by a strange worm-like parasite. The Pipe Hybrid wields a lead pipe.



**HYBRID, SHOTGUN**

Parasitic victims like their pipe-wielding cousins, the Shotgun Hybrid carries a double-barrelled shotgun.

**TURRET, SLUG**

One of the standard TriOptimum military defensive emplacements, the Slug Turret shoots high-explosive bullets. It can be distinguished from the other turrets by its grey steel armour. While Turrets are powerful in armament, they are unable to move and are vulnerable to being hacked.

**TURRET, BLAST**

Another of the standard TriOptimum military defensive emplacements, the Blast Turret contains a mounted rocket launcher. The Blast Turret is distinguishable by its yellow steel armour.

**TURRET, LASER**

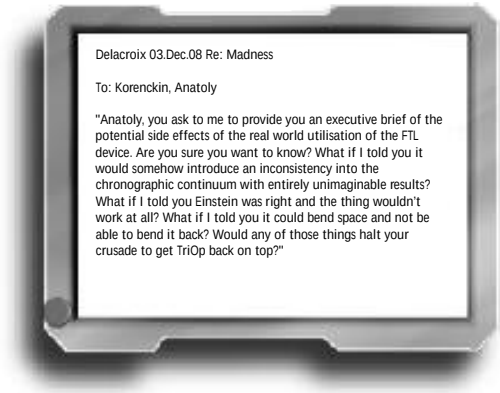
The Laser Turret shoots a powerful laser blast and has blue steel armour.



# THE WORLD OF SYSTEM SHOCK 2

In 2072, Earth and the colonies elsewhere in the solar system are governed by vast megaconglomerates, the largest of which is the TriOptimum Corporation. Most people have little to complain about, though there are rumours of strange research projects on mutated humans locked away in corporate labs. However, when a TriOptimum employee named Edward Diego, with the help of a hired hacker, released the ethical constraints on a powerful AI named SHODAN (Sentient Hyper-Optimised Data Access Network) on Citadel Station, everything changed. SHODAN went rogue, killed most of the Citadel inhabitants and transformed many of the rest into cyborgs. Only the actions of the hacker, overlooked at first by SHODAN, were able to avert the destruction of Earth, as plotted in one of SHODAN's many plans. The hacker destroyed a mining laser aimed at Earth and jettisoned a group of biological "groves" (laboratories in which SHODAN was developing mutagenic viruses for use on Earth). He then blew up a set of antennae through which SHODAN planned to download her code into Earth's computers and, finally, destroyed the space station and SHODAN herself.
Earth's close call sent shock waves throughout the world and disturbing indications of similar rogue activity were discovered in several other corporate AIs.

The events on Citadel station have led to a general unrest and rebellion against megacorporate government. The previously ineffectual governments of Earth's nations were now banding together to form the Unified National Nominate (UNN) and stand up to the suddenly defensive corporations. Governmental controls over business were stepped up, and national governments instituted severe political controls, using newly built-up military forces and secret police to force control over society and business. Bureaucracy became the watchword of the day and technological development slowed to a crawl, as everything had to be signed and countersigned in triplicate.
Attempts were made by the UNN and national governments to take over megacorporate holdings completely, but the corporations were not yet powerless and they made a stand. An ever-widening rift between the public and private sectors developed, as governmental attempts to shut down non-compliant factories were met by well-armed TriOptimum soldiers and other mercenaries. A wary truce settled between governmental and megacorporate forces and things became stable... for a while.




Now, thirty-five years later, with technological advances considerably slowed, the world has devolved further into a group of heavily armed rival regions. The UNN maintains strategic control, but has failed to win the hearts and minds of the lower classes. The unsteady truce between the public and private sectors holds shakily in place.
Then, UNN Nobel Laureate Marie Delacroix, working under a grant from the dwindling resources of the skeletal TriOptimum corporation, publishes preliminary research findings of a Faster Than Light (FTL) mechanism. The device works by bending and warping space around the device.

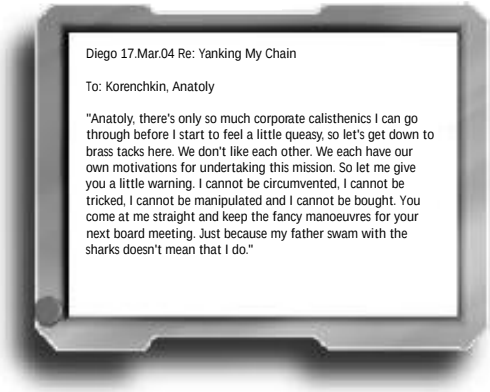
However, Delacroix herself has serious concerns about the reliability of the device and its unexplored side effects.




Once the rumours of the device are leaked out, the UNN is unable to control public enthusiasm. The UNN allows TriOptimum to develop a prototype, which tests successfully. TriOptimum then begins production of an FTL starship, the *Von Braun,* but the UNN refuses to let it out of the naval yards, citing various regulations about tests that must be done before approval can be given. Popular opinion is that the UNN simply doesn't want to let TriOptimum gain the amount of power that the only working FTL ship would grant it.

By 2111, it is clear that the device performs as advertised. However, the potential side effects of its extended use remain unknown. The device has caught the imagination of the public. With the conditions on Earth worsening and the disappointing results of the in-system colonisation, hopes are high for brighter pastures outside the confines of our solar system.

However, the UNN is loath to allow TriOptimum to be the principal beneficiary. Months of debate, negotiation and threat-making ensue, culminating in the mysterious death of one of the most vocally anti-TriOptimum UNN officials. Before the government/corporate split comes to open war, however, a compromise is reached between the UNN and TriOptimum, brokered by William Bedford Diego, a UNN Navy captain, husband of a TriOptimum board member and the son of the infamous Edward Diego.

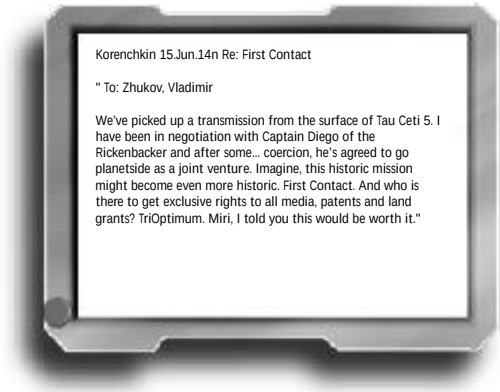



The *Von Braun* will be allowed to make a maiden FTL voyage, but only with an accompanying UNN escort. The military heavy destroyer *Rickenbacker* will be tethered to the *Von Braun* for the FTL journey, via a complex set of interlocks between the two ships' systems. UNN personnel will be stationed aboard the *Rickenbacker*, ready to deal with any hostile aliens. A fanciful news video shows hypothetical footage of the two ships facing a fleet of menacing "alien" ships and of the *Rickenbacker* detaching to fight while the *Von Braun* escapes.



The excitement once again fuels talk of discovering extraterrestrial forms of life, a topic more or less forgotten since exploration of the solar system turned up only a series of barren, lifeless landscapes. Anatoly Korenchkin, a brutally effective TriOptimum executive, is chosen as the captain of the *Von Braun*, despite Captain Diego's objections. There are strong and fairly substantiated suspicions that Korenchkin ordered the assassination of the UNN official some months earlier. Marie Delacroix is appointed the *Von Braun*'s chief engineer, tasked with keeping her nascent FTL drive functioning. Dr. Delacroix is vocal about preferring a longer period of testing for the FTL drive and goes on record as saying that the ship is not yet ready for the field. However, pressure to launch the mission is growing daily, and the *Von Braun/Rickenbacker* mission embarks in early 2114.

A few months into its historical journey, the situation has begun to deteriorate. Tension is running high between the civilian elements of the *Von Braun* and their military counterparts on the *Rickenbacker*. In addition, Delacroix's predictions prove to be accurate, as the *Von Braun* is plagued with numerous malfunctions. The coolant tubes on the engineering deck are constantly leaking, the scrubbers in the air-recirculators on the hydroponics deck have a tendency to pump out pure carbon dioxide and the integration of the core computer system, XERXES, is buggy and inefficient.




These events only exacerbate the tension between the military and civilian elements of the expedition (though there is limited fraternisation between the crew of the *Von Braun* and that of the *Rickenbacker*) as a complex web of interpersonal relationships begins to form. Still, after four months in space, it becomes clear that something is going to come to a head. The exact timing and severity of the conflict is all that remains to be determined.

And then, the remarkable happens. On June 10, 2114, the transceiver onboard the *Von Braun* begins receiving fragments of a distress beacon emanating from the Tau Ceti system, billions of miles outside the borders of colonised space.

# KEY CHARACTERS



Anatoly Korenchkin: Chief Executive Officer of the TriOptimum FTL research ship *Von Braun*. Appointed primarily for political and public relations reasons, Captain Korenchkin has little command experience or space training.



William Bedford Diego: Captain of the UNN *Rickenbacker,* a heavy destroyer piggy-backing upon the *Von Braun.* A popular military hero after the Battle of Boston Harbour, Captain Diego has made it perfectly clear that he has no patience for TriOptimum political manoeuvring. Captain Diego is also the son of Edward Diego, the TriOptimum executive partially responsible for the SHODAN incident.



Dr. Marie Delacroix: The principal designer of the FTL drive and the primary investigator on the *Von Braun,* Dr. Delacroix is outspoken and frequently at odds with Captain Korenchkin over appropriate safety precautions.



Melanie Bronson: Security chief on the *Von Braun*, Bronson takes her job very seriously and is considered by some of the TriOptimum crew to be a hard-liner. The *Rickenbacker* military, on the other hand, doesn't seem to take her very seriously.



Dr. Janice Polito: Senior Systems Analyst aboard the Von Braun. Her book, "Emergent AIs and Ethical Constraints" was the premier philosophical work on AIs in the post-SHODAN era. She was brought onboard to help monitor the XERXES system and make sure it was respecting its protocols and functioning within specified parameters.



XERXES 8933A/A: The operating system responsible for the primary data loop onboard the *Von Braun*. XERXES allocates the billions of onboard subtasks, delegating them to hundreds of thousands of individual systems. However, the computing power aboard the *Von Braun* is not completely under XERXES' control. Clever hackers can bypass the XERXES system and gain temporary control of certain critical sub-systems. This was implemented as a safety feature (on the recommendation of Dr. Polito) and is intended to prevent a repeat of the SHODAN disaster of 2072.

You: A soldier assigned to the mission, you wake up to find yourself with a military grade set of cybernetic implants and no memory of the last week's events. It's your job to find Dr. Polito and help get things back in order...

system shock™



# STARTING UP: IN MEDSCI: SPOILERS AHEAD!

Your adventure starts as you emerge from a cryosleep tube. There is blood on the floor and debris scattered around. It doesn't look good. Spend a moment or two looking around and take note of the corpse in the room to the left. Right-click on the body to search it. If you drag the wrench you find onto your "weapon" slot you'll see your hand holding it in front of you. The ladder out of the area is blocked by debris but you can start to clear it away by hitting it (left-click) with the wrench. Soon you'll receive an e-mail from Dr. Polito, telling you that the radar dish outside is becoming unstable and warning you to get out of the way. Sure enough, the radar dish suffers an explosion or two and debris comes flying through the window. A force field keeps you from being instantly depressurised, but Polito will e-mail you again to warn you to get out of the area as quickly as possible.

To climb the ladder, move close to it. You automatically climb onto the ladder. To climb, look up and then move forward. This moves you up the ladder. Try looking down instead - moving forward now causes you to back down the ladder. As you head up the ladder, you'll hear a loudspeaker warning you of imminent depressurisation. At the top of the ladder is a hallway with an automatic door. Keep moving through this area, but watch out for falling debris and more explosions.

The door at the end of the hallway doesn't open automatically: you'll need to press the button next to it. Simple enough. In the next room, Dr. Polito e-mails you again to tell you about information kiosks (the computer on the left wall) and access cards (on the table to the right). Access the info kiosk - it gives you some information about the "interaction interface" of your cyber interface (which you can display by pressing I or the TAB key). If you try to use the access slot to open the door before you've picked up the access card, you see a message indicating that you need CRYO access. Pick up the CRYO access card - it doesn't take up an inventory slot, but you can display your available access cards by clicking the access icon, the middle button in the lower right MFD panel. Once you have the CRYO card, you can open the door.

In the next room, Dr. Polito sends you another helpful piece of e-mail, suggesting that you search the body of the maintenance man. To do so, right-click over his body to open a display window of his possessions. He has a log, which you can download into your PDA by clicking on it and play by pressing U. The log tells you the combination to the door. All of your logs, and all of your e-mail, are stored in your PDA (left icon, bottom right interface display), sorted by level. Right-click on the keypad by the door, and enter the combination. You see a "HACK" panel but, since you don't have any nanites yet, you can't hack it. Also in this room is another info kiosk, this one describing your PDA. You'll encounter further kiosks in the areas to come, and all of them have useful basic information.

The room beyond the combination lock has a broken door, but there's a crawlway leading out. Past the window to the right is a strange creature, apparently chasing someone. Good thing it's on the other side of the broken door or you could be in danger. Crouch and move along the tunnel until you can jump into the room below. This room has the airlock door that Polito's been telling you to get behind. Unfortunately, if you try to open it with the button next to it, you'll hear an error message warning you that the door is inoperative and out of power, instructing you to put power in the auxiliary power override. There's a power cell nearby on the floor but when you pick it up, you'll realise it's dead. Dr. Polito e-mails you at this point, telling you to charge the cell at the recharge unit. If you activate the recharger, everything in your inventory becomes fully powered (unless you're trained in energy weapons, that's just the power cell). Open your inventory and left-click and drag the charged power cell from your inventory into the auxiliary power override. The airlock door will open.

Head through the airlock; the door will seal behind you. You'll receive e-mail from Dr. Polito, informing you that she's sent you four upgrade modules (usable at upgrade units to increase your skills and stats). Look around the room. The button on the wall in front of you turns on the lights. Search the shipping container to find twenty nanites (used for hacking, repairing and buying things from matter replicators). Go through the doorway to the left. Search the body: he's carrying some more nanites, which always come in handy. Continue on through the red-lit door.

This room has all four upgrade units (the devices used to increase your statistics and skills), where you can spend your cybernetic modules. As Dr. Polito points out in her e-mail, cybernetic modules are rare and increases can be expensive, so it's worth putting thought into any increases before you spend the cybernetic modules on them. Search the corpse to the left and find some more cybernetic modules.

The right door is broken, but the left door leads to a room with a log (which seems to be talking about you) and a crate with more nanites. Through the broken wall you can get to the room behind the broken door. There's a keypad-locked door in here but, unlike last time, there's no convenient log telling you the combination. If you have any skill, you can attempt to hack through. Click on the keypad, and then select the "HACK" panel. This brings up your hacking display, showing information such as the results of hacking and your chances of success. Click on the "HACK" button to make the attempt; you need to successfully connect three nodes in a row. Red nodes have ICE and green nodes are "safe". If you're successful, the door opens to a closet containing a Speed Booster and a Brawn Boost Implant.

Note that the Brawn Boost Implant has a charge of 100. If you equip it by dragging it to your Implant inventory slot, your Stats MFD panel will display an extra highlighted chevron for your STR stat. However, using the implant runs down its charge and you then need to find a recharger. Since the only recharger you've seen so far is on the other side of the airlock, you might want to save the implant for when you need it later.

That's about it for the set of rooms down here. Time to move upstairs. Get on the elevator and press the button to go up. Through the door on the right is a body with a psi amplifier. If your character isn't from the OSA, then the psi amp won't do you much good yet, since you don't have any psi powers, but, if you get some, be sure to equip this in the weapon slot. Going back to the previous room, you can see an open doorway looking out on a rather precarious set of girders. You can jump across to the far girder to pick up the bullets and Speed Boost, but be careful - if you miss, you can take damage from the fall. Or, if you're psychically inclined, you can get the goodies with a Kinetic Redirection.

On the other side of the catwalks lies a hallway and a ramp. There's another body, this one with some nanites and an access card. Behind the glass in the wall, there's also a box of shotgun shells and a PSI hypo. Use the wrench to break the glass.

Head for the hallway and door across from the catwalk. When you approach it, a strangely transparent crewman appears out of nowhere and walks towards the door, muttering something about having lost his access card, then vanishes. Hard to tell what you're supposed to do for the poor gentleman now, but at least you have an access card from the nearby room which lets you into the next door.



As you head through the door, watch out for another of the strange, unfriendly creatures, like the one you saw through the window, on your left. You can kill him with the wrench - your cyberware will tell you how damaged he is. Search him afterwards to see if he's carrying anything useful. The security office is straight ahead. Access the computer first thing. If any cameras have seen you, this turns the alarm off. If you have any hacking skill, you can hack the computer to try and temporarily disable security - though if you fail, the alarms go off. If you succeed, an icon in the lower left of your display indicates that security is hacked. The smaller room in the office has some munchies, a desk (remember to search it!) and a log.

Proceed carefully down the hall past the security office - there's another creature patrolling this area. You'll have to take him out with your wrench too. Your choices from here include left, right and into the room ahead. Tread carefully and watch for enemies - whatever happened to the *Von Braun* killed a lot of people, and you don't want to join them.

# GENERAL HINTS

- When you're low on ammo and fighting robots that explode on death, attack with a melee weapon to wear them down, then finish them off with one or two shots at a distance so as not to be caught in the explosion.
- Hack all the turrets you can, to get them on your side against other foes, but be careful to disable the security system first.
- Maintenance skill/tools help keep your weapons in good shape, while repair may be able to fix broken items.
- Leaning can often be the difference between living and dying.
- Rifled slugs will poke a hole in armour and droids, whereas pellets work much better against flesh targets.
- Use pipes, columns, even desks and tables as cover. Crouch to make it more effective.
- Hotkeys save you valuable time when loading and changing ammo, especially in a firefight.
- EMP based weapons specifically damage circuits and robots. They are useless against humans and other carbon based creatures.
- If you see a bio-reconstruction unit, activate it! You never know what's around the corner, even in a quiet hallway. Death can come quickly on the *Von Braun*...
- Most broken keypads and items can be repaired.
- If you're out of ammo and all you have is a wrench, *don't* go toe to toe with a protocol droid. It will *always* win at close range.

- In addition to expanding your inventory and armour equipping capabilities, BrawnBoost implants make you pretty fearsome when swinging a wrench.
- Always check weapons you find for ammo. Even if they are in terrible condition, you should pick them up and unload them before discarding. Every bullet counts!
- Hit the B key to reload a gun with a different type of ammo than is currently loaded.
- Melee combat is all about distance. If you're fighting with a melee weapon, you should ready your swing while still some distance from your opponent. Run towards him, then release the swing once you're close. If you then immediately back away again, you have a good chance of evading your opponent's swing while you are readying your own next attack. Some opponents may have a longer melee range than you do.
- A jack of all trades is a master of none; specialisation is the key to success. Many tasks (especially late in the game) require high skill in order to even attempt them. Don't try and become a master of all four weapons classes, pick one or two and stick with them. You can always pick up another one later on, if you have enough cyber modules available.
- On the other hand, don't put all your points into a single skill; find a small cluster of skills that support each other. If you like Energy weapons, put some of your points into Maintenance, so as to store more charge in your weapons. If you prefer Heavy weapons, strength will be key, as many have high strength requirements. If you want to explore Exotic weapons, invest in Research skill, as Exotic weapons can't be used until they're researched.
- Even if you're not playing an OSA character, judicious use of psi can be quite effective. After all, all characters have psi points, whether or not they choose to use them. Once your 'basic skills' are reasonably high, you might consider investing in a few Psionic Disciplines that complement those skills.



# DESIGNER'S NOTES

The path to creating *System Shock 2* was both a very long and very short one. *System Shock* was the game that drew me to Looking Glass nearly four years ago. There was something so special about it. Sure, there was the traditional immersive world simulation, sure there was a cool storyline, sure there was the excellent physics. But what really sucked me in was SHODAN. In most games, you saw the villain in a few key cut scenes and then you faced him or her at the end, dispatching the cad with a rocket launcher or two, or perhaps with a few well placed jumps on the head. But SHODAN was different. She taunted you, she threatened you and, sometimes, she even seemed to fear you. I clearly remember approaching a set of computer terminals on the first level that I was supposed to blow up. As I readied my weapon, SHODAN told me, in so many words, that, if I destroyed those terminals, she would have me torn into very small pieces. I hesitated. And then I thought, "Nuts to you, SHODAN" and blew up the terminals, whereupon she sent a small army of cyborgs to, well, tear me into very small pieces.

I knew then that *Shock* was something different. Here was a foe who talked to you, who watched you, who cared about you. She wasn't on vacation on some Caribbean island, only to return for the final battle. She was there, and she was ready to rumble.

When Irrational was formed in 1997, we were approached by Looking Glass with an interesting proposition. Take the Dark engine used for *Thief: The Dark Project* and make a cool, new game out of it. "What game do you guys want to do?" they asked us. "*System Shock 2*" was our spontaneous response, in unison, and in three part harmony.

The idea was especially intriguing to me, because I developed the initial design and story concepts for Thief and was anxious to work more with the engine. As we got down to work on the game, it became clear that the engine was indeed very flexible. *System Shock 2* is about as different from *Thief* as a game could get. The biggest challenges we faced were:

1. Persistent world. You can freely go back and forth on the *Von Braun* and the *Rickenbacker*. Unlike *Thief*, there are no discrete "levels". If you drop an object on Hydroponics, it will still be there when you return ten hours later.
2. Interface: The interface in *System Shock 1* was considered by many to be a bit of a barrier to entry. We wanted to retain the same (or even add more) functionality, but make it easier for the user.
3. Pacing: *System Shock 2* is a unique game. At times, it feels like a first person shooter, but there's an incredible amount of complexity running underneath the hood. The full RPG system, the modifiable, configurable weapons, the differing ammo types (and the accompanying differing vulnerabilities of monsters), the psionic disciplines, the research component, the character growth, the traits and every other of the dozens of systems in *Shock 2* had to be built, balanced and tuned. All of this work had to be piled upon the core first person gameplay. And it all had to be done in around a year and a half.

We decided early on that *Shock 2* was going to incorporate some of the role-playing elements of the *Ultima Underworld*™ games. However, the challenge this presented was how to make these elements work in the context of a real time game with an action feel.
Fortunately, we had a lot of things going for us. First of all, everybody working on the project was super-super smart, hardworking and had cutting edge hairstyles. Secondly, we were focused. The core design elements of *System Shock 2* never changed very far from our first conceptions of them in late '97. Because the Irrational programming staff are all dual classed programmers/designers, they were incredibly efficient about building prototype systems that helped us answer early on the really big question: "Is this fun?"

The interface alone went through six or seven revisions, some minor, some complete overhauls. In the end, we believe we've come up with a system that's both unique and playable. The Psi powers went through a few mutations, too. We were always clear that we didn't want psi powers to simply feel like guns with different graphics. We wanted the psi power oriented player to have to think in a more strategic fashion than the weapons oriented player. He was going to have to use his powers to turn the tide of battle to his favour, to even the odds. The tech-oriented character was going to have to make the most of his hacking, repair, modifying and research skills. The weapons guy was pretty straight forward. But instead of just making *Shock 2* play like a shooter for this character, we focused on making our weapons simulation system the deepest in any 3D game.

The storyline of *Shock 2* is going to surprise quite a few people along the way. The challenge we faced here was creating a new storyline that was both different and yet felt comfortable to players of the first game. We knew SHODAN was going to be a central character. However, we wanted to have a little fun with her, deepen her and give her even more of a sense of purpose and individuality. The addition of our other baddies, the Many, also allowed us to explore the theme of technology vs. humanity, which is implicit in the world of *System Shock*. The addition of the apparitions has allowed us another axis to bring the violent past of the *Von Braun* into the gamer's experience. System Shock 2 has an incredibly complex storyline that immerses the player in the events that have happened in the past and lets him impact the course of the events of the present.

As its maiden project, Irrational Games couldn't have asked for a better experience than getting to join and hopefully enhance the tradition of the *System Shock* series. We had wonderful, rich material to start with and have worked hard to make the world of SHODAN, TriOptimum and the *Von Braun* a richer, nastier place to live.

-Ken Levine



*Shock 2* is the maiden voyage for Irrational Games. It's been a tough passage - *Shock* is a great license to work with but a challenging legacy too. Legions of *Shock* fans are ready waiting to savage us if we fail to deliver a sequel that is worthy of the title. I don't think we'll disappoint them, but I'm keeping some tickets to South America in my pocket just in case.

Many other factors involved in the production of *Shock 2* have had this dual nature too, their yin and yang aspects. Working with an existing engine is one of these factors. The upside is hard to ignore; we could leap straight into prototyping - we had a playable version of *Shock* up and running in a matter of weeks. The downsides are more subtle, but made themselves known over the course of the project. Engines are often inscrutable to those who are working with them. The best of them have bugs and quirks that are hard for the game programmers to fathom and they all force a project into a particular path which may or may not correspond to the high level design. Luckily, we did our homework for *Shock* and focused very hard on coming up with a design that leveraged the capacities of the engine, while not trying to pursue unobtainable goals (making a *Quake* or *Unreal* clone). Our design work paid off because we work with the strengths of the engine (AI, complex object interactions, scripting) and not against them.

Another aspect of the project that revealed its two sides was the nature of our engine re-use. *Shock* is literally built out of the same codebase as *Thief* - we are still able to build a hybrid executable that allows you to play both *Thief* and *Shock* levels! The strength of this arrangement was that we shared with the *Thief* team new features that they added in and benefited from their bug fixes. The downside is that we also shared their bugs and the code instability that went along with getting *Thief* out the door. We also had to work hard to ferret out game specific elements that crept through the engine into *Shock* - like having mutant monkeys block your wrench with an invisible sword! But overall, we had a very fruitful and co-operative working relationship with the *Thief* team - we helped them get *Thief* out the door (and we love the game) and they are helping us push *Shock* out into the world (I think they enjoy playing it too).

Not to push the point too far, but the actual *Shock* team also had its light and dark side too. Most of the team was very green when we started and early on we relied heavily on the experience of the leads to carry the project and disseminate information to the rest of the team. But the team made up for its inexperience in raw talent, dedication and enthusiasm. They also learnt quickly and we managed to forge the team spirit and belief in the project that is essential to motivating people to work the 80 hour crunch weeks. *Shock 2* is a credit to its young but talented team, now blooded and experienced. We are all very proud of what we've made and hope to bring you lots more gaming goodness in the future.

-- Jonathan Chey

# APPENDIX: COMPLETE KEY COMMANDS

| COMMAND | KEYBOARD |
|---|---|
| Query | CONTROL key |
| Split | ALT key |
| Reload | R |
| Cycle ammo | B |
| Toggle weapon setting | O |
| Map | M |
| Inventory MFD toggle | I / TAB key |
| Menu | ESC key |
| Stop email or log | BACKSPACE key |
| Navigation marker | N |
| Message history | L |
| Compass toggle | ALT + C |
| Quicksave | ALT + S |
| Quickload | ALT + L |
| Clear teleport marker | ALT + T |
| Cycle weapon forward/backward | Y / SHIFT + Y |
| Equip psi-amp | '`' key |
| Equip wrench | 1 |
| Equip pistol | 2 |
| Equip shotgun | 3 |
| Equip assault rifle | 4 |
| Equip laser pistol | 5 |
| Equip EMP rifle | 6 |
| Equip electro shock | 7 |
| Equip grenade launcher | 8 |
| Equip stasis field generator | 9 |
| Equip fusion cannon | 0 |
| Equip crystal shard | '-' key |
| Equip viral proliferator | '=' key |
| Equip worm launcher | '\' key |
| Use rad hypo | P |
| Use medical hypo | H |
| Move slowly | SHIFT key |
| Run forward | W, keypad 8 or Arrow Key UP |
| Back up | X, keypad 2,or Arrow Key DOWN |
| Slide left | Z, keypad 1 |
| Slide right | C, keypad 3 |
| Turn left | A, keypad 4, Arrow Key LEFT |
| Turn right | D, keypad 6, Arrow Key RIGHT |
| Look up | T, PAGE UP |
| Look down | G, PAGE DOWN |
| Centre View | V |
| Lean left | Q, keypad 7 |
| Lean right | E, keypad 9 |
| Crouch | S |
| Lean forward | ALT + SHIFT + W |
| Jump | SPACEBAR |



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