

# GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI: THE FUTURE OF MANKIND

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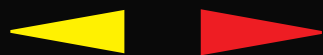
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# WHAT'S INSIDE

INTRODUCTION





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

**A**s with all grand strategy games that challenge you to forge a world-spanning empire, in Alpha Centauri the road to victory is a long and arduous, but not without its benefits. In a game of such magnificent scope and depth, the journey is every bit as rewarding as the ending. And that journey can be as beguiling as the alien fauna that populates the harsh, new world of Alpha Centauri.

Your paths to world domination or technological superiority are many and varied. However, just in case you find the journey to be more daunting task than you surmised, and the goal a little beyond your grasp, we offer you a map to speed you on your journey. Broken into four parts, this guide:

- **Details the basics of exploration, facility and unit construction, science and technology, and the military.**
- **Reveals the strategic possibilities of Alpha Centauri.**
- **Offers advanced tactics for maximizing city growth.**
- **Provides the how-to for social, political, and economic, engineering.**
- **Explains the values system so you maximize every aspect of play—from terraforming to designing custom units.**
- **Covers every faction, technology, base facility, secret project, and basic unit building block.**
- **Discusses multiplayer games, with both setup issues and multiplayer strategies.**
- **Shows you how to modify the Alpha Centauri rules, create custom factions, and make your own maps and scenarios.**

Alpha Centauri begins with nothing but discord and strife between the new citizens of the planet. Your efforts will hopefully restore order and unity, with you at the head of this new empire. The path you take is up to you, but this guide will ensure you have no trouble getting there, no matter which path you choose to become the master of Alpha Centauri.





# PART ONE

LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY





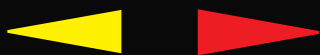
**A**lpha Centauri is a complex game rooted in the far future, when seven factions depart from the U.N. Starship Unity and make planetfall on an alien world. Each faction must explore this new world, discover scientific breakthroughs, and build up its military might. To be successful, you need a thorough understanding of the fundamental elements that compose the Alpha Centauri experience. Part 1 of this guide will take you through the early concepts of the game, explaining how to engage in planetary exploration, creating new and powerful cities, engaging in scientific research, and building up your military forces.





# CHAPTER ONE

EXPLORATION





All great adventures begin with exploration. Safely away from the mutiny on the U.N. Starship Unity, your faction arrives on Planet with little more than a colony pod and only a few squares of landscape visible to you. What lurks beyond your initial borders will remain a mystery until you venture forth like a modern-day Christopher Columbus and examine the world around you. Are you secluded on a small island? Did you happen to land on a large continent rich with resources? Are you surrounded by competing factions? You must answer many questions if you intend to be the supreme leader of Planet, and the act of exploration is your gateway to answering them.

## FIRST CITY

When Alpha Centauri begins, your colony pod will land on Planet in a random location, in turn creating your first city. It is from this initial starting point that your empire in the making will begin to branch out into unexplored territory. This initial location will have a tremendous impact in the early stages of the game.

Since your first city is founded in a random location, you may be at an advantage or disadvantage, depending on your immediate surroundings. For instance, if you see no water around you, you may be placed in the middle of a large continent somewhere, or the ocean could simply be just a few tiles away. Of primary importance are the abundance of resources within reach of your initial base; the more resources you have, the quicker your city will grow, the more research you can conduct, and the more units you can build, and so on. Lacking abundant resources at the outset of the game means your development will be stunted. What to do? Explore!



## SCOUT PATROL

Now that the colony pod is safely on land and has been recycled into your first city, your initial plan of action should be to explore as much of the surrounding territory as possible. Fortunately, your new city comes with a prebuilt scout patrol, a unit with weak offensive and defensive abilities. The scout patrol is intended for exploration and not warfare—though it can hold its own against the occasional mind worm attack (mind worms are indigenous life forms on Planet that don't appreciate all these new visitors invading their home).

**TIP**

THE MORE SCOUT PATROLS YOU HAVE BLANKETING THE AREA, THE BETTER. WHILE YOU GET ONE FREE PATROL AT THE OUTSET OF THE GAME, YOU SHOULD HAVE YOUR BASE MANUFACTURE AT LEAST TWO MORE SO YOU CAN UNCOVER HIDDEN TERRITORY WITH MUCH MORE SPEED.

## SCOUT PATROL VISION

Your initial scout patrol is capable of viewing terrain one map tile in every direction. Since it begins at your base no new territory will be visible, as a city is capable of viewing two tiles in every direction. However, once you pick a direction and move your scout patrol, new terrain will emerge, and the mystery of your location will slowly unfold.



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TIP

SINCE YOU KNOW THE PATROL CAN UNCOVER ONE SQUARE IN EVERY DIRECTION, YOUR INITIAL EXPLORATION SHOULD FIND YOU UNCOVERING AS MUCH TERRAIN AS POSSIBLE WITH A SINGLE MOVE.

## WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?

You should be on the lookout for several things when moving your scout patrol:

- **Resources for new cities**
- **Other faction leaders**
- **Supply pods and monoliths.**

Let's take a look at each and see why it is important.

## RESOURCES FOR NEW CITIES

You'll never get anywhere in Alpha Centauri if you don't branch out and create new cities. You can bet the competing factions are actively seeking out new territory, expanding their bases, and funneling every last resource into the creation of new military units and technological discoveries. At the outset of the game, you may be surrounded by factions that are staking their claim in territory perilously close to your base. You should uncover as much hidden terrain as possible as fast as you can, hopefully discovering new regions that would be suitable for a strong city.

## CITY SWEETSPOTS

Finding valuable locations for new cities is of primary importance. If a city lacks valuable resources, don't expect the city to evolve into a





# GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

super power any time soon. Important elements for a city and its growth can be broken down into three categories:

- **Nutrients**
- **Minerals**
- **Energy.**

Nutrients are your food supply. Without nutrients, your city will not grow in population. Without population growth, the city will be at a loss for workers, and without workers you can't do very much, so having a food supply is critical.

Tiles that have grassy plains will produce more food than a hilly flatland, and tiles infested with xenofungus produce no food whatsoever unless the fungus is removed by terraforming. Having a city next to water is an excellent way to ensure future growth, as sea formers (units that can terraform water tiles) can plant kelp forests that are rich in nutrients. However, since sea formers are still a ways away in the early goings of the game, you should concentrate more on land tiles than water in the beginning of the game.

**TIP**

THE GREENER A TERRAIN TILE IS, THE MORE RAINFALL IT SUSTAINS. THE MORE RAIN IT RECEIVES, THE MORE FOOD IT IS CAPABLE OF PRODUCING.

Minerals are required for your city, so it can produce new units and create an infrastructure. Without minerals, your city can grow in population (if it has nutrients), but can't build anything, ultimately making it all but useless. Minerals are extracted from rocks, so the more rocks you see on a tile square, the more minerals it can produce. You can turn a mineral barren tile into a mineral producing one by building certain enhancements (like mines or forests) on the square. This is called terraforming and will be covered at length in Chapter 6.



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Energy is used for research and supporting your labs. The more energy you produce, the faster you can evolve your city and empire with new technologies and base enhancements. The primary factor for determining a good energy tile is its elevation. The higher the tile, the more energy it will produce (especially when a solar collector is built there later in the game).

**TIP**

A TILE WILL PRODUCE ONE ENERGY UNIT FOR EVERY 1,000 METERS OF HEIGHT. THEREFORE, A TILE AT 3,000 METERS WILL PRODUCE THREE ENERGY UNITS.

## R E C A P

- **Nutrients are produced in wet, grassy squares.**
- **Minerals are produced in rocky squares.**
- **Energy is produced at high elevations.**

With this in mind, your scout patrol should be on the lookout for regions of terrain that offer these resources. If you're not strong in all three areas, the growth and functionality of your city will be stunted. On the other hand, the power of terraforming can make even the bleakest of situations more fruitful, but this is a time-consuming process and not something you should be engaged in at the early stages of the game.

Last, when creating a new city near these resources, make sure the city is within two squares of all three resources. A city only benefits from resources within that two tile radius. Everything else is beyond its reach. Remember this two tile radius when founding new cities so that you create cities that overlap and thus steal each other's resources.



## DISCOVERING OTHER FACTIONS

As you move your patrol around your base, uncovering new terrain, you may come across a competing faction. This is either good news or bad news, depending on who the faction is and where it is located in relation to you. For instance, if you're pressed against the back end of a continent with nowhere to go but one direction, and there happens to be a competing faction in that direction, well, you've got problems. You're must either get along with that faction by signing a Pact or, alternatively, destroy the competing faction as soon as you possibly can.

If a faction is pressed up against yours, you'll both be fighting for limited space and borders. This isn't a good way to start the game, as you should be focusing on expansion and establishing several strong cities, not haggling with a neighbor that may or may not have your best interests at heart. It is for this reason that you should seriously consider channeling all your funds and resources into creating several military units and wiping out the competing faction as soon as possible. This may sound rather brutal, but it's better that you get them out of the way sooner rather than later, if for no other reason than the faction will begin to amass its own army of units.

There is a downside to wiping out a competing faction in the early portion of the game. For all you know, there may still be other factions within the vicinity, so if you present yourself as a ruthless warmonger early, don't be surprised if everyone else finds you untrustworthy and assumes a hostile stance towards you. Fortunately, attitudes can be smoothed over with some technological exchanges, so you can get yourself out of a nasty situation in the early stages as opposed to later when grudges are backed up by earth-scorching firepower. (Diplomacy is covered in Chapter 8.)

**TIP**

COMPETING FACTIONS ARE FAR FRIENDLIER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME THAN AT LATER STAGES. WITH LITTLE IN THE WAY OF MILITARY OR TECHNOLOGICAL MIGHT, THEY WILL SELDOM RUSH INTO A FIGHT. USE THIS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE BY STRIKING EARLY AND CLEARING THE WAY FOR YOUR EXPANSION.

If, on the other hand, you want to resist the military alternative and instead go the friendly route, there are a few things you should take into account. While you may be on friendly terms with the opposition, that doesn't mean you can simply move your units through the faction's territory without ruffling a few feathers. More often than not, a faction will demand that you move your units out of his or her terrain or risk starting a conflict. The only way to get around this is by seeking a pact with the faction. A pact lets you freely move through the faction's territory without risk of conflict.

With all this in mind, an early military strike is still your best bet for future success. Having a neighbor is a risky prospect, and one that should be dealt with early and swiftly.

**W A R N I N G**

*Make sure you leave at least one military unit in your city at all times. Not doing so could find your city easily taken over by a lowly mind worm or a sneaky enemy unit!*

## UNITY SUPPLY PODS

While your colony ship plummeted toward Planet, the Unity mother-ship dropped tons of supply pods across the surface of the planet. These cargo pods can be found on both land and water squares in





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random locations all over the world. They are important because they house all sorts of benefits—new units, powerups for the discovering unit, enhanced resources—that can give you an early boost. As you move your scout patrol across the landscape, you will see these pods just about everywhere. It is crucial to your future success that you move your patrol over as many supply pods as possible. Don't leave them sitting around uncovered, or a competing faction may come in and claim the pods for itself, potentially gaining new technologies beyond your reach.

For the most part, supply pods are extremely useful. On the other hand, in rare instances, pods can sometimes be infested with mind worms that will attack the closest unit you have. In the early goings of the game, this can be quite risky. Fortunately, your average scout patrol can usually fend off at least a few attacks before being destroyed. The risk of uncovering a few mind worms, though, should not deter you from uncovering all the supply pods you can. More often than not, you'll find free resources and units. In some instances, you might even uncover a more valuable prize: an alien artifact.

## ALIEN ARTIFACTS

Alien artifacts are the most powerful item to be held within a supply pod. Unfortunately, their power can only be tapped by moving the artifact to a base that has a network node constructed. If no network node has been constructed, you can still bring the alien artifact to one of your bases and connect it to a node when you do finally build one.

## W A R N I N G

***You can only take one alien artifact to a particular base. If you happen to come across a second alien artifact, you must take it to a secondary base outfitted with a network node***



Simply put, an alien artifact contains a free technology that doesn't need to be researched. Once the artifact is connected to a node, the technology immediately becomes available to your faction, opening the gateway to bigger and better technologies, base enhancements, or units. When you consider that researching new technologies takes a considerable amount of time, the value of getting one for free (and immediately) should be obvious. What's more, gaining a technology in this way can quickly put you ahead of the competition. While they're waiting years and year to discover something, you've gained the ability in the blink of an eye.

## MONOLITHS

Monoliths appear in random locations throughout the world of Alpha Centauri and can be quite useful to the resourceful player. Unlike alien artifacts and cargo pods, the abilities of a monolith are unwavering constants. A monolith will always:

- **Increase a unit's morale by one level (morale levels are covered in detail in Chapter 5)**
- **Repairs any damaged unit**
- **Produce two nutrients, two minerals, and two energy units every turn.**

## W A R N I N G

*A particular unit can only use a monolith once to raise its level, though it may repair itself at a monolith an infinite number of times.*



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As you can see, monoliths are very powerful and useful, especially if used properly. It usually takes many successful battles before a military unit increases in level, which makes it more potent and more difficult to destroy. A monolith can do the same thing—without bloodshed—and the effect is immediate.

**TIP**

USE THE MONOLITH TO INCREASE THE MORALE LEVEL OF ALREADY ADVANCED UNITS. IT'S QUITE SIMPLE TO GO FROM LEVEL 1 TO LEVEL 2, BUT WHEN THE UNIT IN QUESTION IS ALREADY HIGHLY RANKED, THE NEXT LEVEL CAN BE QUITE CHALLENGING TO GET. THE WISE PLAYER WILL BUMP UP THE LEVEL OF AN ADVANCED UNIT USING A MONOLITH.

Since a monolith can repair a unit instantly, having a monolith near one of your cities can prove invaluable. A great tactic is to place a military unit on top of the monolith and have it sit there for as long as possible. If an enemy happens to come strolling by, let them come to you. By doing this, your unit will be repaired automatically at the beginning of the next round while the enemy is still damaged!

Last, because a monolith tile can also be a valuable resource supplier, you should consider building a city near one and tapping into the resources. Just make sure that the region in question has plenty of other tiles worth harvesting, as a solitary monolith isn't enough to grow a small city into a larger one.

## EXPLORATION INSIGHT

You've uncovered a wide area of terrain around your base and now have a pretty good understanding of where you are situated. But what does this information really mean in the scheme of things?



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

You could find yourself in an almost limitless number of situations, all of which speak to where you and your civilization should head in terms of technology and research.

For instance, if you find yourself on a small island in the middle of nowhere, obviously you're going to be hard-pressed for quick expansion because of the limited terrain for building. Therefore, island dwellers should concentrate their research on naval units, so they can get off the island quickly and explore new regions of the map.

*"When they discover the center of the universe, a lot of people will be disappointed to discover they are not it."*

*—Bernard Bailey*

Alternatively, you may be situated on a large landmass with no enemies in sight. This fortunate position lets you earmark less research for a military build-up and concentrate more on peaceful activities like expansion and infrastructure.

Ultimately, where you are dictates a course of action. It is the leader who doesn't take his situation into account in the early stages of the game that is doomed to failure.

## W A R N I N G

*Just as being alone for long periods of time lets you engage in all manner of research without worrying about military action, the same is true for the enemy. It's the enemies in seclusion that are perhaps your biggest threat for the simple reason that no one has been bugging them, diverting them, or attacking them, allowing for an impressive build-up of technology and units.*



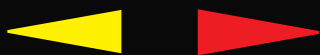
## EXPLORATION RECAP

- Build several scout patrols at the beginning of the game.
- Uncover as much hidden terrain as possible.
- Seek new areas that are rich in resources for the construction of new cities.
- Hoard every supply pod you can.
- Repair injured units at monoliths.
- Raise the morale of units at monoliths.
- Guide alien artifacts to a city with a network node, unleashing a new technology.
- Wipe out enemy factions that are too close for comfort... before it's too late!



# CHAPTER TWO

## INFRASTRUCTURE





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

**T**hroughout human history, powerful and important leaders have always pointed toward their cities as examples of their abilities. Whether it was Rome, Greece, or Alexandria, great cities were held up as a symbol of advancement and culture. With Alpha Centauri, this heritage continues. A city is your lifeline to research, resources, and military might. Without powerful and evolving cities under your thumb, your future will be bleak and short-lived. This chapter will ease you into the concepts behind a successful city, such as how to promote growth, build infrastructure, allocate workers, and suppress the occasional riot.

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Now that your colony pod has safely touched down on the surface of Planet, a shiny new city recycles itself into existence. It is from this humble beginning that your empire will grow and expand, leading to the founding of even more cities under your control.

## POPULATION

The first thing you should make note of is the number displayed over your city, viewable from the main game screen. At the outset of the game, this number will be 1. This number represents how large the city is, translating into 1,000 citizens. If the number were 2, you'd have 2,000 citizens dwelling within the city, and so on. Every new city will start at 1 and progress up as the growth rate takes hold, and your citizens procreate.

The population number also indicates how many workers you currently have available to collect resources within reach of the city. A



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

population 1 city will have one worker that can be placed on any tile within the radius of the city. A level 3 city would have three workers to be allocated each on his own tile.

**NOTE**

The tile upon which your city rests automatically generates resources without a worker assigned to it, so consider the city tile a freebie.

When your city reaches a population of 7, you cannot progress past this number until you build a hab complex. Once that has been constructed, your population will flourish until it reaches 15, when you must build a hab dome to continue growing.

**G R O W T H**

The growth of your city depends on the availability of nutrients. Without solid access to nutrients, the growth of your city will be severely stunted. Having an ever-expanding population is extremely important. The more workers you have, the more resources you can have them collect; and the more resources you're collecting, the faster you can research new technologies and develop new military units.

For every 1,000 citizens you have, you must generate a minimum of two nutrients to support them. If your city happens to be breaking

**TIP**

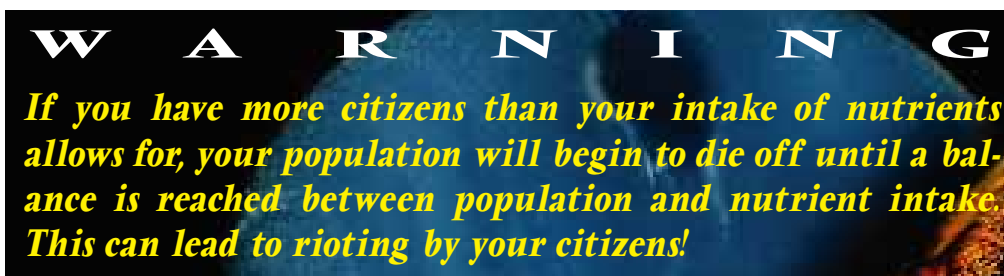
THE MORE NUTRIENTS YOU COLLECT EVERY TURN, THE FASTER YOUR CITY WILL INCREASE IN POPULATION.





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even on nutrients, your city is stagnant and will not increase in size. The only way to prevent this is to ensure you're generating more nutrients than your city consumes.



## THE CITY SCREEN

When you double-click on one of your cities, a window will pop up, offering all kinds of information about the city—information you must digest and understand to be a successful leader. Novice players are in luck because the computer does a fairly good job of running most of the micromanagement of the city, though it is by no means perfect. When you feel you're ready to tackle the details for yourself, you should head to Chapter 5 and learn the advanced tactics.

## EXAMPLE CITY

Let's take a look at a sample city screen for a population level 5 city and see what all these numbers mean. Keep in mind that this is just an example city and not indicative of what every city will look like.

A level 5 five city translates into a total population 5,000 people, in turn representing five available workers on five tiles. Looking at the city screen, we would see five workers on five tiles around the perimeter of the city. Take a gander at the following table for a breakdown of what each worker is currently doing.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

| TILE | NUTRIENT | MINERAL | ENERGY |
|------|----------|---------|--------|
| 1    | 2        | 1       | 1      |
| 2    | 2        | 2       | 2      |
| 3    | 2        | 1       | 2      |
| 4    | 2        | 1       | 1      |
| 5    | 2        | 1       | 2      |
| City | 3        | 2       | 4      |

All together, this translates into:

| TOTAL NUTRIENTS | TOTAL MINERALS | TOTAL ENERGY UNITS |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| PER TURN        | PER TURN       | PER TURN           |
| 13              | 8              | 12                 |

Since we know that for every 1,000 citizens, two nutrients are required to keep them alive, we can see that of our 13 total nutrients, ten are being used just to support the workers, leaving a surplus of three nutrient units. What happens to this surplus? It is sent into a pool, indicated on the city screen at the top-left under nutrients. This section is made up of lots of little boxes that fill in over time. The rate at which these boxes fill is dependent on your surplus. When the pool fills to maximum capacity, you gain another population point and the pool empties to be filled again. In the case of our example city, we are filling in three boxes every turn. At this rate, we will raise our population one point in 18 turns, making it a level 6 city!

Ultimately, a solid city that has a bright future will have a surplus in all three categories of resource: nutrients, minerals, and energy. This doesn't mean that a city is a lost cause if it's not showing a surplus in all three, as micro-managing your workers can squeeze a little more out of the city, something we'll cover in greater detail in Chapter 5.

**NOTE**

As a city grows in population, the nutrients required to raise its level also increase, so more nutrients must be harvested in a level 6 city than a level 5 city; that is, each jump in population growth will take longer than the last.

More often than not, a city will generate one type of resource more than any other. This happens because of the city's particular location to nearby resources. While not every city can be perfect, the wise leader will use a city's strength to maximize its potential.

For instance, if a city is generating a high surplus of minerals, it is a great candidate for producing the bulk of your military units. On the other hand, if a city is pumping out energy with plenty of surplus, this city is contributing to your research of new units and secret projects. At the bottom of the scale, we would have a city that is growing in population, but producing little in the way of energy or minerals. This city would be contributing next to nothing to your efforts. With all this in mind, it should be apparent that every city should show a surplus in either minerals or energy, or it will be a wasted effort.

## FASTER RESEARCH AND BUILDING

One of the keys to success in Alpha Centauri is out-producing and out-researching the competition. Alpha Centauri has so many potential discoveries and advanced military units that often, the victor is the one who gets to the higher levels first. To accomplish this, you need high surplus rates.



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When you order a city to build a particular unit, say a scout rover, the time this takes to produce is directly related to how many minerals you show in surplus. The more powerful a unit, the more minerals it requires for completion. If your city is showing a low surplus in minerals, you can expect to wait around for quite a few turns until the unit is finally constructed. It is for this reason that you should resist building mineral-hoarding units or base enhancements until your city is showing a high surplus rate.

## PUMPING UP THE SURPLUS

There are three ways to increase your surplus of minerals, nutrients, and energy:

- **Terraform the surrounding landscape**
- **Build base enhancements**
- **Reallocate your work force.**

Let's take a look at each in detail.

## TERRAFORMING

Terraforming is the act of building new facilities on landscape tiles or affecting the land itself by raising or lowering its elevation. To terraform, you must first build a former, a special unit that has no offensive capability but can build a wide range of improvements to increase your resources. The advanced use of terraforming is covered in detail in Chapter 6.

When you finally have a former in action, you can manipulate it in one of two ways: manually or automatically. If you're a new player to Alpha Centauri, you should consider toggling your former to autopilot

**TIP**

THE MORE FORMERS YOU HAVE, THE QUICKER THE REGION AROUND YOUR CITY WILL BENEFIT FROM TERRAFORMING IMPROVEMENTS. IF YOU WANT A PARTICULAR TERRAIN TILE TERRAFORMED RAPIDLY, GANG TWO FORMERS UP ON IT, AND THEY WILL COMPLETE THE TASK IN DOUBLE TIME!

by selecting it and pressing shift-A. From this point onward, the former will travel around your city and create roads, mines, forests, sensors, and so on. All these improvements will increase the amount of resources generated by a particular terrain tile. A mine, for example, will enhance the number of minerals produced in that tile. Farms will increase nutrient output.

**W A R N I N G**

*When the former is set to autopilot, it usually creates roads first before moving onto farms and mines. If you are desperate for nutrients, energy, or minerals, you should manually give the former orders.*

## BASE ENHANCEMENTS

You can construct quite a few base enhancements to help stimulate your surplus rates. Unfortunately, the bulk of them cannot be discovered until much later in the game. However, there is one base enhancement that arrives very quickly and should be built at every one of your cities: recycling tanks.

Recycling tanks are cheap and quick to build, and the payoff can make the difference between a city that sits at population 3 and doesn't evolve and one that blossoms into a huge metropolis. Recycling tanks only effect the city tile itself, but this can usually generate at least a



nutrient or two extra. What's more, recycling tanks influence mineral and energy production!

Beyond this, you must engage in quite a bit of research before gaining access to such surplus enhancements like tree farms, sky hydroponics labs, nanoreplicators, and quantum converters. You'll find all the details on these advanced topics in Chapter 13.

## REALLOCATING THE WORK FORCE

Your workers are an ambitious lot and love to show their drive by venturing out into the terrain squares and working where they want. For the most part, they make sound decisions, but not always.

If you find yourself running low on nutrients, minerals, or energy, your first stop should be the city screen. Click the button labeled Resources, and you will see a map of your city along with all the surrounding terrain tiles. On some tiles, you will see the values for the various resources you're pulling in. Let's say you want to pump up your nutrient intake by at least one point. Scanning the terrain tiles, you may find a worker on a tile that is generating, say, two minerals and nothing else. If you can afford to sacrifice the minerals and still maintain a surplus, you could take the worker off the mineral tile and have him work on a farm tile instead. You do this by clicking on the mineral tile first, thus taking the worker off, and then clicking on the farm tile once to put him back to work. You'll now be making far more nutrients than you were before, increasing your growth rate, and still showing a surplus in energy and minerals.



**TIP**

ALWAYS BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR RESOURCES OFTEN AND TWEAK THE LOCATION OF YOUR WORKERS. LETTING THE COMPUTER ALWAYS MAKE THE DECISION GUARANTEES YOU'LL BE OPERATING SLIGHTLY UNDER YOUR POTENTIAL!

## THE GOVERNOR

The governor is a great option for new or inexperienced players. Simply put, the governor automates a lot of the micromanagement involved in running and building a successful city. When activated, the governor will decide which units and city improvements to build. For the most part, the governor makes sound decisions and will greatly help you expand your empire.

## ACTIVATING THE GOVERNOR

By default, the governor is toggled off at the beginning of the game. To enable the Governor, you must click on a city, so the City Detail screen appears. Across the top of this window, you will see a large button in the middle labeled "Governor." Clicking this button will tell the governor to take over control of the city and begin building units and improvements. While this may seem rather vague, you can refine what the governor does by toggling the four buttons: Explore, Discover, Build, and Conquer.

### EXPLORE

When you toggle the Explore button, the governor of the city in question will focus on creating scouts, colony pods, and transports. No effort



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will be taken to manufacture city improvements. Setting the governor to Explore plays a critical role in the early part of the game, when venturing out and exploring your surroundings is of utmost importance. When you feel you have a nice chunk of territory explored, you should return to the City Detail screen and assign the governor a new role.

## DISCOVER

When the governor is set to Discover, he will guide your city by engaging in new secret projects, developing new military prototypes, creating probe teams (used for covert activity against enemy cities), and constructing network nodes (increases research by 50 percent). A city should be set to Discover when it has already attained a sizable defense force and is well protected. Ultimately, the Discover option will lead to scientific research and the construction of city enhancements that promote further research opportunities.

## BUILD

When set to Build, the governor will focus on the infrastructure of your base, building any and all improvements that benefit your citizens and promote growth and happiness. Additionally, the Discover option will find your city producing formers for terraforming the surrounding landscape. You should set your governor to Build in times of peace and when you are at a low risk of being attacked.

## CONQUER

When push comes to shove, and you are forced into military action, setting your governor to Conquer mode will focus all efforts within



the city to the production of military units and city enhancements that promote a strong show of force. Usually, the governor will produce the most advanced military units you have access to, and occasionally he will produce city improvements such as command centers that assist in your military efforts. You should toggle the governor to Conquer when under attack or, better yet, when you want to begin building up an invasion force.

## ADVANCED GOVERNOR

If the governor of a particular city keeps producing units you don't want, and you're a little tired of correcting it, you should consider tweaking the responsibilities of the governor by bringing up the Advanced Governor screen. This is done by clicking the small arrow next to the Governor button on the City Detail screen.

When this window pops up, you will see a list of every action the governor is slated to make decisions on. Anything with an X next to it means the governor has permission for this particular action. So, if the governor of a particular city keeps on building transports when you feel that your empire has more than enough, come to this screen and toggle off the appropriate action.

For the most part, the governor makes sound decisions and will help the inexperienced player understand the basics of building a strong city, so this option shouldn't be fiddled with until you have a thorough understanding of the concepts behind Alpha Centauri.

## WORKERS AND TALENTS

The backbone of any city is the workforce that keeps it sustained. In Alpha Centauri, your workers are a loyal lot, but they can only be



pushed so far. As a city grows in population and overcrowding becomes an issue, you must always be on the lookout for the dreaded drone riot.

The best way to handle your burgeoning population is to monitor every city, every turn. Eventually, your city will benefit from talents, a derivative of the worker but with a unique ability to either calm people down, enhance research, or stimulate the economy. However, using talents isn't as easy as it sounds.

The biggest concern with talents is that turning a worker into a talent diverts him away from your workforce; that is, you have one less person out gathering resources. The trick here is to find the right balance between assigning talents and maintaining a surplus in the three key categories of nutrients, minerals, and energy. If you pull a worker off the terrain, you can bet your generation of resources will suffer. Therefore, only assign talents when you can afford to do so without jeopardizing the growth or profitability of your city.

## DRONE RIOTS

Drone riots occur when the amount of drones within a given city equals or outnumbers the amount of talents available. When a drone riot happens, your citizens will continue to generate nutrients, but will cease all production, and nothing in the way of energy surplus will be produced.

***"The limitation of riots, moral questions aside, is that they cannot win and their participants know it. Hence, rioting is not revolutionary but reactionary because it invites defeat."***

***—Martin Luther King, Jr.***



Drone riots can be prevented or ended by the following methods:

- **Build psych-related facilities, such as a recreation commons.**
- **If you have a high police rating under social engineering, placing military units in a rioting city can calm down the populace. (Social Engineering is explained in detail in Chapter 5.)**
- **Convert some of your workers to talents, such as a doctor.**
- **If you don't have enough talents to restore the balance, pump up your energy allocation to psych to create more talents (explained in Chapter 5).**

Drone riots should be avoided at all cost, especially in times of war. The last thing you need while knee-deep in a military campaign is to divert your attention to a drone riot. Chances are, it could've been avoided in the first place!

## RECAP

- **Each increase in population equals 1,000 people and one new worker.**
- **Population growth occurs by having a nutrient surplus.**
- **Every city should strive to have a surplus in nutrients, minerals, and energy.**
- **The more minerals you produce, the faster you'll construct new units and base enhancements.**
- **The more energy you produce, the quicker you'll research new secret projects and discoveries.**
- **Use formers to terraform the landscape around your base to improve the amount of resources you bring in.**
- **Build recycling tanks at every base to improve resource gathering.**



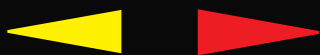
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- ▶ Fine-tune which terrain tiles your workers are operating on.
- ▶ Use the governor to micromanage the details of your cities until you are comfortable with the concepts behind the game.
- ▶ Use talents to keep your city in a good mood.



# CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT





**Y**ou've explored the surrounding landscape and founded several cities that are bustling with population growth and resource gathering. Sounds great on paper, but none of this means anything unless you are actively engaged in research and development, uncovering new technologies and secret projects that will help your civilization continue to grow. Without research and development, you'll quickly lag behind the competition, and before you know it, you'll be like a caveman stuck in the Jetsons. This chapter will guide you through the basics of research and development and illustrate the basics you should understand to become a dominant force.

## BLIND RESEARCH – PROS AND CONS

When starting a game from scratch, blind research is toggled on by default. This gives novice players a little less to think about and breaks down all the technological improvements into the following four categories:

- **Explore**
- **Discover**
- **Build**
- **Conquer**

At the outset of the game, you will be asked what areas of research you would like to focus on. You can either select one category for faster research or even select all four, though this will slow down the research process of all categories involved. This is called blind research—you aren't shooting for a specific advance but rather casting your net at an ocean of scientific possibilities and seeing what



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comes up. Discoveries will be divvied out as the game progresses, depending on which areas of interest you have allocated. Unfortunately, blind research detracts from the big picture of the game and will not really assist you in learning the ins and outs of research and development, especially how all the technological pieces fit together. For this reason, you should start a new game with blind research toggled off, letting you pinpoint exactly those technologies you'd like to research. Ultimately, this will increase your understanding of the game and make you a much stronger player.

*"To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism, to steal ideas from many is research."*

— *Anonymous*

## LABS

Labs are the lifeblood of your research. The more output coming from your labs, the faster you research new technologies and secret projects. The amount of your lab output is directly related to how much energy each of your cities is producing. Low output means it will take significantly longer to make breakthroughs. It is for this reason, especially at the outset of a new game, you generate as many energy credits as possible. Tweaking your social engineering and adjusting the output of psych, economy, and labs is covered in great detail in Chapter 5.

## PATHS TO DOMINANCE

There are so many routes to take in research that nailing down a set path is next to impossible. What research you want or need to engage



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in is usually dictated by the atmosphere of the game you find yourself in. For instance, if you start the game near a rather irate neighbor, channeling your insight into conquer research will be extremely important. On the other hand, if you begin the game secluded from the opposition, you may want to forsake conquer research until later in the game and focus your energies on build and discover research. Let's take a look at each of the four categories of research and see how they evolve and what they offer the player. Full details on every technology and secret project can be found in the reference section.

**NOTE**

You'll find references to secret projects in the following section. They are world monuments that confer great bonuses on the first faction to build them. Secret Projects are unique buildings. Secret projects, though incredibly beneficial, require a tremendous amount of minerals to build, sometimes taking 10-15 times longer to build than regular base improvement. You'll find more about them at this end of this chapter.

**E X P L O R E**

Explore is the gateway to mobile units and terraforming. Without research into Explore, you'll never develop formers or wheeled military units. Considering that formers are vital to a burgeoning city, focusing on this field of research is extremely important in the early stages of the game.

**NOTE**

Every technology has a level rating indicating the category of research and what level it is. E1 means Explore Level 1, meaning this is the first step in the Explore path, leading to E2.



## CENTAURI ECOLOGY (E1)

This is one of the first technologies you want to research. It allows for a new unit, formers, and a new unit add-on, the terraforming unit. As with every technology, Centauri Ecology opens the gateway to other areas of research—in this case, the secret project Weather Paradigm and technologies such as Ecological Engineering and Centauri Empathy, all of which make your empire slightly more Planet friendly.

## DOCTRINE MOBILITY (E1)

Everyone needs wheels, and this is the starting point. If you happen to start a new game, and you're perilously close to a rival faction, researching Mobility should be your first priority, as it will allow for the construction of the speeder land unit and the command center base improvement, additionally opening up a new research avenue to Doctrine Loyalty and Doctrine Flexibility.

## DISCOVER

Discover research leads to bigger and better engines for your military units which, in turn, increases the rate at which you can move your units. Additionally, the field of Discover opens the gateway to such advanced projects as orbital spaceflight and the incredibly powerful weapon, the planet buster.

The first few levels of Discover research are critical in the early goings of the game, but as it progresses, advancements become more elusive because further research into other categories will be required.





## BIOGENETICS (D1)

Biogenetics is a vital technology, especially if your new city is struggling for a growth rate. One of the earliest base improvements you can build to pump up your nutrient intake is the recycling plant. The only way to gain access to this improvement is through researching Biogenetics, which not only lets you build a recycling plant at any base, but opens the door to the secret project The Human Genome Project.

## SECRETS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN (D2)

After you've researched Biogenetics, Secrets of the Human Brain will be the next available path. Secrets of the Human Brain allows for greater defense against mind worms and psi combat, but you also get a free technological discovery. Considering the time involved in researching new technologies, gaining a freebie should not be underestimated. Anything you can do to increase your knowledge without investing valuable time is a great benefit to your empire. It's for this reason that you should do everything possible to make sure you are the first to research this topic.

**TIP**

THE FIRST FACTION TO RESEARCH SECRETS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN GAINS THE ADDED BONUS OF A FREE TECHNOLOGICAL DISCOVERY!

## BUILD

The Build category of research opens the door to outfitting your military units with armor and leads to a whole host of improvements that





will benefit your base. Base research should be conducted as early as possible, especially if you feel threatened by a rival faction. Without armor, your units are doomed to obliteration on the battlefield!

## INDUSTRIAL BASE (B1)

Once researched, you can outfit your military units with synth-metal armor, increasing their defense against attack. Additionally, you'll open the door to the secret project The Merchant Exchange, a valuable item for generating more energy at the base in which it is built.

## INDUSTRIAL ECONOMICS (B2)

For the energy hungry, Industrial Economics is an absolute must. This technology will let you build an energy bank at any base, increasing the economy by 50 percent. Additionally, you can then shape your political structure into a free market economy that will enhance your cash flow at the risk of irritating the Planet. Social engineering is explained in detail in Chapter 5.

## CONQUER

Sooner or later you must destroy the opposition or be destroyed by them. If you're not prepared and have minimal research in the field of Conquer, you're in big, big trouble. Applying your research to the realm of Conquer leads to a whole host of nasty weaponry, including nerve gas pods and all manner of powerful lasers.



## APPLIED PHYSICS (C1)

Applied Physics is the first step in Conquer and will let you outfit all your units with a laser. Once researched, Applied Physics will make the next step available, High Energy Chemistry.

## HIGH ENERGY CHEMISTRY (C2)

For only being the second step in the Conquer chain, High Energy Chemistry packs quite a wallop. Not only do you benefit from plasma steel armor for all your military units, you also gain the special ability of nerve gas pods. Nerve gas pods can be outfitted on any military unit and unleashed on opposing units or, preferably, cities. Nerve gas can wipe out entire populations.

### W A R N I N G

*The use of nerve gas is considered an atrocity, (a term used in the game to describe any act deemed heinous enough to warrant reprimands from the planetary council, a representative body of all the factions on Planet). By using it, you put yourself at risk of irritating all the factions. Further, they may impose trade sanctions against you for a period of ten years. If you use the nerve gas again, they will impose another ten years, and so on, each time you use it.*

Despite the threat of sanctions and hostility, nerve gas does have its place. Specifically, it is a deterrent for people annoying you. Would you want to annoy someone outfitted with nerve gas pods? When push comes to shove, nerve gas pods can make a valuable contribution to your early civilization. Even if sanctions are imposed on you,



the effect won't hurt too much, since you'll be generating little in the way of commerce. At the later stages of the game, however, sanctions can be costly. Additionally, later in the game, the opposition is more than likely to have nerve gas at its disposal as well.

## SECRET PROJECTS

Secret projects can make or break your civilization. Without them, you lack the enhancements and bonuses they bring; with them, you can become a powerful force to be reckoned with. While all areas of research and development are open to every faction, secret projects are first come, first served. That means whoever researches a secret project first is the sole owner of the secret project for the remainder of the game. With this in mind, it should be clear that when a secret project is available for research, you should tackle it as soon as you feasibly can.

Secret projects come into being by researching the four main categories of development: Explore, Build, Discover, and Conquer. Only one of your cities can engage in research for a specific secret project. Considering that secret projects take an extremely long time to complete, your largest

**TIP**

THE ONLY WAY TO GET A SECRET PROJECT EARNED BY AN OPPOSING FACTION IS TO CONQUER THE CITY IN WHICH IT WAS BUILT.

*“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”*

—Arthur C. Clarke



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mineral producing city should be the one engaged in this activity. Secret Projects can literally cost 10 times as much as your most expensive regular base enhancement, and take that much longer to build.

**W A R N I N G**

*You should only research a secret project when the city capable of producing it is in fine shape economically and has a positive growth rate. If your city is frequently having problems feeding itself or suffers from drone riots, now would not be the time to divert your resources to a secret project.*

You can't expect to have every secret project available. With up to six other competing factions, everyone will be in a race to to each secret project. What you must do is be selective and pick the secret projects that will most benefit your empire, depending on the needs you have. Once you do decide to set your city to building a secret project, consider tweaking your work force to maximize your mineral producing potential. Take as many workers off of nutrient and energy production tiles as you can without going negative in those two resources and divert them to tiles that produce minerals.

Let's take a look at some of the early secret projects you'll have access to and how they fit into the big picture. For advanced details on all the available secret projects, head to Chapter 14.

## THE CITIZENS' DEFENSE FORCE

The Citizens' Defense Force is a powerful secret project that builds a perimeter defense at every city in your empire. Any new city you cre-



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ate after the discovery of the Citizens' Defense Force will gain this enhancement automatically. A perimeter defense will double the defense strength of any base, making it extremely difficult for the opposition to break through and take over your city. Considering the effect applies to every city, its power and importance should be readily apparent.

**W A R N I N G**

*Chairman Yang of the Hive automatically starts the game with a perimeter defense at every city, so Yang should not waste the time or effort in researching the Citizens' Defense Force.*

**T H E C O M M A N D N E X U S**

Once you research the early technology Doctrine Loyalty, The Command Nexus secret project will become available for research. The Command Nexus is a valuable secret project in times of war, as it creates a command center at every city in your empire. The command center not only repairs damaged units more rapidly, but every new unit created will start at two morale levels higher than normal, making your force considerably more experienced and ready for combat.

**TIP**

IF YOU'VE ALREADY CONSTRUCTED A COMMAND CENTER IN YOUR BASE PRIOR TO DEVELOPING THE COMMAND NEXUS, HEAD TO THE CITY SCREEN FOR THE BASE IN QUESTION AND DISMANTLE THE COMMAND CENTER YOU BUILT. THIS WILL SAVE YOU THE EXPENSE OF UPKEEP FOR SOMETHING THAT WILL NOW BE FREE!



## THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

One of the earliest secret projects available for research, the Human Genome Project, places an extra talent at every base. If you're playing your game at a low difficulty level, where drones and riots are not much of an issue, the Human Genome Project won't be that valuable. However, at the higher difficulty settings, access to the Human Genome Project can make the difference between a city that is happy and productive and one that is up in arms with rioting.

## MARITIME CONTROL CENTER

The Maritime Control Center is a valuable secret project for those times when you have very little landmass to work with and are forced to explore through naval means. Not only does the Maritime Control Center increase the movement rate of every single naval unit by two squares, it automatically builds a naval yard at every base, repairing damaged units in double -time, and creating new naval units with two morale upgrades.

## THE PLANETARY TRANSIT SYSTEM

Once you have discovered industrial automation, access to the Planetary Transit System secret project will become available. This is





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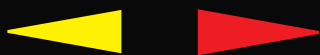
especially useful if you have a large landmass to populate with new cities. This project, once completed, will begin your cities at a level 3 population as opposed to level 1. This gives each new city a huge jumpstart on growth.

## RECAP

- Turn blind research off when starting a new game. This lets you select research projects manually.
- The more output you get from your labs, the faster you will research new projects.
- Researching Explore opens the door to mobile units and terraforming.
- Researching Discover gains access to bigger and better engines, orbital spaceflight, and the ultimate in home defense, the planet buster.
- Researching Build leads to improvements in armor and a whole host of city improvements.
- Researching Conquer invents the bulk of weapon improvements.
- Secret projects are first come, first served. If an opponent beats you to it, you must research something else.
- Secret projects can be taken from the enemy by conquering the city that built it.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## MILITARY FUNDAMENTALS





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

**N**o matter how adept you've been at diplomacy, no matter how hard you strive for peace, sooner or later, a competing faction will launch an assault against you. War in Alpha Centauri is a dangerous proposition. You'll usually have no idea how advanced the competition is until it attacks your units. Will your enemies come by air? By boat? Will they launch missiles from their bases? Are you prepared for every situation? This chapter will guide you through the basics of warfare and explain the many elements that compose a military unit.

## UNIT BUILDING BLOCKS

The size and strength of your force is directly related to the technological research you've engaged in and how well you have supervised the creation of new units. It is recommended that the novice player set the game up so the computer creates new units automatically when technologies are researched. If you'd like to create custom units yourself, using the Design Workshop, head to Chapter 7, where advanced unit design will guide you in the steps needed.

Every unit in Alpha Centauri is made up of several elements, including:

- **Chassis**
- **Weapon**
- **Shielding**
- **Reactor**
- **Two special abilities**

Let's take a look at how each comes together to create a military unit.



## CHASSIS

The chassis determines the amount of moves a unit will receive each turn. Chassis come in three basic categories: land, sea, and air. These three categories are then broken down into more detailed categories and comprise.

## GARRISON

A garrison unit excels at sitting in a city and defending it from attack. It should not be used for any other activity except protecting a city from hostile incursion.

## INFANTRY

Infantry units are excellent at attacking enemy bases and receive a +25 percent modifier when doing so. Infantry can be outfitted with advanced weaponry and shielding. Its only drawback is a limited movement rate.

## ARTILLERY

Artillery units are infantry or tanks outfitted with bombard, a special ability. This lets outfitted units attack squares up to two tiles away. Further, bombarding the opposition attacks every enemy unit in the targeted area, not just one unit.

## TANK

Tanks are mobile land units that are well rounded, capable of both defending and attacking enemy units. Tanks can be outfitted with the



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best of everything, making them a potent force to be reckoned with. Tanks, like infantry, are excellent units to overtake opposing bases.

## SCOUT

Scout vehicles and infantry will be the first type of military unit you can build. Lacking both strong offensive and defensive capabilities, scouts should be used for exploring unknown terrain.

## NAVAL

Naval units come in all shapes and sizes, from simple foils to advanced and powerful cruisers and battleships. Naval units can takeover opposing water bases and can even be outfitted with artillery capability, making them a very well-rounded unit.

## TRANSPORT

Transport vehicles can take many forms, from simple transport foils to transport cruisers and even transport air units. Transports play a vital role in the expansion of your empire, especially on large water-based maps, by carrying tanks and infantry across water.

## AIR ASSAULT

Air assault units are powerful air-based units like needlejets and choppers that are especially useful in launching assaults against enemy ground units and cities. All air units need to return to a friendly base before they run out of fuel (represented in the game by a set



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number of movement points). If the air unit doesn't return to base before all those movement points are spent, it will crash and be destroyed.

## AIR DEFENSE

The key difference between air assault and air defense units is that air defense units can also attack enemy air units. Assault units are created solely for attacking ground-based opposition, while defense units can take down both air and ground support.

## CHOPPER

Choppers are similar to air assault units but have the added advantage of not needing to return to a friendly base for refueling. However, a chopper will suffer 30 percent damage when landing in terrain.

**TIP**

**CHOPPERS ARE EXCELLENT UNITS FOR LONG-RANGE ATTACKS BECAUSE OF THEIR ABILITY TO LAND AND REFUEL.**

## MISSILE

Loading your cities with missiles is a great deterrent against enemy attack. Relatively cheap to build, missiles are one-shot wonders that can create all manner of carnage for the opposition. Missiles, especially at the later stages of the game, are capable of wiping out entire cities with one blow.





## PLANET BUSTER

The planet buster is the most expensive unit to build in Alpha Centauri and with good reason. Launching one of these bad boys at an enemy city not only destroys the target completely, but destroys the surrounding tiles as well, often reducing large sections of land to a watery grave.

### W A R N I N G

*Unfortunately, use of the planet buster is considered an atrocity, so use it only as a last resort. Don't be surprised when the whole world rallies together to attack your empire! Planet busters are akin to launching nuclear weapons, so make sure you're ready for the repercussions.*

## PARADROP

Paradrops are advanced units that begin at a friendly city and can reappear up to eight squares away in any direction. This is a great unit for surprise attacks as the enemy will never see them coming until it's too late. At the later stages of the game, when you have developed the orbital insertion technology, you can make drop squads appear anywhere on the map!

## AMPHIBIOUS

Amphibious units have one purpose and one purpose only: taking over enemy bases from a naval transport ship. Under normal circumstances, ground-based units cannot leave a naval transport and directly enter an enemy city. Amphibious troops let you do this.





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

Overwhelmed yet? Don't be. Fortunately, most of these categories will be unavailable to you in the early stages of the game, so you can tackle them one at a time as they develop. You must engage in quite a bit research and development before you must access the planet buster missiles and squadrons of air assault units.

## WEAPONS

A military unit isn't much good without a weapon. Fortunately, there is no shortage of firepower in Alpha Centauri. However, you must engage in quite a bit of research to get to the big, bad weaponry available later in the game. While the weapons don't sport any new capabilities as they evolve, they do pack a bigger punch. The following is a breakdown of the evolution weapons take, in order of their development.

*War does not determine who is right—only who is left.”  
—Bertrand Russell*

- ▶ Hand weapons
- ▶ Laser
- ▶ Particle impactor
- ▶ Gatling laser
- ▶ Missile launcher
- ▶ Chaos gun
- ▶ Fusion laser
- ▶ Tachyon bolt



- **Plasma shard**
- **Quantum laser**
- **Gravitron gun**
- **Singularity laser**

Any of these weapons can be outfitted to any military unit, whether it be infantry, naval, or air. Alternatively, some units have special payloads in place of weaponry. These payloads are:

- **Colony module:** Used to create new cities and can be outfitted to naval and land units.
- **Terraforming unit:** Used to terraform land and sea tiles. It can be outfitted to both land and naval units.
- **Troop transport:** Used to carry units across sea, land, and air.
- **Supply transport:** Used to gather resources beyond a city's reach.
- **Probe team:** A special covert unit that can steal technology, sabotage enemy facilities, or simply monitor enemy activity after a successful incursion.

## SHIELDING

Your unit may pack an advanced weapon, but if it has weak shields, the enemy may make mincemeat out of your forces. Always strive to keep the evolution of your shields in line with your weapon advancements to have a well-rounded force. A unit's armor strength determines its combat strength when under attack. The stronger the armor the better the defense.

The evolution of shields is indicated by the following list:

- **No armor**
- **Synthmetal armor**



- Plasma Steel armor
- Silksteel armor
- Photon wall
- Probability sheath
- Neutronium armor
- Antimatter plate
- Stasis generator
- Psi defense (effective only against psi attacks)

## W A R N I N G

*Shields are more costly than any other element, especially at the later stages of the game. Don't overspend just because you have access to powerful equipment. A delicate balance must be maintained between your economic growth and your military spending.*

## R E A C T O R S

There are four levels of reactors available in Alpha Centauri. Of all the elements you research within the game, reactors take the longest to develop. Similar to shields, reactors determine a unit's power rating, which, in turn, affects how much damage the unit can absorb in combat before it is terminated. A general rule of thumb is that a unit can take ten points of damage for each level of the reactor. Mixing a level 4 reactor with stasis generator armor represents the best protection a unit can possibly have. The four reactor types are:

- Fission plant
- Fusion reactor
- Quantum chamber
- Singularity engine



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

All military units can be outfitted with a special ability. Special abilities are made available through the research of various technologies. (See Chapter 7 for a complete examination of special abilities.) At the outset of the game, you can only assign one special ability per unit, though after neural grafting has been researched, you can assign two. Special abilities are a powerful tool for refining the role of each unit.

The following is a list of all of the available special abilities in Alpha Centauri.

- **AAA tracking**—increases a unit's defense against air and missile attacks by 100 percent
- **Air superiority**—Lets air units attack other air units
- **Amphibious pods**—Lets ground units attack a city square from a naval transport
- **Antigrav struts**—Gives one extra move per turn and voids out terrain penalties
- **Blink displacer**—Lets a unit to bypass base defenses
- **Carrier deck**—Lets a naval unit refuel and transport air units
- **Clean reactor**—Unit has no resource cost attached
- **Cloaking device**—Unit remains hidden unless an enemy tries to enter the same terrain tile
- **Comm jammer**—+50 percent defense bonus against speeders and hover tanks
- **Deep pressure hull**—Naval unit can submerge like a submarine, making detection difficult
- **Deep radar**—Increases visual range by two squares
- **Drop pods**—Lets a unit make air drops
- **Empath song**—+50 percent attack bonus against units that have a psi defense, like mind worms



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- ▶ **Fungicide tanks**—Lets a former clear out xenofungus from terrain squares
- ▶ **Heavy artillery**—A unit can bombard squares from two squares away, attacking every unit within that given square
- ▶ **High morale**—+1 morale upgrade when outfitted unit is constructed
- ▶ **Hypnotic trance**—+50 percent defense bonus against units with psi attack
- ▶ **Nerve gas pods**—+50 percent attack bonus with the added ability of destroying the majority of the population; this special ability is an atrocity, so use it with caution
- ▶ **Nonlethal methods**—Lets a unit quell drone riots
- ▶ **Polymorphic encryption**—Doubles a unit's defense against probe team attack
- ▶ **Repair bay**—Lets a transport unit repair units it carries, even while moving
- ▶ **Super former**—Doubles the rate of terraforming

As you can see, there are plenty of special abilities that lend themselves to some interesting and varied units as the game progresses. If you're a novice player, you should let the computer design new units based on your technological breakthroughs.

**NOTE**

The computer will automatically assign special abilities to new units so you needn't worry about these details. Chapter 7 will go into great detail about customizing your military units for the greatest impact.



## UNIT RATINGS

Now that you have a brief overview of all the various elements that go into making a military unit, take the time to understand what the ratings for a unit mean. Even if you're letting the computer design new units for you, get a complete understanding of the rating system, so you can more capably wage war against the opposition.

Every unit, whether it be a simple nonmilitary former or a highly advanced needlejet, will have a series of numbers below its name. Let's take a look at a sample unit and examine the breakdown.

### SHARD GUNSHIP

**13-5-16**

- **The first number (13) is the weapon strength. The higher the number, the more punch the weapon packs.**
- **The second number (5) is the armor thickness or defensive capability. The higher the number, the tougher the unit is.**
- **The third number (16) tells you how many squares the unit can move over. The higher the number, the further it can move during its turn.**

In the case of the shard gunship, we can clearly see that it packs quite a wallop in terms of firepower with a solid armored shell. The final number tells us the gunship can move 16 squares before running out of fuel.

### UNIT COST

By now, your taste buds are most likely salivating at the prospect of building the biggest and best units imaginable. Unfortunately, powerful



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

units cost a considerable amount of money. When a unit is strong in all three areas, expect the price tag to be awfully high.

**TIP**

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS STRIVE TO CREATE UNITS THAT ARE SLIGHTLY MORE ADVANCED THAN THE OPPOSITION. IF YOU'RE CREATING UNITS THAT ARE FAR BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF YOUR ENEMY, YOU'RE JUST THROWING MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN WHEN A LESS EFFECTIVE UNIT COULD HANDLE THE JOB JUST FINE. THIS LETS YOU MAINTAIN THE ADVANTAGE WHILE SPENDING LESS OF YOUR VALUABLE RESOURCES.

## CONQUERING CITIES

While the intricate details of waging war are covered in detail in Chapter 7, one element should be covered now because of its importance: specifically, the act of overtaking opposing bases. As a leader, you ultimately have two options for expanding your empire: founding new cities or taking over the cities of your enemy.

*"The Military don't start wars. Politicians start wars."*

*—William Westmoreland*

## STEP 1: DETERMINE CITY SIZE

When your military unit approaches an enemy city, you will see the population number clearly displayed over the city itself. As explained in Chapter 2, the larger the number, the bigger the city. Just because





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a city may be large doesn't necessarily mean it will be more difficult to take over. However, large cities are more than likely to be well defended by the computer, while lower population cities more often than not have scant defenses.

**TIP**

TAKE THE OPPOSING CITY POPULATION INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE ATTACKING. THE LARGER THE CITY, THE MORE UNITS YOU'LL WANT TO ATTACK WITH TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

## STEP 2: SOFTEN UP THE CITY

Before launching a full-scale attack on an opposing city, you should attempt to soften it up by using any artillery units you have. Artillery lets you attack from two squares away and inflict damage on all units within the city. While artillery attacks won't completely destroy the units under fire, they do inflict some moderate damage and, most importantly, prevent the units within the city from repairing their damage.

## STEP 3: BRING IN THE AIR SUPPORT

If you have the air power technological advancement, you should have a fleet of several aircraft at your disposal. Aircraft are excellent for taking out garrison units in an opposing city, but certain precautions should be made:



1. Make sure the aircraft can make it back to a friendly city after it attacks. Otherwise, you will lose the plane when it runs out of fuel!
2. Make sure the enemy has no air defense units nearby that could easily take out your air assault units.
3. Have several infantry or tanks nearby for a city takeover.

## STEP 4: TAKEOVER THE CITY

After you've softened up the city defenses with artillery bombardment and air assaults, you're ready to bring in the ground units for takeover. You can only take over a city when every unit within that city has been destroyed. If all opposition has been destroyed, simply move a ground unit into the city, and it will become yours!

### W A R N I N G

*You can only take control of cities with a population level of 2 or more. When attacking a level 1 city, you will completely destroy it!*

## DEFENDING YOUR CITY

It's one thing to be a warmonger, instigating attack after attack against enemy bases, but sooner or later, you can expect to be attacked back. At the risk of losing your valuable cities, you should take precautions to ensure you're prepared.



## NO DEFENSE EQUALS NO CITY

This may sound obvious, but you'd be surprised how many players neglect the defense of their cities. This usually happens for one very simple reason: you want so badly to create base improvements that you've neglected a military buildup. Remember, while you may not want to expend the funds required to launch a full-scale assault, you shouldn't do so at the expense of a solid defense. Specifically, you should have plenty of strong garrison units sitting behind the walls of your city at all times.

## AIR DEFENSE

Once you have attained the air power technology, you should create at least one air defense unit at every base. Air defense lets you attack air units before they cause too much damage. In this situation, you would launch your air defense forces at first sight of an incoming air assault.

## PROTECT THE COASTS!

Your empire is growing. Your cities sport huge populations and each has a nice stable of garrisons acting as defense. Unfortunately, the arrival of an opposing naval unit parks off your coast and begins the bombardment phase. If you don't have an air force or naval power, you're in big trouble. For the ultimate in defense, you should have a nice complement of both naval and air power protecting your coastal cities.



## BUILD SENSORS

Formers have the unique ability to construct sensors on any land tile. Sensors can peer out for two squares and give you early warning about enemy activity. Optimally, you should place sensors near your cities and at various points along your coast, especially at points that may make good landing points for an enemy transport.

The more warning you have about an enemy attack, the more time you must adapt to the situation and get your forces into their proper place.

## HURRY PRODUCTION!

An often-overlooked button on the city screen is the Hurry Production button. In those times when the enemy is pounding you and you have a unit in production you know will turn the tide in your favor, press the Hurry button if you have the energy available to cover the cost. This could mean the difference between waiting ten turns for the unit to be produced and having the unit available on your next turn.

**TIP**

ALWAYS KEEP AS MUCH ENERGY AVAILABLE AS YOU CAN IN THE LATER STAGES OF THE GAME TO COVER THE COST OF RUSHED PRODUCTION.

## RECAP

- A unit comprises the following elements: chassis, weapon, shielding, reactor, and up to two special abilities.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- ▶ Chassis determines how fast a unit travels in a given turn.
- ▶ Weapon determines how powerful a weapon is.
- ▶ Shielding represents the strength and defensive ability of a unit.
- ▶ Reactor determines how much damage your unit can sustain before being destroyed.
- ▶ Special abilities are invented through the research of technologies.
- ▶ Unit rating represents the overall effectiveness of the unit; that is, 12-3-8 translates into a 12 weapon rating, 3 defense, and 8 movement.
- ▶ The higher the unit rating, the more expensive it is to build.
- ▶ Use garrisons to defend your cities.
- ▶ Air assault units cannot fight other air units unless they have the air superiority special ability.
- ▶ Soften up hostile cities with bombardment and air raids before taking them over with ground units.



# PART TWO

## ADVANCED TACTICS





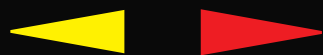
With the fundamentals of Alpha Centauri understood, it's now time to take your game to the next level by tackling some advanced concepts. Here you will learn the subtle details of social engineering and quelling those pesky drone riots. In addition, you'll become well versed in the art of terraforming the land and sea, building incredibly powerful military units, entering into negotiations and diplomacy, and getting yourself out of some common situations. By the time you've graduated from Part 2, you'll have the knowledge to take your fledgling empire to the top of the pack and bask in the golden light of global dominance!





# CHAPTER FIVE

CONTROLLING  
YOUR EMPIRE





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

**W**ith the fundamentals of running your empire firmly in your grasp, you must now venture forth and tackle the subtle details of governing. While the computer is fairly adept at managing your resources and infrastructure, it pales in comparison to how a human touch can squeeze more productivity from the process. The following chapter will guide you through two critical aspects of a successful city—specifically, monitoring and reassigning your workforce and tweaking the elements of social engineering. By managing these two aspects efficiently, you will turn your empire into an amalgamation of strong cities, ultimately leading you down the road of victory.

## CITY GOVERNMENT

You're only as good as the amount of resources you're bringing in from each city under your control. Without a stable supply of nutrients, minerals, and energy, your growth will be stunted, your construction of military units will be minimal, and research will take forever. Ultimately, Alpha Centauri is about speed and efficiency. Without either, your empire will be squashed like a bug. With this sobering thought in mind, let's take a look at how to tweak each city in your arsenal for optimum performance.

WORKERS: HARD AT WORK  
OR HARDLY WORKING?

Every new turn should find you opening the detailed city screen and monitoring the activity of your workforce at each city. By way of



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

example, let's assume you have a level 4 city, translating into four available workers to gather resources. Optimally, you should be getting as much output from these four workers as possible. Reasons for why you wouldn't be getting this desired output have to do with which terrain tiles the computer assigns each worker to work on. As the game develops and your formers terraform the land around your city, the computer is not overly efficient at assigning your workforce. This could lead to underused farms and mines just sitting around gathering dust while your workforce is placed on unproductive tiles generating half the resources they could be.

To streamline your workers, move them to terrain tiles that have been terraformed for one purpose or another. To your great surprise, you will find your surplus ratios rising, in turn leading to faster growth, research, and unit construction.

**TIP**

PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO YOUR SURPLUS RATES BEFORE MOVING YOUR WORKERS AROUND. THESE NUMBERS REFLECT WHAT YOU'RE CURRENTLY PRODUCING AND SHOULD BE USED AS YOUR FOUNDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT.

## DRONE CONTROL

As populations grow, drones become more and more of an issue. Left unchecked, drones can bring any city, no matter how big and powerful, to its knees. While there are remedies to quell a drone riot when one occurs, the wise leader will prevent such an outbreak before it can take root.

Just as you monitor the workers of your city, you should also examine the amount of drones in all your cities, especially if a city has just gained a population level, as this is the typical time a drone problem will rear its ugly head. Before you learn how to clamp down on a

**W A R N I N G**

*When a drone riot occurs, all production will cease, and your workers will only produce enough food to sustain themselves without generating a surplus.*

*"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or exercise their revolutionary right to overthrow it."*

*—Abraham Lincoln*

drone riot, you should be aware of the several factors that cause this problem in the first place.

The difficulty level of the game you're playing effects how drone's behave. At the lowest setting, every citizen after six will become a drone automatically. For each increase in difficulty, an additional drone is added; that is, the highest difficulty level means every citizen after one will automatically be a drone. A negative efficiency rating for your city will cause an increase in drones, an effect heightened by each step up the difficulty curve. Fifty turns after conquering an enemy city, you will receive drones while you subdue the citizens. The basic rate is five drones minus one for each ten turns that have elapsed. The university faction receives an extra drone for every four citizens.

**W A R N I N G**

*Nerve stapling should be used as a last resort when attempting to subdue your people. While it effectively makes everyone more peaceful, all other factions will be outraged at the atrocity, putting you at risk of economic sanctions and a possible military response!*





Drone riots can be prevented or stopped by any one of the following activities:

1. **Build psych-related facilities; that is, recreations commons.**
2. **Place military units in the troubled city. You must have a high enough police rating in social engineering for this to be possible. (See social engineering later in this chapter.)**
3. **Convert some of your workers into psych-related talents, like doctors and empaths.**
4. **Divert some of your energy output and direct it into psych.**

By far, the easiest way to quell a riot is to take a worker off the job and convert it into a talent. Remember, when you do this, you lose one worker, but you also reduce the drones in your city. This is usually a painless endeavor, as long as you pay attention to how it effects your surplus. You may have to move a few workers around to compensate for the decrease in manpower. At the minimum, you should retain a +1 nutrient surplus.

**TIP**

THOUGH A BRUTAL TACTIC, ONE SURE WAY TO END A RECURRING RIOT PROBLEM IS TO TAKE ENOUGH WORKERS OFF THE FIELD SO YOUR NUTRIENT SURPLUS IS -1 OR LOWER. THIS WILL EFFECTIVELY KILL OFF A PORTION OF YOUR POPULATION WHILE DECREASING THE AMOUNT OF DRONES.

## CITY HARMONY

As mentioned earlier, one sure way to stem the tide of an irate population is to make them happy with some city improvements. What follows is a list of base improvements that will assist in keeping your city from the unproductive activity of rioting.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- ▶ **Children's creche**—Increases efficiency and negates negative morale modifiers for military units.
- ▶ **Hologram theatre**—Decreases drones by two.
- ▶ **Nanohospital**—Increases psych at city by 25 percent and reduced drones by one.
- ▶ **Paradise garden**—Offers two extra talents at city.
- ▶ **Punishment sphere**—Eliminates drones and talents at city.
- ▶ **Recreation commons**—Reduces number of drones by two.
- ▶ **Research hospital**—Increase psych by 25 percent.
- ▶ **Tree farm**—Increases psych by 50 percent.

Lastly, there are a few secret projects that can help in keeping your city or cities subdued and happy.

- ▶ **Clinical immortality**—Gives one extra talent at every base.
- ▶ **The Human Genome Project**—Gives one extra talent at every base.
- ▶ **The longevity vaccine**—Two less drones at every base if your economics are set at planned. One less drone if set at simple.
- ▶ **The planetary transit system**—One less drone at all bases under population level 3.
- ▶ **The telepathic matrix**—Drones never riot at any of your bases.

## S O C I A L   E N G I N E E R I N G

Social engineering is an often overlooked, yet extremely powerful tool that enhances the performance of your empire. As new technologies are uncovered, new elements will appear on the Social Engineering screen. These elements break down into the following four categories:



*"The first duty of society is to give each of its members the possibility of fulfilling his destiny. When it becomes incapable of performing this duty it must be transformed."*

*—Alexis Carrel*

1. Politics
2. Economics
3. Values
4. Future society

Let's now take a look at each category in detail and see how you can best put it to work for you. Keep in mind that at the early stages of the game, there may be nothing for you to do here until you research the appropriate technologies that uncover new social engineering models. Technologies that open the gateway to these enhancements can be found at the end of this chapter.

## POLITICS

- Frontier—No modifiers
- Police state—+2 support/+2 police/-2 efficiency
- Democratic—+2 efficiency/+2 growth/-2 support
- Fundamentalist—+1 morale/+2 probe/-2 research

## ECONOMICS

- Simple—No modifiers
- Free market—+2 economy/-5 police/-3 planet





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- **Planned**—+2 growth/+1 industry/-2 efficiency
- **Green**—+2 efficiency/+2 planet/-2 growth

## VALUES

- **Survival**—No modifiers
- **Power**—+2 support/+2 morale/-2 industry
- **Knowledge**—+1 efficiency/+2 research/-2 probe
- **Wealth**—+1 economy/+1 industry/-2 morale

## FUTURE SOCIETY

- **None**—No modifiers
- **Cybernetic**—+2 efficiency/+2 planet/+2 research/-3 police
- **Eudaimonic**—+2 economy/+2 growth/+2 industry/-2 morale
- **Thought control**—+2 morale/+2 police/+2 probe/-3 support

## SOCIETY CHART

All these parameters are reflected in the society chart at the right side of the screen. As you select new societal options, you will see various numbers—some positive, some negative—appearing in this area. The society chart reflects your overall society modifier and tells you where you're suffering and where you're showing great progress. The ultimate trick is to get these numbers as high as possible in the areas that will most benefit your current situation.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

Let's take a look at each element on the society chart and see how they effect your empire.

## Economy

This rating represents the strength of your overall economy. A high number will increase the flow of energy.

| RATING | EFFECT                                    |
|--------|---|
| -3     | -2 energy each base                       |
| -2     | -1 energy each base                       |
| -1     | -1 energy at headquarters base            |
| 0      | Standard energy rates                     |
| 1      | +1 energy each base                       |
| 2      | +1 energy each square                     |
| 3      | +1 energy each square; +1 commerce rating |
| 4      | +1 energy/sq; +2 energy/base; +2 commerce |
| 5      | +1 energy/sq; +4 energy/base; +3 commerce |

## Efficiency

This rating represents your society's ability to operate without waste and mismanagement. The lower the number, the more susceptible you are to losing energy because of inefficiency.

| RATING | EFFECT                 |
|--------|------------------------|
| -4     | Economic paralysis     |
| -3     | Murderous inefficiency |
| -2     | Appalling inefficiency |
| -1     | Gross inefficiency     |

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| RATING | EFFECT                 |
|--------|------------------------|
| 0      | High inefficiency      |
| 1      | Reasonable efficiency  |
| 2      | Commendable efficiency |
| 3      | Exemplary efficiency   |
| 4      | Paradigm economy       |

## SUPPORT

This rating represents the support cost of your military units. The lower the number, the more minerals you must spend to support your units.

| RATING | EFFECT  |
|--------|---|
| -4     | Each unit costs 2 to support; no free minerals for new base |
| -3     | Each unit costs 1 to support; no free minerals for new base |
| -2     | Support 1 unit free per base; no free minerals for new base |
| -1     | Support 1 unit free per base                                |
| 0      | Support 2 units free per base                               |
| 1      | Support 3 units free per base                               |
| 2      | Support 4 units free per base                               |
| 3      | Support 4 units or up to base size for free                 |

## MORALE

This number affects the training of your military. The higher the number, the more upgrades you'll receive when building military units.



| RATING | EFFECT                        |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| -4     | -3 morale; + modifiers halved |
| -3     | -2 morale; + modifiers halved |
| -2     | -1 morale; + modifiers halved |
| -1     | -1 morale                     |
| 0      | Normal morale                 |
| 1      | +1 morale                     |
| 2      | +1 morale (+2 on defense)     |
| 3      | +2 morale (+3 on defense)     |
| 4      | +3 morale                     |

## POLICE

Represents your society's tolerance for police control. The higher the number, the more military units you can use to suppress drone riots. A low number will increase tension when military units leave a city.

| RATING | EFFECT  |
|--------|---|
| -5     | Two extra drones for each military unit away from base    |
| -4     | Extra drone for each military unit away from base         |
| -3     | Extra drone if more than one military unit away from base |
| -2     | Cannot use military units as police; no nerve stapling    |
| -1     | One police unit allowed; no nerve stapling                |
| 0      | Can use one military unit as police                       |
| 1      | Can use up to two military units as police                |
| 2      | Can use up to three military units as police              |
| 3      | Three units as police; police effect doubled              |



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

## G R O W T H

Represents your population growth rate. The higher the score, the fewer nutrients your bases will be required to grow.

| RATING | EFFECT                  |
|--------|-------------------------|
| -3     | Zero population growth  |
| -2     | -20 percent growth rate |
| -1     | -10 percent growth rate |
| 0      | Normal growth rate      |
| 1      | +10 percent growth rate |
| 2      | +20 percent growth rate |
| 3      | +30 percent growth rate |
| 4      | +40 percent growth rate |
| 5      | +50 percent growth rate |
| 6      | Population boom         |

## P L A N E T

A low number in planet indicates that ecological damage will occur more rapidly.

| RATING | EFFECT  |
|--------|---|
| -3     | Wanton ecological disruption; -3 fungus production    |
| -2     | Rampant ecological disruption; -2 fungus production   |
| -1     | Increased ecological disruption; -1 fungus production |
| 0      | Normal ecological tension                             |
| 1      | Ecological safeguards; mind worm capture 25 percent   |
| 2      | Ecological harmony; mind worm capture 50 percent      |
| 3      | Ecological wisdom; mind worm capture 75 percent       |



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

## P R O B E

This number affects your vulnerability against enemy probe team attacks.

| RATING | EFFECT  |
|--------|---|
| -2     | -50 percent cost of enemy probe team actions;<br>enemy success rate increased |
| -1     | -25 percent cost of enemy probe team actions;<br>enemy success rate increased |
| 0      | Normal security measures  |
| 1      | +1 probe team morale; +50 percent cost of enemy<br>probe team actions         |
| 2      | +2 probe team morale; doubles cost of enemy probe<br>team actions             |
| 3      | +3 probe team morale; bases and units cannot be<br>subverted                  |

## I N D U S T R Y

Indicates your manufacturing power. A high number reduces the amount of minerals required to build units and facilities.

| RATING | EFFECT                                |
|--------|---------------------------------------|
| -3     | Mineral costs increased by 30 percent |
| -2     | Mineral costs increased by 20 percent |
| -1     | Mineral costs increased by 10 percent |
| 0      | Normal production rate                |
| 1      | Mineral costs decreased by 10 percent |
| 2      | Mineral costs decreased by 20 percent |
| 3      | Mineral costs decreased by 30 percent |
| 4      | Mineral costs decreased by 40 percent |
| 5      | Mineral costs decreased by 50 percent |



## RESEARCH

Indicates your technological research ability. A high number will increase the rate at which you research new discoveries.

| RATING | EFFECT                              |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| -5     | Labs research slowed by 50 percent  |
| -4     | Labs research slowed by 40 percent  |
| -3     | Labs research slowed by 30 percent  |
| -2     | Labs research slowed by 20 percent  |
| -1     | Labs research slowed by 10 percent  |
| 0      | Normal research rate                |
| 1      | Labs research speeded by 10 percent |
| 2      | Labs research speeded by 20 percent |
| 3      | Labs research speeded by 30 percent |
| 4      | Labs research speeded by 40 percent |
| 5      | Labs research speeded by 50 percent |

## ECONOMY BAR

This bar lets you adjust the percentage of your energy flow devoted to your economy, increasing your energy reserve. The higher the percentage, the more funds you will generate per turn.

## PSYCH BAR

The psych bar lets you divert a percentage of your energy flow to increase the quality of life for your people. Energy spent here will increase the number of talents in your cities.





## LABS BAR

This bar controls the percentage of your energy flow directed toward research. It is important to understand that your efficiency is at its best when labs and economy percentages are equal. When these two settings differ, your inefficiency will rise. Ultimately, your rate here is dependent upon your efficiency.

## THE BIG PICTURE

You've digested lots of information here, so let's put it to work with some examples. Using University as our sample faction, let's see how a few simple adjustments can make a big difference in how our empire operates. At the most basic level, University is -2 on probe and +2 on research, two factors that are set in stone at the beginning of the game. If we wanted to massage our negative probe rating, we really only have one choice: applying thought control in the future society category. Looking down our society checklist, we can see improvements in morale (+2), police (+2), and our once negative probe rating has settled in at 0. Unfortunately, this has come at the cost of degrading our support rating, which is now a nasty -3, making each unit in our empire require a mineral each for support. If your empire could tolerate this, all would be well, but a little more tweaking may be in order.

By toggling our politics to a police state, we can at least get our support rating to a more comfortable -1, but now our efficiency is suffering at -2. One last change can flesh this out in our favor; setting our values to knowledge. Now we're -1 on efficiency, -1 on support, but +2 on morale, +4 on police, and a whopping +4 on research. This translates into a society that:



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1. Is easily subdued by military units sitting within a city
2. Has upgraded military units that will be stronger in battle
3. Has lab research sped up by a rather choice 40 percent!

Where you set your various society models should be directly related to what you currently need to accomplish as an empire. By constantly returning to this screen and adjusting these settings, you can improve those areas of your empire that need the most help.

## G A T E W A Y   T E C H N O L O G I E S

The following technologies must be researched for their corresponding societal effects to appear on the Social Engineering screen.

- **Advanced military algorithms—power**
- **Centauri empathy—green**
- **Cyberethics—knowledge**
- **Digital sentience—cybernetic**
- **Doctrine Loyalty—police state**
- **Ethical calculus—democratic**
- **Eudaimonia—eudaimonic**
- **Industrial economics—free market**
- **Planetary economics—planned**
- **Secrets of the Human Brain—fundamentalist**
- **The Will to Power—thought control**

# CHAPTER SIX

TERRAFORMING





# GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

**S**ince time began, mankind has altered the landscape under its feet to improve the quality of life. This still holds true, even 4.2 light years away from Earth, and is an important concept to put to work on the alien world of Planet. Instead of plows and tractors, you'll be putting the versatile former to work, constructing all manner of terrain improvements such as roads, mines, forests, solar collectors, kelp farms, sensors, and a whole host of others. This chapter will assist you in the pertinent art of terraforming and explain how to take a barren and unyielding landscape and transform it into a productive oasis.

## ROLL OUT THE FORMERS

One you've researched Centauri ecology (one of the first discoveries you should make), you can construct formers. Built from a simple infantry chassis with a terraforming unit attached and powered by a fission power plant, this 0-1-1 unit can be ordered to engage in all manner of terraforming activity. Its slow rate of movement, weak shields, and nonexistent firepower make it a sitting duck when it's doing its job. Fortunately, formers are cheap and relatively quick to build, so losing one here and there to a mind worm should not be cause for alarm. On the other hand, what most players fail to realize is that formers, like military units, can be custom built with some interesting payoffs. Before we get to details of terraforming, let's take some time and look at the various ways we can build a former throughout the course of the game.

**TIP**

EVERY CITY SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST TWO FORMERS ENGAGED IN TERRAFORMING AT ALL TIMES.



## BASIC FORMER

► 0-1-1

► Chassis—infantry

The basic former is your entry-level model, capable of engaging in rudimentary forms of terraforming like building mines, roads, farms, and forests.

## ROVER FORMER

► 0-1-2

► Chassis—speeder

The rover is just like the previous model, but we've outfitted the terraforming unit to a rover chassis, doubling the movement rate.

### NOTE

*Formers can be outfitted with any type of armor available to your empire. While there's nothing wrong with giving a former armor, it comes at a price. At the middle stages of the game, when your economy is solid, you should consider armoring your formers so they can withstand the attack of the occasional mind worm infestation.*

## TANK FORMER

► 0-1-3

► Chassis—hovertank





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Now, we have a movement rate of three squares and, what's more, the ability to hover over the landscape, voiding out the negative effect of moving over xenofungus squares.

## SEA FORMER

► **0-1-4**

► **Chassis—foil**

A seaworthy former? You bet! This is a critical invention to support your coastal cities. A sea former will open up many new options in terraforming, like planting kelp forests and mining platforms.

## DESTROYER FORMERS

► **0-1-6**

► **Chassis—cruiser**

A step up from the sea former, the destroyer former has a whopping movement rate of six squares, making this a nimble addition to your terraforming arsenal.

## SKYBASE FORMER

► **0-1-10**

► **Chassis—gravship**

Look! Up in the sky! It's a flying former! Not only do you benefit from a whopping ten-square movement rate, the skybase former can avoid ground units when under attack and move over land to hard to reach locations. What's more, this former can terraform both land and sea squares, making it an extremely versatile.



## SPECIAL ABILITIES

As technological advances arrive, you'll ultimately be allowed to attach some special abilities to your formers.

### SUPER FORMER

Terraform rate will be doubled, meaning any terraform action will be completed in half the time as normal. This is a sure way to speed up the process of improving your empire and can give you a real edge over the competition.

### FUNGICIDE TANKS

Normally, clearing fungus from a square is a long, arduous process. With this special ability, the rate at which this happens is effectively doubled, letting you clear unproductive squares near your cities in twice the time.

## THE ULTIMATE FORMER

With so many options, it's easy to get lost in the maze of former construction. If you've ever wanted to know what the best and biggest former could possibly be, here is the ultimate in terraforming technology.





## SUPER SINGULARITY GRAVSHIP FORMER

- **0-12-16**
- **Chassis—gravship**
- **Shielding—stasis generator**
- **Reactor—singularity engine**
- **Special ability #1—super former**
- **Special ability #2—fungicidal tanks**

This former isn't cheap to build, but if your empire has the resources to spend, you can't get any better than this model, offering an impressive movement rate, air capability, land and sea terraforming, and special abilities. The super singularity gravship former can fend off all but the most punishing attacks.

## TERRAFORMING IMPROVEMENTS

Now that you know the many types of formers that can be manufactured, the time has come to look in-depth at the various improvements that can be initiated.

## WORKING THE LAND

Terraforming comes in two varieties, land based and sea based. In this section, we will analyze all the land-based terraforming you can engage in.



## BUILD ROAD—ONE TURN

The importance of a road network should be self-evident; it enhances the movement rate of all units that travel upon it. The rate of this increase is three times faster than normal. Roads should be built in such a way that they connect all your cities together, letting your units travel to each location quickly. This is especially useful in times of war, when getting critical units to a far away base is of primary importance. Additionally, roads negate the effect of fungus.

### NOTE

*Roads also increase mine production in rocky squares.*

## BUILD MAG TUBE—THREE TURNS

A step up from a humble road, a mag tube doesn't just speed up the movement of units. In fact, it doesn't expend any movement points whatsoever. The value of this should be readily apparent; the mag tube lets you move any and all units as far as you want, when you want, with no thought as to how much it will cost. If you've already built roads, they can be retrofitted to mag tubes later in the game when the proper technology has been discovered.

## CONSTRUCT AIRBASE—TEN TURNS

An airbase is a powerful terraforming function when your civilization has developed Doctrine Air Power. Under normal circumstances, air



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units must return to a friendly city to refuel. With strategically placed airbases, your aircraft can now land away from a city and refuel.

**TIP**

PLACE AIRBASES AWAY FROM YOUR CITIES AND NEAR THE BORDER OF YOUR EMPIRE. THIS WILL GIVE YOU LONG-RANGE CAPABILITY, INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR AIR FORCE.

## CONSTRUCT BUNKER—FIVE TURNS

A bunker greatly improves the defensive value of the square on which it is built by a whopping 50 percent. Bunkers should be built near critical points like monoliths and choke points on the terrain. Staffing bunkers with garrison units is a potent combination.

**TIP**

BUILD BUNKERS IN A CIRCLE AROUND YOUR CITIES AND STAFF THEM WITH GARRISON UNITS. BEFORE THE ENEMY CAN ATTACK YOUR BASES, IT WILL BE FORCED TO DEAL WITH YOUR BUNKERED FORCES FIRST.

## CONSTRUCT CONDENSER—12 TURNS

A condenser affects the rainfall in the square in which it is built and all squares that surround it. You'll receive a +1 nutrient bonus in its primary square that is cumulative with any farm bonuses in the area. Condensers are of critical importance in terrain that is abnormally dry.

**W A R N I N G**

*Condensers have a negative ecological impact, so don't be surprised if the indigenous life forms get a tad upset if and when you build several condensers.*

## CONSTRUCT ECHELON MIRROR – 12 TURNS

An echelon mirror increases the energy collected by solar collectors in all surrounding squares by a factor of +1. In addition, it counts as a solar collector for the square in which it is built. Building an echelon mirror has a negative impact on your ecology rating, so heed this warning in regards to building excessive amounts of them. Optimally, you should build a circle of solar collectors and then construct an echelon mirror in the center to maximize the effect.

## CONSTRUCT MINE – EIGHT TURNS

A mine is a quick way to increase the mineral output of a square. On flat squares, you'll gain +1 minerals. Rolling squares together gives you another +1, and rocky squares gain the maximum benefit of +2.

**TIP**

YOU CAN PUSH THE MINERAL OUTPUT OF A MINE SQUARE BY BUILDING A ROAD ON THE MINE, ULTIMATELY GIVING YOU A +3 MINERAL INTAKE.



## CONSTRUCT SENSOR ARRAY – FOUR TURNS

A sensor array is an unusual terraforming process in that it doesn't benefit you in terms of resources. What it does do is offer an early warning for enemy activity. Able to see an enemy unit two squares away, sensor arrays are best built at the outskirts of your borders and in coastal areas.

**TIP**

A UNIT THAT IS PLACED WITHIN TWO SQUARES OF A SENSOR ARRAY WILL RECEIVE A +25 PERCENT DEFENSIVE BONUS.

## CONSTRUCT SOIL ENRICHER – EIGHT TURNS

You must have already built a farm on a square before constructing a soil enricher. Once accomplished, you will gain a +1 nutrient bonus from the square on which it is built.

## CONSTRUCT SOLAR COLLECTOR – FOUR TURNS

A solar collector lets you pull energy from the square in which it is built at the rate of one unit per turn. The higher the altitude, the more



energy you will produce based on 1,000 meter increments. For instance, at an elevation of 5,000 meters, you would gain a whopping +5 in energy output for that square.

## CONSTRUCT THERMAL BOREHOLE—24 TURNS

The motherlode of terraforming, thermal boreholes provide massive mineral and energy output to the tune of +6 each. Thermal boreholes have a significant negative impact on your ecological rating.

### W A R N I N G

*Thermal boreholes cannot be built in adjacent squares; they must be separated by at least one tile.*

## CULTIVATE FARM—FOUR TURNS

Building a farm on a square will give you a +1 nutrient bonus for the square on which it is built. You cannot build a farm on rocky terrain.

## DRILL TO AQUIFER—18 TURNS

When a former completes this terraforming activity, it creates the beginning of a new river system, allowing for an increase in nutrient production.



## PLANT FOREST—FOUR TURNS

Planting a forest is a powerful tool that enhances all aspects of resource output. Once completed, you will receive resources for nutrients, minerals, and energy. Best of all, forests expand automatically over time, even wiping out patches of fungus in the process.

**TIP**

THE EFFECT OF A FOREST IS GREATLY ENHANCED BY CONSTRUCTING THE TREE FARM OR HYBRID FOREST IMPROVEMENTS INSIDE YOUR CITY.

## PLANT FUNGUS—SIX TURNS

Why on earth would you ever want to plant fungus intentionally? To irritate your neighbors, of course. While at the later levels of the game, fungus is capable of producing resources, planting a fungus patch near an enemy city can soon find it spreading out and rendering a large area of land unusable.

## REMOVE FUNGUS—SIX TURNS

Sometimes all a city needs to explode with wealth is the removal of nearby fungus patches. Once removed, movement will no longer be impeded and terraforms such as farms or mines can then be built.





## TERRAFORM DOWN / LEVEL / UP – 8 / 12 / 8 TURNS

This lets you raise or lower the land on the square in question. The obvious benefit is raising land for increased energy output. As for lowering land, this is especially useful when your chunk of territory is connected with an enemy by way of a land bridge. By lowering the land, you can sink it into the ocean, forcing the opposition to move units into your area through naval means.

### NOTE

Terraform level is useful in decreasing the rockiness of an area, in turn allowing for more nutrient production.

## WORKING THE SEA

The following actions are for sea-based terraforming.

## CONSTRUCT MINING PLATFORM – EIGHT TURNS

A mining platform greatly increases the mineral output of an ocean square by +1 (+2 if advanced ecological engineering has been discovered).

**NOTE**

Mining platforms must be built on shelf squares (less than 1,000 meters).

## CONSTRUCT TIDAL HARNESS – 12 TURNS

A tidal harness lets you draw energy resources from an ocean square at the rate of +3 per turn. It must be constructed on a shelf square (depth of less than 1,000 meters).

## CULTIVATE KELP FARM – TEN TURNS

A kelp farm increases the nutrient production of a square by +1. Like the forest, kelp farms will spread through the water over time, allowing for great regions to be harvested.

## PLANT SEA FUNGUS – SIX TURNS

Like land fungus, planting sea fungus will impede the movement of enemy ships (and your own). This is a great way to slow down the opposition when a great waterway is the only route to your empire.



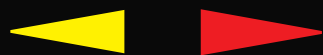
## G A T E W A Y   T E C H N O L O G I E S

The following is a list of technologies that must be researched to open new avenues of terraforming.

- **Advanced ecological engineering—super former (doubles the rate of terraforming)**
- **Centauri ecology—formers**
- **Synthetic fossil fuels—fungicide tanks (allows for the removal of fungus).**

# CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ART  
OF WAR





**Y**ou try to be nice but sometimes that isn't enough. As the saying goes, nice guys do finish last, and Alpha Centauri brings that point home with style. Military weakness is akin to a red carpet inviting your enemies over for a little invasion. Just because you may want to present yourself as a pacifist doesn't mean you must act like one. Having a strong and powerful army at your disposal needn't be used to prove its worth. Sometimes, like having a nuclear bomb in your back pocket, size and strength is deterrent enough to sway your enemies from attacking you.

## THE DELICATE BALANCE OF MILITARY MIGHT

Using the real world as an example, we effectively have two superpowers: the United States and Russia. Each is a military powerhouse, easily capable of wiping the other out with the press of a button. However, how these two superpowers came to be are completely different stories, each pointing directly to the philosophies that sustain them. With the US, a delicate balance between economic growth and prosperity was mixed with a sizable military expansion. In the case of Russia, more weight and funds were thrown at the military at the risk of a faulty infrastructure and the economic prosperity of their land. Ultimately, the US came out ahead, while Russia was forced to disembark from the Cold War ship and repair the damage from decades of societal neglect.

The point of this historical perspective is to illustrate cause and effect. While the desire to quickly build an overwhelming army may be great, it does come at the expense of other things. For every military unit you build, you're not building something that benefits your



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people, increases resources, or heightens your economy. On the other hand, you will stay ahead of the technological curve in all things war related, again coming at the expense of researching peaceful projects. Ultimately, you must find the right balance for your situation.

There is no way to predict what your situation will be in any given game, but there are a few givens. Sooner or later, you will be attacked. Sooner or later, push will come to shove. Will you be ready for it?

## THE ART OF UNIT DESIGN

Offensive and defensive units come in a wide variety of flavors and serve a wide variety of uses. What is useful against one faction may be pointless against another, simply because of its defensive posture. For instance, your impressive air armada may seem like a force to be reckoned with on paper, but how come it's getting wasted the second it sets foot in enemy territory? The answer is you're not softening up those air defenses before sending in your fighters.

## UNIT WORKSHOP

Pressing the U key will bring up the unit design workshop, the place you'll go to create all manner of new military units. Even if you've set the game up to create units on your behalf, you can still come to this screen at any time and make new units or change existing ones.

## W A R N I N G

***Don't choke your workshop with outdated units. Unless you manually delete them, they will remain in your library. You only have 64 slots, so use them wisely and keep them updated.***





Let's take a look at some custom unit designs that, taken together, represent a flexible stable of units ready for any situation. Keep in mind that, obviously, your ability to create these units is contingent on your technology level.

## INFANTRY

Infantry units are ground-based foot soldiers that should be used for taking over cities after the city in question has been softened up. Here are three different designs, each representing a technological stage in the game, that is, early, middle, and late in the game.

### TRAINED LASER SQUAD

► 2-2-1

► Cost: 40

Cheap to build, the trained laser squad consists of a laser weapon, synthmetal armor, and a fission power plant. What sets this unit apart from a normal infantry is the special high morale ability. This lets the unit be constructed at a higher experience level, in turn making it more effective in combat. Optimally, a trained laser squad should seek out a monolith for yet one more level upgrade.

# NOTE

The units contained in this chapter are not the only way to go. You should experiment with new designs and chart their own course!





## TRAINED MISSILE SHOCK TROOPS

► **6-6-1**

► **Cost: 60**

► **+25 percent offense when attacking city**

Trained missile shock troops deal out the punishment with missile launchers. Outfitted with probability sheath armor and a fusion reactor, these shock troops have two special abilities (you can have two special abilities after researching neural grafting): high morale and deep radar. Deep radar lets the unit see two terrain squares away, making it a good choice for watching enemy activity along the borders.

## SAM SINGULARITY ARTILLERY

► **24-12-1**

► **Cost: 300**

The ultimate in infantry offense, but it comes with a very high price tag. You won't be rolling these out on a conveyor belt. However, all you need is a handful to keep your enemies on their toes. Outfitted with a singularity laser, stasis generator armor, and a singularity engine, the SAM artillery has two special abilities: air superiority, letting it attack air units, and heavy artillery, letting it bombard a city from two squares away. Have a couple of these outside an enemy city, and they'll quickly soften up the defenses, fight off air attacks, and roll into town. The SAM is virtually unstoppable.

## GARRISON

Garrison units are critical to your empire. At the least, you should have one at every city you control. Garrison units gain the natural benefit



of a +25 percent defense rating when sitting in a friendly city. For that reason alone they are useful.

## AAA LASER SQUAD

► **2-2-1**

► **Cost: 50**

This entry-level garrison squad is outfitted with a laser, synthmetal armor, and a fission power plant, all of which serve to keep the cost down so they can be pumped out of your factories on a regular basis. Two special abilities help in its cause of defense: comm jammer gives it a +50 percent attack and defense bonus when up against speeders and hovernets, and AAA tracking ensures incoming planes won't have an easy go of it as this laser squad will have double defense when attacked.

## POLICE FUSION BATTERY

► **10-5-1**

► **Cost: 230**

It's expensive, yes, but worth the cost. Outfitted with a fusion laser, photon wall armor, and a cheap fission plant, this garrison unit has the added ability of heavy artillery, letting it bombard units before they attack your city. Anything you can do to cause damage on invading units before they arrive is a good thing. Lastly, the fusion battery is outfitted with nonlethal methods, providing double police powers.

## SAM SINGULARITY SHOCK TROOPS

► **24-12-1**

► **Cost: 140**

**TIP**

ANY UNIT WITH THE WORD POLICE IN IT IS AN EFFECTIVE PEACEKEEPER FOR THE CITY IN WHICH IT RESIDES. IF YOU'RE HAVING DRONE RIOT PROBLEMS, BUILD UNITS WITH NON-LETHAL METHODS AND KISS YOUR TROUBLES GOODBYE.

The ultimate in home defense, the SAM singularity shock troop is rigged with a powerful singularity laser, thick stasis generator armor, a heavy singularity engine, and two special abilities: air superiority, letting it easily thwart incoming air attacks, and hypnotic trance, offering a +50 percent defense bonus against psi attacks. Simply put, nothing is getting through this unit!

## ARTILLERY

Artillery units are outfitted with the heavy artillery special ability, letting them attack units and bases from two squares away. The act of bombarding will seldom destroy a unit by itself, but it does soften up defenses for a coming invasion. The true power of bombardment comes with sheer numbers. While one unit bombarding a city won't be very useful, four or more can really do some damage!

## BLINK RECON BATTERY

► **2-2-2**

► **Cost: 60**

► **Chassis: speeder**

This interesting unit is built from the chassis of a speeder, allowing for a good movement rate over any terrain. Even at the later stages of the game, this is a valuable unit, if only because it is cheap to build. When



it comes to artillery, armor isn't that important... sheer numbers is. It's for this reason that you should keep your artillery units sparse with weapons and armor, so you can build large armies of blink recon batteries. The more units you have bombarding a city, the more damage you will inflict.

## X RECON BATTERY

► **2-2-3**

► **Cost: 110**

► **Chassis: hovertank**

This peculiar unit packs quite a punch because it has an ace up its sleeve in the form of nerve gas pods (special ability). Made from a hovertank chassis, the X recon is not hampered by fungus, has bombardment capability, and can drop nerve gas any time you want, as often as you want. Nerve gas is a sure way to cut the population of a city by nearly half! Unfortunately, this counts as an atrocity, so make sure you're prepared for the economic sanctions that will be levied against you.

## X SINGULARITY ARTILLERY

► **24-12-3**

► **Cost: 620**

► **Chassis: hovertank**

Pricy, yes. Lethal, yes. Need an army of them? No. Just one is enough to cause the enemy fits. It is extremely difficult to kill because of the dense stasis generator shielding. It's punishing because of the singularity laser mounted on the hood and has a good movement rate, thanks to the hovertank chassis. This nasty creation bombards and can release nerve gas pods. This is one unit the enemy will not want to see coming.



## TANKS

Tanks are useful units for both defense and offense. How best to use them is dependent on what you stick on them. Tanks enjoy a great movement rate, are not hampered by fungus, and make exceptional invasion units as well as defense softeners.

**TIP**

**BUILD YOUR FLEET OF TANKS WITH THE BEST ARMOR POSSIBLE. ARMOR IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN A STRONG WEAPON. WHAT GOOD IS A BIG WEAPON IF THE TANK IS OBLITERATED BEFORE IT CAN USE IT?**

### SAM RECON TANK

► **2-2-4**

► **Cost: 90**

This relatively cheap beast is made from a hovertank chassis, laser, synth-metal armor, and fission plant. It has two special abilities: antigrav struts that increase its movement by 1, and air superiority, letting it attack air units. Because of its mobility, the SAM recon tank is great for patrolling your borders and can deal with both land and air incursions. Its cheap price makes it a unit that can be manufactured relatively quickly.

### CLOAKED MISSILE TANK

► **6-4-3**

► **Cost: 120**

Outfitted with a missile launcher, silksteel armor, and a fusion reactor, the cloaked missile tank has air superiority for use against air



units. Where it really shines is in using the onboard cloaking device. This lets the unit move freely without enemy detection. The only way for the enemy to see it is to physically move one of its units into the same square as your cloaked tank. Otherwise, it's perfectly invisible and can launch surprise attacks at any time you wish. An interesting thing to do with the cloaked tank is have it sit within the border of an enemy faction. This lets you monitor enemy activity without giving away your presence.

## DROP SINGULARITY BEHEMOTH

► **24-12-3**

► **Cost: 260**

This is one brutal machine whose sole purpose is to attack cities. Outfitted with a singularity laser, stasis generator armor, and a singularity engine makes it a formidable opponent indeed. However, its two special abilities give it the edge as a city invader: blink displacer, letting it bypass any and all city defenses, and drop pods, letting it teleport up to eight squares away from any friendly city. If you've researched orbital spaceflight, you can teleport this unit to any square in the world!

## NAVAL UNITS

Protecting your land is one thing, but if your coasts are an open invitation to invasion, you'll have more trouble than you'll know what to do with. It's extremely important that you protect your coastlines and water cities from hostile action. Naval units are the gateway. Further, a strong offensive naval force is a great way to soften up those large coastal cities before launching a land invasion!

**TIP**

NAVAL UNITS CAN TAKE OVER WATER CITIES BY SIMPLY MOVING INTO THE CITY SQUARE. YOU DON'T NEED LAND UNITS TO TAKE OVER WATER CITIES!

## SAM LASER SKIMSHIP

► 2-2-4

► Chassis: foil

► Cost: 40

The SAM laser skimship is a great, entry-level naval unit that is still a force to be reckoned with. Outfitted with lasers, Synthmetal Armor, and a Fission Plant, it enjoys +4 movement with a few special abilities; Blink Displacer, allowing it to bypass enemy defense altogether, and Air Superiority, allowing it to knock out air defenses and air invasions. These multiple roles will serve you well and its cheap cost ensures you can build plenty of them in no time.

## SUB CHAOS CRUISER

► 8-5-6

► Chassis: Cruiser

► Cost: 110

This interesting and powerful unit is all about surprise. Outfitted with a chaos gun, photon wall shielding, and a fusion reactor, its special abilities give this unit the edge. Specifically, the deep pressure hull lets it operate underwater just like a submarine. Enemy units must move into the same square as this sub to detect it. Additionally, the AAA tracking special ability gives it a double defensive bonus when its being attacked





by air units. All this translates into a hard-to-kill naval unit that deals a considerable amount of damage and is hard to detect as well!

## SAM SINGULARITY CRUISER

► 24-12-6

► Chassis: Cruiser

► Cost: 120

The ultimate in naval units, the SAM singularity cruiser is decked out with a singularity laser, stasis generator armor, and a singularity engine. Its AAA tracking ability gives a great defensive bonus when under attack from the air, and its air superiority lets it wipe out armadas of invading air forces. All in all, the SAM singularity cruiser is an exceptional water city invader as well as an air sweeper.

## TRANSPORTS

Transports are critical, as they are the only way to get land-based units off your continent and onto an enemy shore. Unfortunately, transports are often sitting ducks for even the lowest of naval units because they do not, and cannot, have any firepower whatsoever. However, we can still make them tough to kill by using some advantageous special abilities. Let's look at a few options.

## CARRIER DESTROYER TRANSPORT

► 0-2-5

► Chassis: cruiser



► **Equipment: troop transport**

► **Cost: 60**

Outfitted with cheap synthmetal armor so it can withstand a sizable attack, this transport is decked out with two special abilities that make it extremely useful. First up is the carrier deck, which lets this unit repair and refuel air units, a valuable commodity. Second, it has a repair bay that performs the same function as the carrier deck, but this bay repairs any ground unit. This is a great ship to hang off an enemy coast, letting for all units, whether land or air based, be quickly returned into the field of battle in fighting shape.

## SUB QUANTUM DESTROYER TRANSPORT

► **0-8-5**

► **Chassis: cruiser**

► **Equipment: troop transport**

► **Cost: 90**

Outfitted with neutronium armor and a quantum chamber engine, this huge transport is capable of carrying a whopping 12 units. Added benefits include a deep pressure hull, allowing for nondetection as it moves underwater, and a functioning carrier deck for repairing and refueling air units. If you're tired of your transports sinking to the bottom of the ocean, this model will ease your pain.

## AIR UNITS

Air units should be the staple in any military diet, as they let you launch attacks from afar and wipe out scores of units. Air units are



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the principal force to use when softening up the defenses of an enemy city before launching a forthcoming ground invasion. The only drawback an air unit has is its inability to capture cities that are undefended. It's for this reason that a ground unit should be only a turn away when launching an air assault.

**W A R N I N G**

*Make sure your air units have enough fuel to return home, or they will crash and be destroyed!*

**B L I N K   L A S E R   T A C T I C A L**

► **2-2-8**

► **Cost: 40**

This inexpensive fighter is well rounded and ready for both air- and ground-based combat. Its cheap cost allows for a massive buildup of these units. Outfitted with a simple laser, synthmetal armor, and a fission plant, it enjoys air-to-air capability thanks to the air superiority special ability. Finally, the blink displacer lets it easily sidestep base defenses and wipe out those pesky garrison units.

**X   M I S S I L E   I N T E R C E P T O R**

► **6-5-9**

► **Cost: 50**

You get a lot of power in this unit for very little cost. The X missile interceptor is outfitted with a missile launcher, photon wall armor, and a fusion reactor. Air superiority ensures it's ready for an air



defense, and the onboard nerve gas pods are the ace in the hole, letting it wipe out massive amounts of city population with one shot!

## EMPATH SINGULARITY THUNDERBOLT

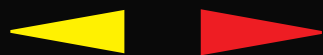
► **24-12-16**

► **Cost: 140**

The ultimate in air power (the empath singularity thunderbolt packs quite a wallop coupled with a Singularity Laser) is hard to kill thanks to the stasis generator armor and sports an impressive movement rate of +16 thanks to the singularity engine. What really sets this unit apart are the two special abilities specifically earmarked for use against psi attacks. Empath song lets the thunderbolt benefit from a +50 attack bonus when attacking psi units, and hypnotic trance offers a +50 percent defense bonus. You need a handful of these units to take care of most attacks, and its movement rate ensures it will get around town quickly.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

DIPLOMACY







A powerful feature of Alpha Centauri is the ability to engage competing factions in rounds of diplomacy. The outcome of a successful discussion can lead to a trading in technologies, military assistance, and even the purchasing of votes in a forthcoming council election. Each faction treats and likes to be treated in certain ways. How you engage each faction in diplomacy will have a big effect on the course of the game. This chapter will guide you down the path of communication, illustrating how best to handle situations as they arise and, better yet, get yourself elected planetary governor!

## C O N T A C T

You're enjoying a nice life, seemingly secluded in your little corner of the world, when all of a sudden, a foreign unit crests the hill and makes contact with your scout. Suddenly, hailing frequencies are opened, and you find yourself in a face-to-face meeting with the ruler of a rival faction.

When you make contact with another faction, its hailing frequency is immediately transferred to you. When this happens, you are free to contact that faction at any point during the game. Through the process of exploration, you will ultimately gain the frequency number of each faction, opening the door to new diplomatic features such as planetary elections.

**TIP**

EVEN IF YOU HAVEN'T PERSONALLY MET A RIVAL FACTION, YOU CAN STILL GET ITS FREQUENCY NUMBER FROM A DIFFERENT FACTION BY SIMPLY ASKING. HOWEVER, YOU MAY HAVE TO TRADE SOME ENERGY OR TECHNOLOGY TO GET IT.



## COMMLINK

All known hailing frequencies are conveniently displayed on the commlink at the far right of the game screen. Clicking this button once will pop-up a list of known factions, including the current state of your relationship. Your relationship with a faction will be one of four states:

- **Vendetta**
- **Pact**
- **Treaty**
- **Truce**

## VENDETTA

Vendetta represents a state of war between yourself and the rival faction in question. Your units will be engaged in military exchanges with the other faction, and war will ensue until a treaty or truce is ultimately signed.

### NOTE

When your status with a faction is a vendetta, you run the risk of irritating any allies of the faction you're at war with. Before you know it, you may have three vendettas against you, so plan your enemies carefully!

## PACT OF BROTHERHOOD

A Pact of Brotherhood (or Sisterhood) represents the tightest form of diplomatic relationship you can have with a rival faction. When enter-





ing into a Pact of Brotherhood, each faction can move its units freely within each other's territory as well as stack military units on each other and even enter each other's bases.

There are a great many positives that can come out of a pact, not the least of which is added military support from your pact brother or sister. You'll soon discover that when you're under serious attack from an enemy, your pact brother will usually come to your defense with a legion of helpful units, fortifying some of your weaker cities and placing those units under your direct control.

In addition to military support, each member of a pact receives double the commerce between their bases and is far more willing to share technological breakthroughs.

## NOTE

A PACT CAN BE TERMINATED AT ANY TIME, BUT THE MOMENT THE RELATIONSHIP IS DISSOLVED, THE RESPECTIVE UNITS OF EACH FACTION WILL IMMEDIATELY BE RETURNED HOME.

## TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP

A Treaty of Friendship is close to a Pact of Brotherhood and represents a lasting friendship between the two factions. Once the treaty has been signed, both parties will receive a commerce bonus between their bases. Unlike a pact, however, you cannot move your units freely within the territory of a rival faction.

## TRUCE

A truce occurs after a military exchange, when both factions agree to settle their differences and return to a peaceful state of mind. There are no commerce bonuses within a truce, just a dropping of arms and a return to peace.

**TIP**

IF YOUR MILITARY IS TAKING A POUNDING, YOU SHOULD ATTEMPT TO END THE CONFLICT AT ALL COSTS BY SEEKING A TRUCE.

## GIVE A LITTLE, TAKE A LITTLE

When you call up the hailing frequency of a rival faction, you never know quite what to expect. One thing is for sure, however, a rival faction will ask for the world at every opportunity, demanding access to your most precious research and usually not offering much in return. You can't blame someone for trying to get something for nothing. You shouldn't let them get away with it. Diplomacy is a two-way street, and you should get something valuable in return.

## W A R N I N G

*Nine times out of ten, saying no to a rival faction asking for a free technology will not cause any harm in your relationship to it. However, with the more militant factions like Yang and Santiago, there is a slight risk they'll be personally affronted and announce a vendetta. How you handle this situation should be directly related to the proximity of the faction in question. If they're on the other side of the world, you shouldn't concern yourself with their hyperbole. If they're right next door and, amassing military units along the border, you may have a sticky situation on your hands.*



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The wise diplomat will attempt to make technological trades as even as possible. It doesn't take a genius to see that giving up air power in exchange for Centauri ecology is not a fair trade. Simply refuse the offer and attempt to even out the trade.

## BABY WITH THE BATH WATER

There are some technologies you shouldn't give away under any circumstances, even if you're getting something valuable in return. Most rival factions will incessantly demand your high-end military technologies, such as air power, and will offer little in return. Resist the trade! While the faction may be friendly now, the second you hand over air power, you can expect it to quickly build up an air force that could threaten you.

**TIP**

THE LONGER YOU CAN KEEP YOUR VALUABLE MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES OUT OF THE HANDS OF RIVAL FACTIONS, THE LONGER YOU HAVE TO BUILD UP THAT TECHNOLOGY. FOR INSTANCE, ONLY WHEN YOU HAVE A COMMENDABLE AIR FORCE SHOULD YOU CONSIDER HANDING AIR POWER AWAY IN EXCHANGE FOR A NEW TECHNOLOGY.

## BEING A BASTARD

Then there's evil. Here's the setup for being a bastard. Let's say there is a rival faction living right next door to your empire. You're pretty confident its military is weak, yet it may still have a ton of valuable research to trade that could improve your economy and build up your cities. A real bastard would enter into a Pact of Brotherhood, putting



on the nice guy act as thick as possible, giving the faction whatever it asks for. In turn, you demand all sorts of technologies and on the face of it, everyone is in a win-win situation. When you feel you've bled the faction dry of anything useful, terminate the pact, announce a vendetta, and wipe the faction off the face of Planet. Congratulations, you are now a bastard!

## BEING A BIGGER BASTARD

Here's the setup for being a bigger bastard. You've been involved in skirmishes with a rival faction. At first, it was full of hot air, making one threat after another, until finally full-scale war broke out. Fortunately, you're mopping the faction up, taking over one city after another. Eventually, that faction will hail you into some diplomacy, usually offering energy or technologies to bring an end to the conflict. It is here that you put on the nice guy act, accepting the trade. Once you have your bribe technologies, you renew the war and squash the faction!

## BUYING VOTES

Once you have the hailing frequency of a faction, you can call them up and attempt to buy its vote in a coming council meeting. This is usually not cheap, but the payoff can be huge if the vote goes in your favor. The amount of votes you receive from a rival faction is directly related to how big that faction's bases are. The larger a faction is, the more votes it has at its disposal. It is for this reason that you shouldn't trade too much to a small faction whose vote tally may not be enough to be significant.



## BEGGING FOR ENERGY

There may be those times when your energy credits are running perilously low. Your only alternative at this point is to call up a rival faction and grovel for energy credits. Once you open this door, you must decide how to grovel. There are several alternatives, and these alternatives hold true for all diplomatic relations, not just energy credits:

1. Offer to make loan payments
2. Offer your goodwill and friendship
3. Let the faction name their price
4. Threaten military action
5. Offer some research data

If the faction in question has energy to spare, offering to make loan payments is the best alternative you have. Goodwill and friendship is a worthy alternative, but don't expect it to work with Yang or Santiago, as they don't value the concept of friends as much as Deirdre or Miriam.

### W A R N I N G

*Threatening military action is a dangerous affair. If your offer is turned down, chances are good that the faction will be shocked by your actions and suddenly announce a vendetta!*

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are extremely important and much good can come out of them if you play your cards right. You can only engage in council meetings after you have the hailing frequency of every faction. In the early goings of the game, you should attempt to purchase or trade for as many hailing frequencies as you can, so you can quickly get to the council meetings.



Many things can be accomplished in a council meeting. Let's take a look at each and see how they fit into the big picture.

## ELECT PLANETARY GOVERNOR

Each faction casts votes equal to the total size of all its bases. This total can be modified by faction powers and secret projects. There can only be two factions up for election, and they represent the two largest empires on Planet. If you're coming in third place, you cannot be elected governor until you move into at least second place.

The benefits of being the governor are:

- 1. Executive veto—the governor can veto the outcome of council meetings**
- 2. +1 energy in commerce transactions with other friendly factions**
- 3. Governor gains an infiltrator in every faction. The infiltrator will keep tabs on military activity.**

## ELECT SUPREME LEADER

One of the ways to win the game to be elected supreme leader of Planet. A three-quarters vote is required from the planetary council to secure the position. Since this isn't an easy task, you'll most likely want to buy as many votes as possible before commencing the election.

When a supreme leader is elected, there may be a faction or two that opts to defy the will of the council vote. When this occurs, the supreme leader must, with the help of the loyal factions, conquer all defiant factions and achieve a conquest victory.

**NOTE**

If you achieve diplomatic victory by getting elected the supreme leader, 1,200 points will be added to your score, minus 2 for every turn game elapsed.

## SALVAGE UNITY FUSION CORE

When this motion is passed by the council, all factions gain +500 energy credits. While this may sound like a good thing, it has a definite double edge. If your enemies are casting votes to salvage the fusion core, that usually means they lack the energy required to build up their army and are looking for a quick fix. If you're not in this situation, you should vote against this measure and make the factions work for their armies. If the measure passes, you can be sure a rival faction will pump out a few high-powered units!

## GLOBAL TRADE PACT

Passing the Global Trade Pact will only benefit those factions that have entered into a pact. Commerce between friendly factions will double. If, for whatever reason, you have few friends, passing this measure will do you little good. On the other hand, if you have several friends, this is a valuable measure to see through and an easy way to pump up your economy.

## LAUNCH SOLAR SHADE

Passing this measure will instigate global cooling, in turn lowering the sea levels. This may not sound like much, but, depending on the





circumstances within the game, can have a huge impact on yours and other factions. If your empire is made mostly of water-based cities, lowering the sea level could suddenly find them on land, voiding out any water-terraforming you've engaged in, making those cities virtually useless!

## MELT POLAR CAPS

The opposite of the solar shade, this measure will cause the sea levels to rise. This runs the risk of drowning any city that doesn't have a pressure dome built. If you're one of those, your city will be wiped out! Carefully take your empire into consideration before voting for or against this measure.

## REPEAL U.N. CHARTER

This is a tough measure to get passed, but if you do, it can really turn the tide of the game. Simply put, repealing the U.N. charter lifts the prohibition on atrocities. This means you can launch planet busters and drop nerve gas to your heart's content without fear of sanctions and faction vendettas. Only try to pass this measure if your arsenal is overflowing with atrocity weapons you're itching to use. On the other hand, be very careful when passing this measure because the chances are good that someone like Yang, who likes to build planet busters, will welcome it, too!

# CHAPTER NINE

## SITUATIONAL AWARENESS





**A**lpha Centauri is a complex simulation and has many underlying factors and calculations that make it work. Understanding these concepts, while not mandatory, will greatly assist in your understanding of how the game functions behind the scenes. Everything from how your final score is tallied to how certain ratings like bureaucracy, ecology, and efficiency are determined. Additionally, you'll find a series of convenient question-and-answer responses that may answer some of the more obscure queries you have. Lastly, you'll find a huge chart on societal effects that will greatly help in determining what affects what.

## ADVANCED CONCEPTS

Alpha Centauri is powered by a complex set of mathematical formulas. What follows are some of the most critical calculations in the game. Once you have a grasp on how these numbers are determined, you'll be more prepared to face the challenges that await your empire.

## BUREAUCRACY

Bureaucracy is the addition of extra drones because your faction has exceeded a certain number of bases (cities). Bureaucracy functions under the following formula:

$$\text{BaseLimit} = (8 - \text{Difficulty}) \cdot (4 + \text{Efficiency}) \cdot \text{Maproot}/2$$



Where:

- **Difficulty = Player's difficulty level (0-5) • Efficiency = Social engineering efficiency rating.**
- **Maproot = Square root of # map squares/Square root of 3,200.**

For each base a faction constructs in excess of this number, one additional drone will appear at some base somewhere within the colony.

## COMMERCE

Commerce is computed city by city between factions with treaties and pacts, as follows:

1. All bases for each faction are ranked from top to bottom by energy output.
2. Bases are paired off from top to bottom. If one faction has extra bases, they are ignored.
3. For each pair of bases, sum the combined economic output and divide by 89, rounding up.
4. Double this value if a Global Trade Pact is in effect.
5. For each individual base, the commerce formula is  $(\text{ValueFromStep4}) \cdot (\text{CommerceTech} + 1) / (\text{TotalCommerceTech} + 1)$ .
6. CommerceTech is the total number of economic technologies discovered plus faction and social bonuses.
7. TotalCommerceTech is the total number of economic technologies in the game.
8. Using the value from step 5, divide by 2 if no pact is in place.
9. Add +1 if you are planetary governor.
10. Reduce to 0 if sanctions are in effect against either faction.



## D R O N E S

Several factors contribute to the number of drones found at a base before police, facilities, psych, and secret projects are taken into consideration:

1. **Difficulty Level**—At the lowest difficulty level, every citizen after the first six will be a drone. For each increase in difficulty, an additional drone will be added, so at the highest level, every citizen after the first one is a drone.
2. **Bureaucracy**—Depending on your efficiency and the difficulty level, you will gain an additional drone when your number of bases exceeds a certain number.
3. **Disloyal citizenry**—For approximately 50 turns after you capture an enemy base, you will gain an extra drone while you assimilate the enemy citizens. The rate is five drones minus one for each ten turns elapsed, but the number may never exceed:  $(\text{BaseSize} + \text{Difficulty} - 2) / 4$ .
4. **Faction power**—Some factions receive additional drones or talents. For example, the University faction receives an extra drone for every four citizens, while the Peacekeepers receive an extra talent for every four citizens.

## E C O L O G Y

Ecological damage is determined by the following complex formula:

1. For each base, total the number of mines, solar collectors, farms, soil enrichers, roads, mag tubes, condensers, and bore holes. Items in squares that are actually being worked count double.
2. Add an extra +8 for each borehole and +4 for each condenser.



3. Subtract 1 for each forest.
4. Halve each base that has a tree farm, and eliminate it if it also has a hybrid forest.
5. Divide this value by 8 and reduce by up to 16 plus the number of previous damages.
6. Take the number of minerals produced this turn.
7. If result from step 5 was reduced by less than 16, reduce the result from step 6 by the remaining amount.
8. Divide minerals by 1 plus the number of Centauri preserve, Temple of Planet, and nanoreplicator.
9. Sum the values of steps 5 and 8 and add +5 for each major atrocity.
10. If Alpha Prime is at perihelion, double your value.

Ecology percentage = (ValueFromStep10) • Difficulty • Technologies • (3-Planet) \* Life/300

## INEFFICIENCY

The formula used to calculate energy lost to inefficiency is as follows:

Inefficiency = (Energy • Distance) / (64-(4 - Efficiency)) • 8

## MIGHT FORMULA

The formula used to calculate a faction's might is as follows:

- Four points for each point of population
- Four points for each transcendent thought
- X points for each tech (sum of Explore, Discover, Build, and Conquer)





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- 10 points for each secret project
- For each noncombat unit, add Cost/40
- For each psi unit, add Cost/20
- For each planet buster, add Cost/10

For combat units, add Cost/10 in a ratio of weapon strength to best weapon of any unit currently in the game.

## SCORING

Your Alpha Centauri score is calculated as follows:

1. One point for each citizen of each base.
2. If you have won a diplomatic or economic victory, score:
  - (a) One point for each citizen of a pact brother's base.
  - (b) Half a point for each citizen of any other faction's base.
3. Half a point for each citizen of a surrendered base.
4. One point for each unit of commerce your bases are receiving.
5. One point for each technology discovered.
6. Ten points for each transcendence thought advance.
7. 25 points for each secret project.
8. A victory bonus if you have won the game.

## UNIT COST

When designing new units, keep in mind that units strong in three areas will be significantly more expensive than units strong in only two. The basic cost formula is:

$$\text{Cost} = \text{Weapon} \cdot (\text{Armor} + \text{Speed}) \cdot 10 / (2 ^ {(\text{Reactor} + 1)})$$





- ▶ The weapon value is never less than half the armor value.
- ▶ Noncombat units should substitute the equipment cost for a weapon value.
- ▶ Cost is halved for units with speed 1.
- ▶ Cost is halved for sea units, and armor is discounted 50 percent.
- ▶ Cost is quartered for combat air units.
- ▶ Armor cost is doubled for air units.
- ▶ Cost +25 percent for each unit of special ability cost.
- ▶ Cost +10 minerals if both the weapon and armor value is greater than 1.
- ▶ Cost +10 minerals if a land unit's weapon, armor, and speed are all greater than 1.
- ▶ Minimum cost  $(\text{Reactor} \cdot 2 - \text{Reactor} / 2) \cdot 10$  unless all values are 1.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q.** What is the proper order to build things at the beginning of a new game?

*A.* While there is no perfect formula for this because of the random nature of the game, you should consider the following order as a solid template:

1. Scout patrol acting as city defense
2. Formers
3. Recycling tanks
4. Children's creche

**Q.** I'm sandwiched between two factions! What should I do?

*A.* If possible, make them both your allies by engaging in a little diplomacy. Be friendly, give them what they want—and crush them later when the strength of your forces permits.



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**Q. My city governor keeps producing scout patrols even though I have developed better units. How do I stop this?**

*A. Bring up the Unit Workshop and make the scout patrol obsolete.*

**Q. My population isn't advancing past a certain level. What gives?**

*A. First, you need a hab complex to get past a population of 7. Next, you'll need a hab dome to get past level 15.*

**Q. Is there a way to get resources without a city?**

*A. Yes. Build a supply crawler and have it harvest the resource tile in question.*

**Q. Is there an easy way to tell a unit where to move instead of manually dragging a destination?**

*A. Yes. With the unit active, press the G key. A list of all your cities will be displayed. Simply click the city you want the unit to travel to and off it goes!*

**Q. How do I skip the turn of a unit?**

*A. Press the spacebar to skip the current turn.*

**Q. Can I make land bridges?**

*A. Yes. Use your former to raise the elevation of a water square. Continue this process until your bridge is complete.*

**Q. Is there a way to see the odds of a coming battle?**

*A. Yes. Go to the preferences area and click the button labeled: Confirm Odds Before Attacking.*

**Q. I've lost track of where all my Patrol units are going. Is there an easy way to see their destinations?**

*A. Yes. Press shift+P, and you will see the routes for all patrol units.*



**Q. My formers keep getting attacked by mind worms! What should I do?**

*A. Place some military units near your formers and place them in sentry mode. They'll snap to attention at the first sign of an enemy and protect your formers from attack.*

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING MODIFIERS

Social engineering is a complex art. There are many factors and modifiers that can either help or hinder you. The following charts will help you understand the effects of everything within the game.

## ECONOMY POSITIVE MODIFIERS

### **Factions:**

- Morgan Industries: +1

### **Social Models:**

- Free market economics: +2
- Eudaimonic future society: +2
- Wealth values: +1

### **Secret Projects:**

- The Longevity Vaccine (with free market economics):  
+50 percent at base
- The Merchant Exchange: +1 energy per square at base

**Base Facilities:**

- Energy bank: +50 percent at base
- Fusion lab: +50 percent at base
- Hybrid forest: +50 percent at base
- Orbital power transmitter: +1 energy at each base
- Quantum lab: +50 percent at base
- Recycling tanks: +1 energy per base square
- Stockpile energy: 2 minerals converted into 1 energy
- Tree farm: +50 percent at base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions:**

- Human Hive: -2

## EFFICIENCY

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions:**

- Gaia's Stepdaughters: +2

**Social Models:**

- Democratic politics: +2
- Green economics: +2
- Knowledge values: +1
- Cybernetic future society: +2

**Base Facilities:**

- Children's creche: +2 at base
- Headquarters: Eliminates inefficiency at base



## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- Peacekeeping Forces: -1

### Social Models:

- Police state politics: -2
- Planned economics: -2

## SUPPORT

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- The Lord's Believers: +2

### Social Models:

- Police state politics: +2
- Power values: +2

### Secret Projects:

- The Cloning Vats: +3 if using thought control
- The Living Refinery: +2

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- Morgan Industries: -1

### Social Models:

- Democratic politics: -2
- Thought control future society: -3



# MORALE

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- Spartan Federation: +2

### Social Models:

- Fundamentalist politics: +1
- Power values: +2
- Thought control future society: +2

### Secret Projects:

- The Command Nexus: +2 per ground unit built
- The Cyborg Factory: +2 per military unit built
- The Telepathic Matrix: +2 per probe team built
- The Maritime Control Center: +2 per naval unit built

### Base Facilities:

- Aerospace complex: +2 per air unit built at base
- Bioenhancement center: +2 per military unit built at base
- Children's creche: +1 per unit in base square
- Command center: +2 per ground unit built at base
- Naval yard: +2 per naval unit built at base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- Gaia's Stepdaughters: -1

### Social Model:

- Wealth values: -2
- Eudaimonic future society: -2



## POLICE

### POSITIVE MODIFIERS

#### Factions:

- Spartan Federation: +1

#### Social Models:

- Police state politics: +2
- Thought control future society: +2

#### Secret Projects:

- The Ascetic Virtues: +1
- The Network Backbone: +3 if using Cybernetic

### NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

#### Factions:

- Gaia's Stepdaughters: -1

#### Social Models:

- Free market economics: -5
- Cybernetic future society: -3

## GROWTH

### POSITIVE MODIFIERS

#### Factions:

- The Human Hive: +1

#### Social Models:

- Democratic politics: +2
- Planned economics: +2
- Eudaimonic future society: +2





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**Secret Projects:**

- The Cloning Vats: +base growth per turn

**Base Facilities:**

- Children's creche: +2 at base
- Sky hydroponics lab: +1 nutrient at each base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS:

**Social Models:**

- Green economics: -2

## PLANET

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions:**

- Gaia's Stepdaughters: +1

**Social Models:**

- Green economics: +2
- Cybernetic future society: +2

**Secret Projects:**

- The Pholus Mutagen: Reduces industry effect on planet

**Base Facilities:**

- Centauri Preserve: Reduces industry effect on planet at base
- Temple of Planet: Reduces industry effect on planet at base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions**

- The Lord's Believers: -1

**Social Models:**

- Free market economics: -3

# PROBE

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions:**

- The Lord's Believers: +1

**Social Models:**

- Fundamentalist politics: +2
- Thought control future society: +2

**Technology Advances:**

- Planetary networks: Allows probe teams

**Secret Projects:**

- The Telepathic Matrix: +2 morale for probe teams
- The Hunter-Seeker Algorithm: Defense against probe infiltration

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

**Factions:**

- University of Planet: -2

**Social Models:**

- Knowledge: -2



# INDUSTRY

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- The Human Hive: +1

### Social Models:

- Planned economics: +1
- Wealth values: +1
- Eudaimonic future society: +2

### Secret Projects:

- The Bulk Matter Transmitter: +2 minerals per base
- The Cloning Vats: +2 if using power model
- The Singularity Inductor: +50 percent minerals at each base

### Base Facilities:

- Genejack factory: +50 percent minerals at base
- Nanoreplicator: +50 percent minerals at base
- Nessus mining station: +1 mineral at each base
- Quantum converter: +50 percent minerals at base
- Robotic assembly plant: +50 percent mineral at base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- The Spartan Federation: -1

### Social Models:

- Power values: -2



# RESEARCH

## POSITIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- University of Planet: +2

### Social Models:

- Knowledge values: +2
- Cybernetic future society: +2

### Secret Projects:

- The Network Backbone: +1 per network node in game and +1 for each commerce point
- The Planetary Datalinks: Receive any technology possessed by three other factions
- The Supercollider: +100 percent at base
- The Theory of Everything: +100 percent at base
- The Universal Translator: Two free technology advances

### Base Facilities:

- Biology lab: +2 at base per turn
- Fusion lab: +50 percent at base
- Network node: +50 percent at base
- Nanohospital: +50 percent at base
- Quantum lab: +50 percent at base
- Research hospital: +50 percent at base

## NEGATIVE MODIFIERS

### Factions:

- The Lord's Believers: -2

### Social Models:

- \* Fundamentalist politics: -2

### Base Facilities:

- \* Punishment sphere: -50 percent at base



# PART THREE

ALPHA CENTAURI  
REFERENCE  
DATABASE





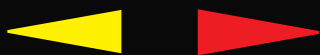
**K**eeping track of all the various statistics and details of Alpha Centauri can be a daunting task. As difficult as the task may be, however, it's equally as important. To become an experienced—and dominant—Alpha Centauri player (both in single and multiplayer), you must become intimately familiar with the seven factions, the various base facilities, the technology advances, and the important secret projects. Use this reference database to study which faction best suits your style of play, construct a technology blueprint, and plan your strategy to tackle the ingenious computer AI or crafty humans. After absorbing the knowledge contained in these chapters, you're ready to begin your quest on the new planet and conquer all through technology, economy, wisdom, and military force.





# CHAPTER TEN

## FACTION PROFILES







**O**n route to the nearest habitable planet, seven leaders on a United Nations mission rest in a deep hypersleep. As the craft nears the planet's atmosphere, a meteor strikes, waking the seven leaders from their slumber and putting the mission, and their lives, in danger. Tensions mount, and it soon becomes clear that a leader must step forth to save the ship and the mission.

The harrowing experience with the meteor shower sparks a mutiny among the seven leaders. With consensus still beyond their collective grasp, the ship plummeting through the planet's atmosphere, the leaders decide to go their separate ways and establish their own civilizations on the planet.

This chapter profiles Alpha Centauri's seven factions, their belief systems, and vital statistics. Studying this information can help you determine how to steer the faction's early development all the way through the middle and end of the game. Essential technological advances and secret projects will also be listed for each faction.

## GAIA'S STEPDAUGHTERS

On Old Earth, pollution ravaged the land, deforestation damaged ecosystems, and species suffered extinction every day. The Gaians vow not to let that happen again. As founder of the Gaian society, Lady Deirdre Skye encourages her followers to live in harmony with Planet, respecting its plant and animal life as much as their own.

*"To cherish what remains of the Earth and to foster its renewal is our only legitimate hope for survival."*

*—Wendall Berry*



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On Earth, Deirdre was an accomplished botanist and xenobiologist. Her role in the U.N. mission was clear: to examine the Planet's indigenous plant and animal life and to study the effects of colonization. Deirdre's commitment to the environment is unparalleled; however, does she value the Planet's plant and animal life over her fellow humans?

- **Faction Name:** Gaia's Stepdaughters
- **Faction Leader:** Lady Deirdre Skye
- **Background:** Free Scotland, Unity Xenobiologist
- **Agenda:** Green democracy
- **Aggression Level:** Pacifist
- **Expansion Through:** Exploration and population growth
- **Social Modifiers:**
  - +2 Efficiency (commendable efficiency)
  - +1 Planet (+25 percent mind worm capture; ecological safeguards)
- -1 Morale (-1 morale)
- -1 Police (One police unit allowed; no nerve stapling)
- **Starting Technology:** Centauri ecology
- **Free Improvements/Units:** None
- **Miscellaneous Characteristics:** Gains +1 nutrients in fungus squares
- **Society Model Pros:** Green economics
- **Society Model Cons:** Free market economics

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

By following the Gaian's leanings toward an environmentalist, democratic society, a player can really boost his efficiency level through the



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stratosphere. As a downside, however, your growth rate suffers with the change to green economics, moving it back down to nominal levels.

**TIP**

IF YOU'RE ATTEMPTING TO BUILD UP A MIND WORM FORCE, SWITCH TO GREEN ECONOMICS AS SOON AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE. THE PLANET BONUS INCREASE WILL LET YOU CAPTURE ABOUT 75 PERCENT OF THE MIND WORMS YOU ENCOUNTER.

A weakness of the Gaians is military morale. However, in late-game battles, if you must boost your military without jeopardizing your superior efficiency and growth rate, choose the power value system. You'll get better support and a +2 increase to morale without any negative effects to the Gaian's basic society model (though your mineral costs will escalate).

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

Since Gaian's begin play with Centauri ecology, they benefit from the terraforming unit, the former, immediately. In keeping with the Gaian ecological slant, your best move would be to harness the lifeforms of Planet to battle your rivals. If you follow up Centauri ecology with the discovery of Centauri empathy, you'll be able to breed mind worms. Switch to a Green Economy, and you'll also be able to capture mind worms to develop an even larger psi force.

If you follow the Centauri branch, you'll quickly discover new facilities and projects, such as the biology lab and empath guild as well as the prime Gaian economic model, green economics. From Centauri empathy, the Gaians can move to Centauri meditation, giving the Gaians the ability to breed the powerful, indigenous sea lifeform (and transport), the Isle of the Deep.

**TIP**

AS PACIFISTS, THE GAIANS HAVE A TOUGH TIME ACQUIRING INTIMIDATING MILITARY UNITS. HOWEVER, IF YOU PERSIST IN WANTING TO WAGE WAR WITH MILITARY UNITS, THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO ABANDON THE CENTAURI BRANCH OF THE TECH TREE. INSTEAD, MOVE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS TO PLANETARY ECONOMICS AND UP THROUGH QUANTUM POWER. BY FAR, THE FASTEST WAY FOR GAIANS TO ACQUIRE THE NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY FOR A STRONG MILITARY IS THROUGH TRADE.

Another path provided by the free Centauri ecology technology is ecological engineering and advanced ecological engineering. With these discoveries, the Gaians can begin creating super formers. Plus, advanced ecological engineering provides free recycling tanks at every base, boosting the Gaian efficiency level even further.

## SECRET PROJECTS

If you follow Deirdre's ideology up through the technology tree, one of the first secret projects you'll come across is the Pholus Mutagen. Because this project reduces the ecological damage done by your industry at all your bases, it allows you to boost your industrial output and efficiency through other less-ecological means, without worrying about harming the environment.

**TIP**

IF YOU FOLLOW THE GAIAN CENTAURI PATH THROUGH THE TECHNOLOGY TREE, YOU'LL GAIN ACCESS TO THE BIOLOGY LAB BASE FACILITY. CONSTRUCT THIS TO IMPROVE THE GAIAN LAB RATE. MOST FACILITIES ON THE CENTAURI TECH TREE IMPROVE YOUR INDUSTRY'S EFFECT ON ECOLOGY, SO THE BIOLOGY LAB WILL BE ONE OF ONLY A FEW LAB-IMPROVING FACILITIES AT YOUR DISPOSAL, AT LEAST IN THE EARLY GAME.



Other early projects that will be available to you include the Weather Paradigm and the Xenoempathy Dome. Increasing terraforming speed by 50 percent, the Weather Paradigm is a solid acquisition, as it means you'll benefit from farms, mines, and solar collectors sooner. The Xenoempathy Dome will improve movement through fungus and lengthen the life cycle of any alien life forms you have created.

## THE HUMAN HIVE

Living in underground fortresses and enclosed in the safety of perimeter defenses, the Human Hive strive to gain power and wealth through aggression. Though its economy tends to lag behind others, it can match nearly anyone's wealth and quickly expand its collective throughout the land with a strong military presence. What's the key ingredient to this success? Chairman Yang puts the good of the state above the good of the individual.

*"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision."*

*—Theodore Hesburgh*

The consummate perfectionist, Chairman Yang has also been described as antisocial and obsessed with security and defense. With those talents, Yang was selected as chief of security for the mission. His military background and expert knowledge of psychology makes him a dangerous foe of the body and mind.

► **Faction Name: The Human Hive**

► **Faction Leader: Sheng-Ji Yang**

► **Background: Great China, Unity Executive Officer**



- **Agenda: Atheist police state**
- **Aggression Level: Hostile**
- **Expansion Through: Power and wealth**
- **Social Modifiers:**
  - +1 Growth (+10 percent growth rate)
  - +1 Industry (-10 percent mineral costs)
  - 2 Economy (-1 energy each base)
- **Starting Technology: Doctrine Loyalty**
- **Free Improvements/Units: Free perimeter defense per base.**
- **Miscellaneous Characteristics: None**
- **Society Model Pros: Police state politics**
- **Society Model Cons: Democratic politics**

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

The Hive's concentration on the state keeps its economy behind that of other factions. That doesn't mean, however, that the Hive can't capitalize on its positive social aspects, which include a +10 percent growth rate and cheap industrial costs. The best way to improve on both positives would be to adopt planned economics, which boosts both growth and industry. The drawback here is reduced efficiency, which would be at a disastrous low if you also choose to run the Hive as a police state.

# TIP

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF A POLICE STATE WHEN CONSTRUCTING MILITARY UNITS. BECAUSE THE POLICE STATE PROVIDES A +2 SUPPORT BONUS, MINERAL COSTS TO SUPPORT A MILITARY FORCE WILL BE MUCH CHEAPER. HOWEVER, EASE AWAY FROM PLANNED ECONOMICS IF YOU DO GO WITH ROUTE. POLICE STATE SHOULD ONLY BE MAINTAINED DURING TIMES OF WAR OR IF YOU ARE IN A MILITARY BUILD UP.



If you're happy enough with the Hive's inherent growth and industry bonuses, then you can elect to address its economic disadvantage by adopting a Free Market, which would eliminate the economy penalty. Should you enter into a wartime situation, though, you should change economics to prevent drone rioting while military units are away from home.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

The Human Hive's initial technology, Doctrine Loyalty, lets the Hive immediately switch its government to its desired police state. However, the path set by Doctrine Loyalty features few immediate rewards. For instance, the next step up—intellectual integrity—offers a secret project (the Citizens' Defense Force) that is a useless acquisition to the perimeter defense-laden Hive.

**TIP**

THE HIVE POSSESSES SOME INTRIGUING FACILITIES AND PROJECTS UP THEIR TECHNOLOGY PATH. ONCE IT IS RESEARCHED, SWITCH TO KNOWLEDGE VALUES IF YOU PLAN TO TRY AND RESEARCH THESE HIGHER ADVANCES QUICKLY.

Though the initial rewards are less than stellar, if the Hive continues down the Doctrine Loyalty path, the ability to produce quantum reactors and weapons is only a few steps away with the discovery of planetary economics and then quantum power.

## SECRET PROJECTS

First, don't worry about building the Citizens' Defense Force, the secret project that provides a free perimeter defense at every base—





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the Hive comes equipped with that ability. Not far up the Hive tech tree, however, rests the Planetary Datalinks. Because the Hive has a tougher time expanding its knowledge due to an early restrictive tech tree, this project, which gives you any technology discovered by three factions, is essential in expanding discovery and knowledge.

**TIP**

A SMART WAY TO ELIMINATE HIVE INEFFICIENCY CONCERNS WITHOUT HINDERING RESEARCH (IF YOU MOVE TO KNOWLEDGE VALUES) OR SUPPORT (IF YOU MOVE TO POLICE STATE) IS TO SELECT GREEN ECONOMICS.

One more notch up the tree, following cyberethics through present algorithms, the Hive will gain the ability to construct the Hunter-Seeker Algorithm, a project that protects each base and unit from probe infiltration. Although, with the Hive's slow research timetables, most other factions may decide that probing the Hive isn't worth the effort—although your valuable units will still be protected.

## MORGAN INDUSTRIES

Driven by wealth and material possessions, the Morganites are organized much like a corporation. With their expensive tastes, Morganites find it difficult to support their field units. Additionally, their bases suffer one huge disadvantage: they need to build a Hab Complex to expand beyond size 4, rather than the normal seven of other faction cities.

*“And while the law of competition may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it ensures the survival of the fittest in every department.”*

*—Andrew Carnegie*



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

CEO Morgan began his economic empire by acquiring of several diamond mines during the Sahara Burst Wars. With his growing wealth, Morgan expanded his empire into several different areas, including mercenary forces and luxurious hotels. With a background in the booming industries of old Earth, Nwabudike Morgan seeks to duplicate his success on this new world.

- **Faction Name: Morgan Industries**
- **Faction Leader: CEO Nwabudike Morgan**
- **Background: Namibian Diamond Tycoon, Unity Franchise Holder**
- **Agenda: Free market economics, pro industry**
- **Aggression Level: Pacifist**
- **Expansion Through: Wealth**
- **Social Modifiers:**
  - +1 Economy (+1 energy each base)
  - 1 Support (1 unit; no mineral support per base)
- **Starting Technology: Industrial base**
- **Free Improvements/Units: 100 extra energy reserves**
- **Miscellaneous Characteristics: Bonus to commerce, which increases value of treaties, pacts, and loans; bases can't exceed population size 4 without a hab complex; can build synthmetal sentinels immediately**
- **Society Model Pros: Free market economics**
- **Society Model Cons: Planned economics**

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Unlike the Human Hive, the Morganites have little problem with a strong economy. With an extra 100 energy credits to use, the



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Morganites can gain an early advantage by rushing early construction orders or research. Choosing an economic model for the Morganites should be a no-brainer; select free market economy to exploit the Morganites already positive economy and reap the rewards of the extra energy benefits. To further boost the economy, select the wealth value system. Keep in mind the adverse effects, though; a free market economy during wartime can send base production into a tailspin with drone riots erupting everywhere.

**TIP**

EMPHASIZING THE MORGANITES SUPERIOR ECONOMIC SKILLS EARLY ON (BY SELECTING DEMOCRATIC, FREE MARKET, AND WEALTH SOCIAL MODELS) COULD RESULT IN A HUGE ENERGY RESERVE LATER IN THE GAME. USE THIS RESERVE TO SPEED THE CONSTRUCTION OF BASE FACILITIES OR SECRET PROJECTS THAT PROVIDE BONUSES TO RESEARCH OR MILITARY STRENGTH. ALSO, WITH A HEFTY RESERVE, YOU COULD BUY ADDITIONAL TECHNOLOGIES FROM OTHER FACTIONS.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

Because the Morganites' start with the industrial base technology, they can build sophisticated defensive units, based on synthmetal armor, from the beginning of the game. Furthermore, industrial base permits the construction of the Merchant Exchange.

**TIP**

RESEARCH SUPERCONDUCTOR TO DISCOVER THE GATLING LASER, A SATISFACTORY WEAPON THAT COULD ASSIST WITH DEFENSE AND EVEN OFFENSIVE MANEUVERS.



Both are stellar benefits, but perhaps the greatest advantage is the number of choices the Morgan player has from the initial technology. Five new technologies branch from industrial base. A Morgan player most interested in economy and growth should move up through industrial economics next, which provides the ability to shift to a free-market society and allows for the construction of energy banks. Industrial automation follows, providing a wealth system, supply crawlers, and much-needed hab complexes to increase the size of the Morganite bases.

## SECRET PROJECTS

Using the Morganites foothold into the industrial portion of the technology tree, a player can immediately build the Merchant Exchange in each base, which greatly improves energy output at every base in which it's built. If you plan to exploit CEO Morgan's economic background, the Merchant Exchange is a must-have.

Higher up the industrial tree, the Morganites quickly gain access to the Planetary Transit System, a project that causes each new base to start at population size 3 and one less drone for bases size 3 or under. This greatly assists the Morganites slow growth as well as their negative modifier to support. However, if you do go this route, make sure you advance quickly to industrial automation and get hab complexes, or else the quick start provided by the Planetary Transit System will be wasted by a ceiling of size 4.

**TIP**

SWITCHING THE MORGANITES TO THE POWER VALUE SYSTEM DURING WARTIME WILL IMPROVE YOUR MILITARY'S MORALE WITHOUT DECREASING ANY ECONOMIC BONUSES.



Industrial nanorobotics isn't far for the Morganites either, which could mean the production of the Nano Factory, a secret project that reduces the cost to upgrade units as well as quickening all repair processes. For wartime situations, when repairs and upgrades are essential, this project could turn the tide in the Morganites favor.

## PEACEKEEPING FORCES

Believing in the free flow of information, the Peacekeeping Forces attempt to live up to their name. Commissioner Pravin Lal's humanitarian ideals make him a popular leader, even providing additional vote support if he should ever decide to run for planetary governor.

*"Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice."*

*—Baruch Spinoza*

Born in India, Pravin Lal studied medicine at Oxford University. As a leading medical professional, Pravin was recognized many times over as a hero in the field, once saving many lives during the India Border Conflict. Extremely loyal, Pravin's dedication to his followers could be an exploitable weakness.

- **Faction Name:** Peacekeeping Forces
- **Faction Leader:** Commissioner Pravin Lal
- **Background:** United Nations Space Authority, Unity Ship's Surgeon
- **Agenda:** Humanitarian ideals, democracy
- **Aggression Level:** Neutral
- **Expansion Through:** Knowledge and population growth



- ▶ **Social Modifiers:**
  - 1 Efficiency (gross inefficiency)
- ▶ **Starting Technology: Biogenetics**
- ▶ **Free Improvements/Units: None**
- ▶ **Miscellaneous Characteristics:** Receives an extra talent for every four citizens; hab complexes may exceed their population limit by two; receives double votes in both planetary governor and supreme leader elections; can build recycling tanks immediately
- ▶ **Society Model Pros: Democratic politics**
- ▶ **Society Model Cons: Police state politics**

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Commissioner Lal's only social drawback is efficiency, and even that isn't a major problem. To reverse the Peacekeepers' efficiency woes, just explore the democratic political model or the green economic model. Both will turn the Peacekeepers' negative efficiency rating into a positive one.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

The Peacekeepers' first technology is quite powerful, letting the colony construct efficiency-helping recycling tanks from the beginning as well as leading to one of the most positive technological advances, the Secrets of the Human Brain. The leader who discovers the Secrets of the Human Brain first is rewarded with a free technology—the Peacekeepers almost always have the shortest road to this advance.



## W A R N I N G

*Playing the Peacekeepers as tyrannical warmongers is a quick way to have your colony conquered by another faction. As their name suggests, they should keep the peace with other factions while gaining wealth and knowledge. Don't be aggressive with another faction unless you know you can defeat it.*

Another smart road, particularly if you are looking into building a defensive force for the Peacekeepers, is to move from biogenetics to gene splicing and finally synthetic fossil fuels. With this advance, the Peacekeepers can construct missile launchers. What's more, synthetic fossil fuels leads to Doctrine Air Power, which could give the Peacekeepers a leg up on the air war.

## SECRET PROJECTS

Providing an extra talent at each base, the Human Genome Project should be constructed as soon as possible—the Peacekeeper colony has the opportunity right from the start. If you're attempting to offset the Peacekeepers only poor social modifier, efficiency, you should construct the Longevity Vaccine, which lies only a few steps up the tech tree at bio-engineering. If you have chosen planned as your economic model, the acquisition of the Longevity Vaccine subtracts two drones at every base. Because the Peacekeepers come equipped with an extra talent per base, these tweaks can greatly improve efficiency and production.



**TIP**

TWO SECRET PROJECTS, CLINICAL IMMORTALITY (DOUBLES VOTES) AND THE EMPATH GUILD (ADDS 50 PERCENT VOTES), CAN ADD EVEN MORE VOTES TO THE PEACEKEEPERS SIDE IF YOU PLAN TO RUN FOR PLANETARY GOVERNOR.

## SPARTAN FEDERATION

The Spartans believe in superior weaponry and training. Extremely confident, the Spartan military is nearly unmatched in raw power; additionally, the Spartans can produce rovers quickly, making them a powerful friend or foe. Unfortunately, the strong military emphasis hinders the Spartans industrial growth.

*"We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."*

*—Winston Churchill*

Colonel Corazon Santiago has learned to survive. From her days as an orphan to her membership with various gangs and security forces, Santiago's life experiences have hardened her psyche tempered her emotions. However, these same experiences make her unpredictable—and dangerous.

- **Faction Name:** Spartan Federation
- **Faction Leader:** Colonel Corazon Santiago
- **Background:** Survivalist, Unity Security Chief
- **Agenda:** Right to keep and bear arms
- **Aggression Level:** Unpredictable



- ▶ **Expansion Through: Knowledge and power**
- ▶ **Social Modifiers:**
  - +2 Morale (+1 morale and +2 defense)
  - +1 Police (can use up to two military units as police)
  - 1 Industry (+10 percent mineral costs)
- ▶ **Starting Technology: Doctrine Mobility**
- ▶ **Free Improvements/Units: One rover**
- ▶ **Miscellaneous Characteristics: Prototype units don't cost extra minerals**
- ▶ **Society Model Pros: Military values**
- ▶ **Society Model Cons: Wealth values**

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

One of the Spartans biggest advantages is their military force. To elevate the Spartan soldiers' morale near cocky level, choose the fundamental political model or the power value system. Both will extend the Spartan morale rating, helping both offensive and defensive forces. As the game moves into higher technologies, thought control also has an extremely positive effect on morale.

To keep industrial mineral costs from escalating, steer the Spartan Federation toward a planned economy, which will offset the negative industry rating while improving growth rate.

**TIP**

BECAUSE THE SPARTANS CAN'T USE WEALTH VALUES, A KEY TO THEIR SUCCESS LIES IN KEEPING THE MILITARY UNITS HAPPY AND INEXPENSIVE TO MAINTAIN. SWITCH TO A POLICE STATE WITH POWER VALUES FOR THE MORALE AND SUPPORT BONUSES.



## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

The Spartans road to military dominance begins with the free technological advance, Doctrine Mobility, which lets them construct rovers and command centers. Perhaps more dangerous are the branches from Doctrine Mobility. The Spartans are only one step away from gaining the ability to construct seafaring units (sea formers and transport foils) and two steps away from constructing needlejets with the discovery of Doctrine Air Power. A powerful military, indeed.

**TIP**

WITH A FREE ROVER AND THE ABILITY TO BUILD ROVERS IMMEDIATELY, THE SPARTANS CAN GAIN QUITE AN ADVANTAGE BY HEAVILY EXPLORING THEIR LANDING AREA. LOOK FOR SUPPLY PODS AND MAKE CONTACT WITH OTHER FACTIONS. IF YOU'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN THEY ARE, CONSIDER USING FORCE TO MAKE THEM SURRENDER.

## SECRET PROJECTS

Though the Spartans tech tree options are rather limited, when it comes to the production of secret projects, one of the first technology advances the Spartans can discover, Doctrine Loyalty, provides the necessary knowledge to produce the Command Nexus. This project eschews the need for command centers as one will be automatically produced at each new base. Building the Command Nexus speeds repair of damaged units at every base and also provides yet another morale bonus.

**TIP**

IF YOU'RE USING THE POLICE STATE / POWER COMBINATION, YOUR ONLY PROBLEM WILL BE INEFFICIENCY. COMBAT THIS PROBLEM THROUGH BASE FACILITIES SUCH AS THE CHILDREN'S CRECHE.



## THE LORD'S BELIEVERS

Devout in faith and dedicated to their religion, the Believers are more concerned with the expansion of followers than the expansion of scientific knowledge. Their civilization is their faith; the Believers will defend their religion as fiercely as they'll defend their homeland. The strength of their religious convictions gives the Believers greater command of their abilities when attacking hostile units.

*"Faith: Belief without evidence in what is told by one who speaks without knowledge, of things without parallel."*

*—Ambrose Bierce*

Sister Miriam Godwinson received her Ph.D. in psychology from Yale University and went on to gain notoriety as the United Nations Psych Chaplain. After assisting a number of decimated countries, Miriam gained an almost cult following: worshipped, idolized, and transformed into a religious icon. Are her followers really devout in their faith or just brainwashed by a convincing leader?

- **Faction Name:** The Lord's Believers
- **Faction Leader:** Sister Miriam Godwinson
- **Background:** Christian States of America, Unity Psych Chaplain
- **Agenda:** Life of religious worship
- **Aggression Level:** Hostile
- **Expansion Through:** Population growth and power
- **Social Modifiers:**
  - +2 Support (four units; no mineral support per base)



**+1 Probe (+1 probe morale and +50 percent cost to enemy probe)**

- ▶ **-1 Planet (-1 fungus production; increase ecological damage)**
- ▶ **-2 Research (-20 percent lab research)**
- ▶ **Starting Technology: Social psych**
- ▶ **Free Improvements/Units: None**
- ▶ **Miscellaneous Characteristics: Units are fanatical and receive a +25 percent attack bonus; the Lord's Believers accumulate no research points until the year 2110**
- ▶ **Society Model Pros: Fundamentalist politics**
- ▶ **Society Model Cons: Knowledge values**

## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Because the Believers can't use a knowledge value system, offsetting the negative research score is quite difficult. It won't be until the end of the game, when cybernetic can be researched, that the Believers will finally end their lab deficiencies. By then, however, it might be too late.

**TIP**

THE BELIEVERS, HAVING LITTLE FAITH IN THE WORLD OF SCIENCE, HAVE LITTLE ABILITY WHEN IT COMES TO RESEARCH. TACKLING THIS PROBLEM THROUGH SOCIAL ENGINEERING IS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE. INSTEAD, SEEK TECHNOLOGY THROUGH ALLIANCES, BRIBERY, OR ENSLAVEMENT (SPECIFICALLY WITH THE TECH-RICH UNIVERSITY OF PLANET).

Concentrate on the positive; selecting the fundamentalist political system can improve the Believers probe rating, making the Believers bases impervious to infiltration. However, if you do this, you are giving up on research—the fundamentalist model decreases the Believers'



research score by another two points. By also moving to power values, you can decrease the cost of supporting military units even more—power values adds to the Believers' support bonus.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

The Believers modifiers to research and development create difficulties when attempting to move up the technology tree. Although their free technology, social psychology, is only one step away from the Secrets of the Human Brain (which awards a free technology to the faction that discovers it), because of research limitations, the Believers will almost never obtain it before another colony. Don't give up on discovering the Secrets of the Human Brain, because it lets the Believers switch to their desired political state, fundamentalist.

**TIP**

**FORGET RESEARCH AND CONCENTRATE RESOURCES ON BUILDING A FIERCE MILITARY PRESENCE. THE BELIEVERS +25 PERCENT ATTACK BONUS ADDS TO THEIR INTIMIDATING FORCE.**

From social psychology, the Believers can move up to Doctrine Loyalty and gain the ability to build perimeter defenses. Another possibility is moving through the Secrets of the Human Brain to neural grafting and mind-machine interface. Reaching mind-machine interface permits the use of drop pods. As with all technology though, remember that the Believers research modifiers will greatly restrict their ability to move up the technology tree, so reaching this point could take many, many years.





## SECRET PROJECTS

Just as they restrict technology advances, the Believers poor researching abilities also hinder construction of secret projects. However, like the Spartans, the Believers possess a quick path to the command nexus. In a race with the Spartans, however, the Believers will inevitably lose. Keep eyes and ears peeled to the planetary announcements and gain an advantage with the command nexus if you can, particularly if you are determined to begin construction of wartime units.

**TIP**

USE THE BELIEVERS PROBE BONUS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE AND CONSTRUCT PLENTY OF PROBE TEAMS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE IN A WAR WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF PLANET (SHIFTING TO A FUNDAMENTALIST SOCIETY WILL IMPROVE YOUR PROBE STATUS EVEN MORE). SURE, THE BELIEVERS HAVE A DEEP BELIEF IN THEIR RELIGION; BUT THAT DOESN'T STOP STEALING FROM BEING AN OPTION.

## UNIVERSITY OF PLANET

Putting discovery and knowledge above all else, the University begins its civilization with a distinct technological advantage. Some say the dedication to knowledge is too great—workers have often complained about the elitism and the unethical practices. Also, since it acquires new technologies so much faster than other factions, the University will always have to fend off covert technology theft from every other faction.





*"Knowledge is power."*

*—Francis Bacon*

Recommended as chief science officer for the mission, Dr. Prokhor Zakharov has made numerous scientific breakthroughs in his time. Many, though, have whispered warnings about his willingness to do anything in the name of research. New technologies will be discovered for sure—but at what cost?

- **Faction Name:** University of Planet
- **Faction Leader:** Dr. Prokhor Zakharov
- **Background:** Russian Commonwealth, Unity Science Officer
- **Agenda:** Research, free flow of information
- **Aggression Level:** Neutral
- **Expansion Through:** Knowledge
- **Social Modifiers:**
  - +2 Research (+20 percent lab research)
  - 2 Probe (enemy probe success increased; -50 percent cost to enemy probe)
- **Starting Technology:** Information networks
- **Free Improvements/Units:** Free Network Node at each base.
- **Miscellaneous Characteristics:** The University receives a bonus technology at the start of each game; for every four citizens at a base, the University must deal with an extra drone
- **Society Model Pros:** Knowledge values
- **Society Model Cons:** Fundamentalist politics



## SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Nearly the exact opposite of the Believers, the University of Planet has virtually no way of improving its probe score until late in the game, when thought control can be researched and selected. Until then, the University player must protect his bases from probe teams. These infiltration units will be seeking the University's greatest, and only, advantage: wealth of new technologies.

Unlike the Believers, good research and lab work isn't an issue at the University. To kick your research into higher gear, explore the knowledge value system, which doubles the output of technological advances.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

With a significant research bonus, the University's climb up the technology tree could be a swift one. Beginning with its free technology, information networks (the University also receives another free technology at the start of each game), you can move in a variety of directions, including polymorphic software, which lets the University construct heavy artillery.

**TIP**

BEING THE MOST TECHNOLOGICALLY RICH SOCIETY HAS BOTH ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES. USE YOUR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES TO TRADE FOR MONEY, FAVORS, OR OTHER TECHNOLOGIES. WITH SO MUCH TECHNOLOGY INSIDE YOUR BASES, BE SURE TO HEAVILY GUARD YOURSELF FROM PROBE TEAM ASSAULTS.



A better path, perhaps, would be through high energy chemistry, an advance that provides durable armor (plasma steel) and the future ability to construct nerve gas pods, a devastating (and very unethical) weapon. If you wish to emphasize economy early on, move to industrial economics from industrial base; a switch to free market economics could boost the economy without adversely affecting research. Either way, with the University's research prowess, moving skyward into the technology tree shouldn't be a problem.

## SECRET PROJECTS

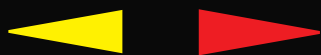
With stellar research abilities, the University should have no trouble getting a leg up on secret project production. Because the University comes equipped with free network nodes at each base, you should attempt to construct the Virtual World as soon as possible. The project rests only two steps up the technology tree and causes all network nodes to also act as hologram theaters, helping immensely with an inevitable University problem: drone riots.

**TIP**

PLAY THE UNIVERSITY FROM A DEFENSIVE POSTURE. USE ANY MILITARY CREATIONS TO PROTECT YOUR BASES AND KEEP FRIENDLY WITH ALLIANCES. THEN, AS YOU GAIN TECHNOLOGIES AND SECRET PROJECTS, YOU'LL BEGIN TO SURPASS MANY OTHER FACTIONS. ONCE YOU'VE RESEARCHED SUFFICIENT MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES, SHIFT GOVERNMENT FOCUS OFF RESEARCH AND ONTO OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## BASE FACILITIES







**A**n important ability of an Alpha Centauri player is determining how best to boost positive social, economic, or environmental effects, or how to counterbalance negative ones. With social engineering, a player can often eliminate or soften negative factors—but frequently additional negative effects emerge. While secret projects typically do the trick, their expensive cost and high prerequisites prevent them from becoming a factor early in the game.

Another way to affect your society's inherent disadvantages, and perhaps the most important way early in the game, is through base facilities or improvements. While the cost and prerequisites are typically low, nearly every facility features maintenance or energy per turn costs. Study these structures well; knowing what to build, where to build it, and how to use it can propel your colony into a solid and productive middle and end of the game.

## AEROSPACE COMPLEX

Providing additional morale and fast repairs, the aerospace complex becomes essential to any player hoping to amass an air force. Construct an aerospace complex inside the base nearest the front line. That way, when your planes return from battle, they will be repaired quickly as they refuel.

### NOTE

The aerospace complex is an important prerequisite to several facilities, including several space orbital technologies.



- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine Air Power**
- **Benefit: Repairs air units quickly; air units built at complex get +2 morale bonus; allows space-based improvements**

## BIOENHANCEMENT CENTER

Providing a morale bonus to military units, a bioenhancement center becomes critical during wartime. Carefully choose where to build the facility; use the facility in your most productive bases, particularly those training military units.

### NOTE

The secret project the Cyborg Factory counts as a bioenhancement center at every base. At a cost of 400, the Cyborg Factory might be worth discovering, particularly if you plan to construct many bioenhancement centers.

- **Cost: 100**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Neural grafting**
- **Benefit: All military units built here receive +2 morale bonus; any alien lifeforms you breed at this base gain +1 lifecycle bonus**

## BIOLOGY LAB

The Gaians, with prerequisite nearly in hand, can use the biology lab early on. Construct it in a productive base and receive the benefit of



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the labs bonus. Also, if you plan on breeding mind worms, do so at a base with the biology lab.

- **Cost: 60**
- **Maintenance: 1**
- **Prerequisite: Centauri empathy**
- **Benefit: +2 Labs bonus per turn; any alien lifeforms bred here gain +1 lifecycle bonus**

## CENTAURI PRESERVE

The Centauri preserve reduces the ecological damage produced by your industry. Though somewhat expensive to build and maintain, the Centauri preserve can be vital in combating inefficiency and poor production.

- **Cost: 100**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Centauri meditation**
- **Benefit: Reduces effect of industry on Planet's ecosystem; any lifeform bred here gains a +1 lifecycle bonus**

## CHILDREN'S CRECHE

Though the cost is low, the children's creche possesses some powerful bonuses. Inefficiency can be a significant problem in the early game, slowing production of much-needed facilities or units. With bonuses to growth and efficiency, a children's creche can eliminate early game problems.

- **Cost: 50**
- **Maintenance: 1**





- **Prerequisite:** Ethical calculus
- **Benefit:** Base receives +2 growth bonus; base receives +2 efficiency bonus; all negative morale effects are cancelled for units in base square (these units receive +1 morale); reduces base's vulnerability to mind control.

## COMMAND CENTER

Providing the same help to ground units that the aerospace complex provides to air units, the command center is a vital facility if you're at war. Build the command center near the front line, giving your +2 morale military units quick access to the war front and a short return home to be repaired.

### NOTE

The Secret Project the Command Nexus counts as a command center for every base. The command nexus might be the cheaper and easier way to go if you need the command center in several bases.

- **Cost:** 40
- **Maintenance:** 0
- **Prerequisite:** Doctrine Mobility
- **Benefits:** Repairs damaged ground units quickly; ground units built here get +2 morale upgrades

## ENERGY BANK

The Morganites, with their already strong economy, can benefit from the energy bank early in the game. Construct the energy bank at the



most productive base; this will ensure a quick build time and will shoot already high production through the roof. Building at a less-productive base could prove helpful, but the energy tank will take some time to construct.

- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 1**
- **Prerequisite: Industrial economics**
- **Benefit: +50 percent economy at base**

## FUSION LAB

Though the fusion lab possesses relatively high costs (especially per-turn maintenance costs), the facility can boom both economy and research. Once you've researched the prerequisite, construct a fusion lab at a productive base. To capitalize on its benefits, begin heavy construction and research at your fusion lab.

### NOTE

The fusion lab is cumulative with the quantum lab

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 3**
- **Prerequisite: Fusion power**
- **Benefit: +50 percent economy at base; +50 percent labs at base**

## GENEJACK FACTORY

There are several facilities that boost mineral output by 50 percent, but the genejack factory is the cheapest—although it comes at a



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heavy price. Constructing the genejack factory can cause drone riots and will increase the base's susceptibility to mind control. Building a hologram theatre (-2 drones at base) can offset the drone penalty.

**NOTE**

The genejack factory's mineral bonus is cumulative with the nanoreplicator, quantum converter, and the robotic assembly plant.

- **Cost: 100**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Retroviral engineering**
- **Benefit: +50 percent minerals output**
- **Negative Effect: +1 drones at base; increases vulnerability to enemy mind control**

**H A B C O M P L E X**

A hab complex assists in the growth of your base. When a base reaches its population limit, a warning will be announced. Construct a hab complex inside the base to raise the population limit to 14. Don't ignore the warnings; to compete in the end of the game, you'll need bases to grow and continue to produce faster.

**TIP**

THE MORGANITES NEED THE HAB COMPLEX MORE THAN ANY OTHER FACTION. WITH A POPULATION SIZE LIMIT OF FOUR ON THEIR BASES, THE HAB COMPLEX BECOMES A NECESSITY TO EARLY GAME GROWTH AND EXPANSION.



- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Industrial automation**
- **Benefit: Lets base population increase beyond 7**

## HABITATION DOME

The hab dome can only be constructed in a base that already has a hab complex; in other words, you can't circumvent the construction of a hab complex and jump all the way up to population size 14 and higher. Though expensive to maintain, your base should be producing plenty of minerals and energy by the time a hab dome becomes a necessity.

- **Cost: 160**
- **Maintenance: 4**
- **Prerequisite: Super tensile solids, hab complex**
- **Benefit: Lets base population increase beyond size 14**

## HEADQUARTERS

Headquarters are cheap, and their lack of maintenance costs create a very useful tool in combating inefficiency. Examine your base charts and discover which ones are losing the most energy to inefficiency; construct the headquarters here to completely eliminate the problem.

- **Cost: 50**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: None**
- **Benefit: +1 energy; no inefficiency; base becomes immune to enemy probe team and mind control**



## H O L O G R A M   T H E A T R E

An excellent way to prevent drone rioting (and the psych bonus prevents future rioting problems), the hologram theatre should be used in the most volatile bases. Though the hologram theater is costly to maintain, the prevention of production-halting drone riots outweighs the cost, especially in bases prone to drone problems.

### NOTE

The secret project the Virtual World causes each network node to also count as a hologram theater.

- **Cost: 60**
- **Maintenance: 3**
- **Prerequisite: Planetary networks**
- **Benefit: -2 drones at base; +50 percent psych output at base**

## H Y B R I D   F O R E S T

Though it is high in start-up and maintenance costs, the hybrid forest will pay for itself after several turns, especially when constructed in a base surrounded by forest squares. Boosting both psych and economy, the hybrid forest causes your talents to work happier and with more efficiency. Build the tree farm first, however; the tree farm provides the same bonuses, but at a cheaper cost.

### NOTE

The hybrid forest has a cumulative effect with the tree farm base facility.



- **Cost:** 240
- **Maintenance:** 4
- **Prerequisite:** Planetary economics
- **Benefit:** +50 percent psych at base; +50 percent economy at base; increases nutrient and energy output of forest squares; combined with a tree farm, it eliminates ecological damage caused by terraforming

## NANO HOSPITAL

Though most players will opt for the less-expensive research hospital facility, the nanohospital can send research through the roof by further boosting its positive effects. Also, the additional psych bonus and reduction of drones will keep your workers happy and efficient.

### NOTE

THE NANO HOSPITAL HAS CUMULATIVE EFFECTS WITH THE LESS EXPENSIVE, BUT SIMILAR, RESEARCH HOSPITAL FACILITY.

- **Cost:** 240
- **Maintenance:** 4
- **Prerequisite:** Homo superior
- **Benefit:** +25 percent psych at base; +50 percent labs at base; -1 drone at base; reduces population loss caused by genetic warfare or disease outbreaks

## NANO REPLICATOR

The fourth of the mineral boosting facilities, the nanoreplicator is also the most expensive. Thus, you should have already built one



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of the others (genejack factory, quantum converter, or robotic assembly plant) before considering the nanoreplicator. If not, the high maintenance cost of the nanoreplicator will likely negate any mineral bonuses it provides.

**NOTE**

The nanoreplicator's mineral bonus is cumulative with the genejack factory, quantum converter, and the robotic assembly plant.

- **Cost: 320**
- **Maintenance: 6**
- **Prerequisite: Matter edition**
- **Benefit: +50 percent mineral output at base**

**NAVAL YARD**

Because the naval yard only provides bonuses to naval units, don't construct this facility inland—build your naval yard at either sea or seashore bases. Use the naval yard in your most productive ocean bases so that naval construction will be steady; don't forget to send your damaged units here for a quick repair.

**NOTE**

THE SECRET PROJECT THE MARITIME CONTROL CENTER COUNTS AS A NAVAL YARD IN EACH BASE.





- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine initiative**
- **Benefit: +2 morale bonus to naval units built here; repairs damaged naval units quickly**

## NESSUS MINING STATION

Though the nessus mining station provides mineral bonuses, you'll need aerospace complexes to reap that benefit. Don't construct the nessus mining station unless you already have aerospace complexes built (or are planning to build them).

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Self-aware machines, aerospace complex**
- **Benefit: +1 mineral output at every base**
- **Negative Effects: Mineral bonus is halved for any base without an aerospace complex**

## NETWORK NODE

To study any alien artifacts you find while scouting, you'll need a network node. Unfortunately, one network node only studies one artifact. If you find several artifacts, you'll need additional bases with their own network nodes. If your colony contains several network nodes, consider researching the Network Backbone secret project, which provides bonuses for every network node in the game.

**NOTE**

The secret project the Virtual World causes each network node to also count as a hologram theatre. Also, the secret project the Universal Translator allows the study of multiple alien artifacts at the same base.

- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 1**
- **Prerequisite: Information networks**
- **Benefit: Base can study an alien artifact; +50 percent labs at base**

## ORBITAL DEFENSE POD

An orbital defense pod can be a lifesaver against an enemy planet buster attack, though protection isn't guaranteed. Although the facility is inexpensive, don't worry about the defense pod until later in the game, when use of a planet buster might come into play.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Self-aware machines**
- **Benefit: 50 percent chance of defense against planet buster attack; defense pods can only be deployed once per turn**

## ORBITAL POWER TRANSMITTER

Providing the energy equivalent bonus to a nexus mining station and sky hydroponics lab, the orbital power transmitter also requires aero-



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space complexes to be effective. Once you've constructed aerospace complexes, particularly in an effort to boost air-force production, consider the orbital power transmitter and nessus mining station, which can further assist in construction of the powerful needlejets.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Advanced spaceflight, aerospace complex**
- **Benefit: +1 energy at every base**
- **Negative Effects: Energy bonus is halved for bases without an aerospace complex**

## PARADISE GARDEN

In boosting your workforce, the paradise garden can speed growth and production while reducing the chances of drone rioting. Though the maintenance cost is pricey, the additional talents should allow you to assign more workers for extra mineral and energy resources to spur growth.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 4**
- **Prerequisite: Sentient econometrics**
- **Benefit: +2 talents at this base**

## PERIMETER DEFENSE

Don't bother with this facility if you play as the Hive; its bases come equipped with a perimeter defense. Extremely inexpensive and at no cost to maintain, the perimeter defense assists in keeping your base safe



from infiltrators and attack (including random mind worm assaults). Use it together with the tachyon field for an even stronger defense.

## NOTE

The secret project the Citizens' Defense Force counts as a perimeter defense for each base.

- **Cost: 50**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine Loyalty**
- **Benefit: +1 defense bonus at base (doubles initial base defense strength)**

## PRESSURE DOME

Building a pressure dome inside seaside bases can be quite useful. Not only do you receive a recycling tank, but the base will be protected against terraform attack by gaining the ability to survive underwater. Don't worry about using the pressure dome at inland bases and don't build recycling tanks if you plan on using the pressure dome.

- **Cost: 80**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine Flexibility**
- **Benefit: Lets the base survive underwater; gives base recycling tanks**

## PSI GATE

Getting your military units from your most productive base to the front line can often be a frustrating task. Psi gates solve the problem;



construct one psi gate at your productive base and one at the base on the front line. Psi gates are cheap (though very high up the technology tree), and the teleportation ability quickly provides defensive support to any base.

- **Cost: 100**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Matter transmission**
- **Benefit: Units can teleport between bases that contain psi gates**

## PUNISHMENT SPHERE

Though the punishment sphere can be a solution to drone rioting, but the negative effects are severe, eliminating talents and killing research. The punishment sphere should only be used in emergencies, particularly if nerve stapling isn't an option to control potential drone riots.

- **Cost: 100**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Advanced military algorithms**
- **Benefits: Eliminates drones at base; decreases vulnerability to enemy mind control**
- **Negative Effects: Eliminates talents at base; -50 percent labs output at base**

## QUANTUM CONVERTER

Cumulative with other mineral-boosting facilities (nanoreplicator, genejack factory, and robotic assembly plant), the quantum converter provides additional mineral bonuses and can send production skyrocketing.

**NOTE**

The secret project the Singularity Inductor acts as a quantum converter for every base.

- **Cost: 200**
- **Maintenance: 5**
- **Prerequisite: Quantum machinery**
- **Benefit: +50 mineral output at base**

## QUANTUM LAB

Construct a fusion lab before using the quantum lab. Both provide the same bonuses, but the fusion lab costs much less. Once you have the fusion lab up and running, adding a quantum lab will provide a further bonus to economy and research.

**NOTE**

The quantum lab is cumulative with the fusion lab base facility.

- **Cost: 240**
- **Maintenance: 4**
- **Prerequisite: Quantum power**
- **Benefit: +50 percent economy at base; +50 percent labs at base**

## RECREATION COMMONS

With an introductory level prerequisite, the recreation commons becomes available early on. Constructing this facility should prevent



future drone rioting. Once the recreation commons are up and running, use the base to concentrate on economy and labs; the reduction of drones should eschew the need for increased psych.

- **Cost: 40**
- **Maintenance: 1**
- **Prerequisite: Social psych**
- **Benefit: -2 drones at base**

## RECYCLING TANKS

Because of the overall boost to vital resources, nearly every productive base should contain recycling tanks. Extremely cheap and no cost to maintain, the recycling tanks improve the base square's output of each resource. If you plan on constructing a pressure dome, don't bother with the recycling tanks—the pressure dome includes the recycling tanks free of charge.

- **Cost: 40**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Biogenetics**
- **Benefit: Increases nutrient, energy, and minerals output of base square**

## RESEARCH HOSPITAL

A cheaper version of the nanohospital, construct the research hospital to boost research and help against drone rioting. Because the nanohospital can further boost the effects of this facility, build the research hospital first.





- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 3**
- **Prerequisite: Gene splicing**
- **Benefit: +25 percent psych at base; +50 percent labs at base; -1 drone at base; reduces population loss caused by genetic warfare or disease outbreaks**

## ROBOTIC ASSEMBLY PLANT

Another base facility that boosts mineral output, the robotic assembly plant's effect is cumulative with other facilities of this type (nanoreplicator, genejack factory, and quantum converter). Be sure to use these in conjunction with one another at the same base to reap the rewards of cumulative effect.

- **Cost: 200**
- **Maintenance: 4**
- **Prerequisite: Industrial nanorobotics**
- **Benefit: +50 minerals at base**

## SKUNKWORKS

An extremely cost-effective facility, the skunkworks eliminates prototype costs at the base in which it's built. Because this facility, like others, is base-specific, construct the skunkworks inside the base where you plan to do the most experimental unit construction.

- **Cost: 60**
- **Maintenance: 1**
- **Prerequisite: Advanced subatomic theory**
- **Benefit: Eliminates new unit prototype costs at this base**



## SKY HYDROPONICS LAB

The sky hydroponics lab provides the nutrient equivalent bonus to the nesus mining station and the orbital power transmitter. Like the equivalent facilities, the sky hydroponics lab requires an aerospace complex to be effective.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: Orbital spaceflight, aerospace complex**
- **Benefit: +1 nutrient at every base; nutrient bonus is halved for any base without an aerospace complex**

## STOCKPILE ENERGY

Although not a facility (it has no start-up or maintenance costs, nor does it require a prerequisite), stockpiling energy can be an effective way of increasing energy reserves when you don't need immediate unit help. In times of growth, switch stockpile energy on to give you cash reserves for expenses such as upgrading units and hurrying facility, project, or unit production.

### NOTE

Every two minerals produced will be converted into one energy reserve.

- **Cost: 0**
- **Maintenance: 0**
- **Prerequisite: None**
- **Benefit: All minerals produced at this base are immediately converted to energy reserves**



## TACHYON FIELD

The tachyon field can be a useful facility if you don't plan to leave units on guard inside your bases. Alongside a perimeter defense, the tachyon field can essentially triple base defenses without the need of unit support.

### NOTE

The tachyon field is cumulative with the perimeter defense facility.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 2**
- **Prerequisite: Probability mechanics**
- **Benefit: +1 defense to base**

## TEMPLE OF PLANET

The Temple of Planet should be constructed after you have already implemented a Centauri preserve. The effects are identical, but the Centauri preserve is much cheaper. After you have the preserve in place, adding the Temple of Planet can further boost lifeform lifecycles and reduce the effect of industry on the planet's ecosystem.

### NOTE

The Temple of Planet is cumulative with the Centauri preserve facility.



# 200

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- **Cost: 200**
- **Maintenance: 3**
- **Prerequisite: Secrets of Alpha Centauri**
- **Benefit: Reduces industry's effect on Planet's ecology; any lifeform bred here receives a +1 lifecycle bonus**

### TREE FARM

In a base surrounded by forest squares (either through natural causes or from terraforming), a tree farm can significantly boost nutrient resources that can quickly spur growth and lead to better production and research. Combining the tree farm with the hybrid forest adds additional bonuses and completely eliminates the ecological damage caused by terraforming.

### NOTE

The tree farm is cumulative with the hybrid forest facility.

- **Cost: 120**
- **Maintenance: 3**
- **Prerequisite: Environmental economics**
- **Benefit: +50 percent psych at base; +50 percent economy at base; increases nutrient output in forest squares; eliminates at least half the ecological damage caused by terraforming**

### BASE FACILITY TREE

Use this chart to quickly determine a facility's build cost, maintenance (per turn) cost, and prerequisites. The base facilities are sorted by pre-



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requisite level, which will provide a rough indication of how far you must research up the technology tree to acquire the ability to construct the facility.

| Facility              | Build Cost | Maintenance | Level | Prerequisite                    |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| Headquarters          | 0          | 0           | 0     | None                            |
| Stockpile energy      | 0          | 0           | 0     | None                            |
| Recycling tanks       | 40         | 0           | 1     | Biogenetics                     |
| Command center        | 40         | 0           | 1     | Doctrine Mobility               |
| Recreation commons    | 40         | 1           | 1     | Social psych                    |
| Network node          | 80         | 1           | 1     | Information networks            |
| Perimeter defense     | 50         | 0           | 2     | Doctrine Loyalty                |
| Children's creche     | 50         | 1           | 2     | Ethical calculus                |
| Hologram theatre      | 60         | 3           | 2     | Planetary networks              |
| Pressure dome         | 80         | 0           | 2     | Doctrine Flexibility            |
| Energy Bank           | 80         | 1           | 2     | Industrial economics            |
| Biology lab           | 60         | 1           | 3     | Centauri empathy                |
| Skunkworks            | 60         | 1           | 3     | Advanced subatomic<br>theory    |
| Hab complex           | 80         | 2           | 3     | Industrial automation           |
| Research hospital     | 120        | 3           | 3     | Gene splicing                   |
| Naval yard            | 80         | 2           | 4     | Doctrine Initiative             |
| Bioenhancement center | 100        | 2           | 4     | Neural grafting                 |
| Punishment sphere     | 100        | 2           | 4     | Advanced military<br>algorithms |
| Aerospace complex     | 80         | 2           | 5     | Doctrine Air Power              |
| Centauri preserve     | 100        | 2           | 5     | Centauri meditation             |
| Tree farm             | 120        | 3           | 5     | Environmental<br>economics      |
| Genejack factory      | 100        | 2           | 6     | Retroviral engineering          |
| Sky hydroponics lab   | 120        | 0           | 6     | Orbital spaceflight             |
| Fusion lab            | 120        | 3           | 6     | Fusion power                    |

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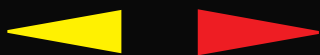


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| Facility                  | Build Cost | Maintenance | Level | Prerequisite              |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|-------|---------------------------|
| Hybrid forest             | 240        | 4           | 6     | Planetary economics       |
| Tachyon field             | 120        | 2           | 7     | Probability mechanics     |
| Orbital power transmitter | 120        | 0           | 8     | Advanced spaceflight      |
| Nanohospital              | 240        | 4           | 8     | Homo superior             |
| Robotic assembly plant    | 200        | 4           | 9     | Industrial nanorobotics   |
| Habitation dome           | 160        | 4           | 10    | Super tensile solids      |
| Nessus mining station     | 120        | 0           | 11    | Self-aware machines       |
| Orbital defense pod       | 120        | 0           | 11    | Self-aware machines       |
| Paradise garden           | 120        | 4           | 11    | Sentient econometrics     |
| Quantum lab               | 240        | 4           | 11    | Quantum power             |
| Temple of Planet Centauri | 200        | 3           | 12    | Secrets of Alpha Centauri |
| Quantum converter         | 200        | 5           | 12    | Quantum machinery         |
| Nanoreplicator            | 320        | 6           | 12    | Matter editation          |
| Psi gate                  | 100        | 2           | 13    | Matter transmission       |

# CHAPTER TWELVE

UNIT  
STATISTICS







Unit construction works side-by-side with diplomacy and economy as the most important aspects of Alpha Centauri. Knowing what prerequisites to research, what units to create, and when to build them are important qualities of an experienced Alpha Centauri player. Should you spend energy reserves to upgrade all units with the chaos gun or save the resources until you've researched plasma shard?

In this chapter, you'll find the statistics that compose the basic Alpha Centauri units and all the building blocks. Study the charts well—particularly the prerequisites for each—and map a research path to acquire the most for your time, effort, and resources.

## BASIC UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Some units in Alpha Centauri can't be modified through the unit design feature. Several of these units are discovered on the planet, either inside supply pods or on the surface. Others are simply of alien origin; the player creates or breeds the lifeform. Nearly all these low-level units, apart from the alien lifeforms, contain weak weapons and even weaker armor. Be sure to protect these units, such as the alien artifact or the colony pod, from enemy attack. The unity units cannot be built, but must be found.

| Basic Unit     | Chassis  | Weapon            | Armor Rating | Cost | Prerequisite                   |
|----------------|----------|-------------------|--------------|------|--------------------------------|
| Alien artifact | Infantry | N/A               | Scout        | 100  | Not available for construction |
| Colony pod     | Infantry | Colony module     | Scout        | 30   | None                           |
| Formers        | Infantry | Terraforming unit | Scout        | 20   | Centauri ecology               |

Continued on page 205



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

| Basic Unit          | Chassis  | Weapon           | Armor Rating | Cost | Prerequisite                   |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|--------------|------|--------------------------------|
| Isle of the Deep    | Foil     | Psi              | Psi          | 80   | Centaury meditation            |
| Locusts of Chiron   | Gravship | Psi              | Psi          | 100  | Centaury genetics              |
| Mind worms          | Infantry | Psi              | Psi          | 50   | Centaury empathy               |
| Probe team          | Infantry | Probe team       | Scout        | 30   | Planetary networks             |
| Scout patrol        | Infantry | Hand weapons     | Scout        | 10   | None                           |
| Supply crawler      | Infantry | Supply transport | Scout        | 30   | Industrial automation          |
| Transport foil      | Foil     | Troop transport  | Scout        | 30   | Doctrine Flexibility           |
| Unity foil          | Foil     | Troop transport  | Scout        | 30   | Not available for construction |
| Unity rover         | Speeder  | Hand weapons     | Scout        | 20   | Not available for construction |
| Unity scout chopper | 'Copter  | Hand weapons     | Scout        | 30   | Not available for construction |

## UNIT BUILDING BLOCKS

Most Alpha Centauri units (apart from a few basic units) are formed by five building blocks: chassis, reactor, weaponry, armor, and special ability. Through experimentation and wise research, you can create literally hundreds of unit combinations. Use the following charts to formulate a battle plan; instead of randomly selecting items to research, use the weapons, armor, and special abilities listed to create unique and powerful units.

**TIP**

HEAD OVER TO CHAPTER 8 TO RECEIVE AN EXCELLENT COURSE ON THE INS AND OUTS OF UNIT CONSTRUCTION, INCLUDING SEVERAL USEFUL CUSTOM UNIT EXAMPLES.



# CHASSIS

| Chassis   | Type-Moves- | Speed      | Modality    | Dimensions      | Modifiers                  | Prerequisite             |
|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cost      |             |            |             |                 |                            |                          |
| Infantry  | Land-1-1    | 8km/hr     | Manual      | N/A             | +25 percent                | None                     |
|           |             |            |             |                 | vs. base                   |                          |
| Speeder   | Land-2-2    | 102km/hr   | Wheeled     | 7.7x3.6x2.9m    | +25 percent                | Doctrine                 |
|           |             |            |             |                 | in open;                   | Mobility                 |
|           |             |            |             |                 | -25 percent in             |                          |
|           |             |            |             |                 | rolling or rocky           |                          |
| Hovortank | Land-3-3    | 227km/hr   | Aircushion- | 6.9x3x3m        | +25 percent                | Nanominiaturization      |
|           |             |            |             |                 | unaffected by fungus       | in open; -25 percent     |
|           |             |            |             |                 | in rolling or rocky        |                          |
| Foil      | Sea-4-4     | 62km/hr    | Airfoil     | 162x24.25x17.5m | Cargo: 2 times reactor     | Doctrine Flexibility     |
| Cruiser   | Sea-6-6     | 115km/hr   | Naval keel  | 200x50.5x20m    | Cargo: 4 times reactor     | Doctrine Initiative      |
| Needlejet | Air-8-8     | 766km/hr   | Fixed-wing  | 18.6x12.5x4.4m  | Fuel: 2 turns (crash       | Doctrine Air Power       |
|           |             |            |             |                 | aircraft                   | landing eliminates unit) |
| 'Copter   | Air-8-8     | 523km/hr   | Rotary      | 15.5x6x4m       | Fuel: 1 turn (30 percent   | Mind-machine             |
|           |             |            |             |                 | damage upon crash landing) | interface                |
| Gravship  | Air-8-8     | 102.1km/hr | Graviton    | 22x8x6m         | Fuel: unlimited            | Graviton theory          |
|           |             |            |             |                 | booster                    |                          |
| Missile   | Air-12-12   | 232.2km/hr | Assisted    | 15.5x5x5m       | Fuel: 1 turn               | Orbital spaceflight      |
|           |             |            |             |                 | airflow                    |                          |



# REACTORS

Supplying your unit with power, a reactor determines how much damage a unit can absorb in combat before it's eliminated. For each level of power, the reactor can absorb ten points of damage. For example, a unit using the fusion reactor can withstand 20 points of damage.

Until you reach the relatively high prerequisites for the other reactors, most of your initial units will feature the fission plant. The higher reactors, because of clean waste disposal, reduce the cost to support your units and the cost to create complex units.

| Reactor            | Rating | Power       | Throughput | Efficiency    | Discharge | Fuel Source               | Prerequisite             |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|------------|---------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Fission plant      | 1      | 32,655kw    | 29,377kw   | 89.99 percent | 52 r      | u235                      | None                     |
| Fusion reactor     | 2      | 68,003kw    | 62,821kw   | 92.38 percent | 67 r      | Ionized<br>deuterium      | Fusion power             |
| Quantum chamber    | 3      | 147,893kw   | 141,977kw  | 96.01 percent | 21 r      | Deuterium-<br>tritium mix | Quantum power            |
| Singularity engine | 4      | 4,000,000kw | Variable   | Variable      | N/A       | VZM-5                     | Singularity<br>mechanics |

# PROJECTILE WEAPONS

After your unit has wheels (or legs) and sufficient power, it's time to strap on weaponry. The most important statistic to look at in this chart is firepower. This rating, relative to the other weapons, determines the amount of damage the weapon can inflict on an equally armored unit. Thus, a chaos gun (firepower 8) is twice as powerful as a particle impactor (firepower 4). Once new weapons are researched, it's possible to use energy reserves to upgrade all existing units.



# TIP

HOLD OFF ON UPGRADING YOUR EXISTING UNIT WEAPONRY UNTIL YOU'VE REACHED THE HIGHER WEAPONS. SAVE YOUR ENERGY RESERVES UNTIL YOU'VE REACHED THE HIGHER PREREQUISITES. THEN AGAIN, IF WAR IS IMMINENT, YOU MIGHT NEED TO UPGRADE WEAPONRY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

| Weapon               | Ammo         | Firepower  | Muzzle Velocity | Rate of Fire  | Max Range         | Target             | Prerequisite           |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Acquisition          |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Hand Weapon          | 7.62mm       | 1          | 2100 fps        | max 120/min   | 550 m             | Visual             | None                   |
| U.N. standard        |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Laser                | Diode        | 2          | Fiber-coupled   | 5 nsec        | 193 nm            | .84 gw             | Applied physics        |
| Particle impactor    | 10mm         | 4          | 2500 fps        | 1100/min      | 2700 m            | Optical            | Nonlinear mathematics  |
| caseless             |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| kinetic energy       |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Missile launcher     | Mk. 12(t)    | 6          | Mach 2.2        | 6/min         | 90 km             | IR signature       | Synthetic fossil fuels |
| sabre missile        |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Chaos gun            | 9mm caseless | 8          | 3000 fps        | 10/min        | 11 km             | Field Differential | Superstring theory     |
| field disruptor      |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Conventional         | Only used    | 9X         | Various         | N/A           | 90km              | IR signature       | Orbital spaceflight    |
| payload              | with missile | reactor    |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| chassis              |              | power      |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Plasma shard         | 15mm Mass-   | 13         | max 4000 fps    | 160/min       | 16 km             | Charged            | Advanced spaceflight   |
| energy shell         |              |            |                 |               |                   | particle           |                        |
| Graviton gun         | 2mm three-   | 20         | 9800 fps        | 2000/min      | 1.4 km            | Nanoremove         | Applied gravitonics    |
| stage particle       |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| accelerated          |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Planet buster        | Quasinuclear | 99         | N/A             | N/A           | Radius of         | Targeting system   | Orbital spaceflight    |
| (Cost: 32)           |              |            |                 |               | destruction equal |                    |                        |
| to reactor size      |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| Psi attack           | Patterned    | -1 (Cost:  | Compelled       | Line of sight | Inverse to        | Psi lock           | Centauri psi           |
| energy               |              | 10; 3 to 2 | dissociative    | to distance   |                   |                    |                        |
| advantage on         |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |
| land; 1 to 1 on sea) |              |            |                 |               |                   |                    |                        |



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

## B E A M   W E A P O N S

Beam weapons are generally more powerful than their projectile brethren. Most of the beam weapon prerequisites lie up the scientific section of the technology advance tree. Make your way up through fusion power and into quantum mechanics to gain access to these powerful tools of war.

| Weapon        | Active Medium      | Firepower | Type        | Pulse    | Wavelength | Peak Power | Burn Rate/ | Prerequisite         |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1-inch Steel  |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| Gatling laser | Neodymium-glass    | 5         | Stacked     | 2nsec    | 107nm      | .96gw      | .52 sec    | Superconductor       |
| array         |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| Fusion laser  | Neodymium-YAG      | 10        | Stacked     | 15nsec   | 573nm      | 2.4gw      | .14 sec    | Organic              |
| array         |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| Tachyon bolt  | Molecular hydrogen | 12        | Liquid      | 1usec    | 680nm      | 5gw        | .07 sec    | Unified field theory |
| coolant       |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| Quantum laser | Field distortion   | 16        | Crystal     | N/A      | .005nm     | Variable   | N/A        | Quantum machinery    |
| diffusion     |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| Singularity   | Temporal boundary  | 24        | Singularity | Relative | .001nm     | N/A        | Relative   | Controlled           |
| laser         |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| induction     |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |
| singularity   |                    |           |             |          |            |            |            |                      |

## D E F E N S E S

To protect yourself against enemy attack, you can outfit your units with a variety of armor or defense types. The most relevant statistic to look at here is the tensile strength, particularly the value in parenthesis. This value represents the relative strength of the armor against the others. Using these values, you can see that the probability sheath is about three times as strong as the synthmetal armor. Many of the defenses lie up the same path in the technology advance tree. Head up to photon/wave mechanics to begin acquisition of powerful defenses.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

| Armor              | Type              | Tensile Strength | Density | Thickness | Prerequisite          |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------------|
| (Value)            |                   |                  |         |           |                       |
| Synthmetal armor   | Chobham           | Base (2)         | 2.3kg/l | 250mm     | Industrial base       |
| Plasma steel armor | Mass-energy       | 5x base (3)      | 2.5kg/l | 520mm     | High energy chemistry |
| composite          |                   |                  |         |           |                       |
| Silksteel armor    | Bonded            | 23x base (4)     | 2.5kg/l | 520mm     | Silksteel alloys      |
| Photon wall        | Refractive shield | 46x base (5)     | N/A     | 2m        | Photon/wave mechanics |
| Probability sheath | Phase adjustment  | 97x base (6)     | N/A     | N/A       | Probability mechanics |
| Neutronium armor   | Kinetic diffusion | 198x base (8)    | 4kg/l   | 755mm     | Matter compression    |
| Antimatter plate   | Reactive          | 560x base (10)   | -4kg/l  | Variable  | Matter editation      |
| Psi defense        | Psi energy field  | Psi (psi)        | N/A     | N/A       | Eudaimonia            |
| Stasis generator   | Temporal field    | N/A (12)         | N/A     | N/A       | Temporal mechanics    |
| distortion         |                   |                  |         |           |                       |

## A B I L I T I E S

Special abilities are an important intangible to your arsenal. Because the abilities are so varied, applying one to a set of units could easily turn the tables on a more powerful opponent. For instance, a needlejet equipped with air superiority boasts a +100 percent advantage against other air units. Items such as the cloaking device and drop pods can introduce devastating offensive strategies. Study the prerequisites and maintain an offensive focus and plan.

TIP

DON'T HAPHAZARDLY RESEARCH ABILITIES; INSTEAD, USE LAB RESOURCES TO DISCOVER WHICH ABILITIES YOU WANT TO IMPLEMENT ... AND QUICKLY PUT THEM TO USE!





## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

| Ability            | Description     | Effect                     | Limits—Cost        | Domain    | Prerequisite           |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Super former       | Smartsettler    | Terraform rate             | Terraformer        | All       | Advanced ecological    |
|                    |                 | doubled                    | unit only—1        |           | engineering            |
| Deep radar         | Mk. 45 sensor   | Sees two spaces            | None—0             | All       | Advanced military      |
|                    |                 | array upgrade              |                    |           | algorithms             |
| Cloaking device    | Type IV         | Invisible; ignores         | Not for use in     | Land      | Frictionless surfaces  |
|                    |                 | diffusion shield           | zones of control   |           | probe teams—1          |
| Amphibious pods    | Hoverpod LCs    | Attack from ships          | Combat units       | Land      | Doctrine Initiative    |
|                    |                 |                            | only—1             |           |                        |
| Drop pods          | Aircushion LCs  | Can make airdrops          | None—2             | Land      | Mind-machine           |
|                    |                 | (within eight squares)     |                    |           | interface              |
| Air superiority    | Mk. 66 fire     | Attacks air units          | Combat units       | All       | Doctrine Air Power     |
|                    |                 | control sensor             | (+100 percent vs.  |           |                        |
|                    |                 | air units, –50 percent     | only—1             |           |                        |
|                    |                 | vs. ground or naval units) |                    |           |                        |
| Deep pressure hull | Reinforced      | Operates underwater        | Combat units       | Sea       | Nanometallurgy         |
|                    |                 | silksteel chassis          | only—1             |           |                        |
| Carrier deck       | Bonded alloy    | Mobile airbase             | Not for use in     | Sea       | Nanometallurgy         |
|                    |                 | flight deck                | probe teams—1      |           |                        |
| Comm jammer        | Type IX ECTS    | +50 percent vs. fast       | Combat, nonpsi     | Land      | Advanced subatomic     |
|                    | EMP pulse       | units (speeders and        | units only—Attack  |           | theory                 |
|                    | generator       | hovertanks)                | divided by defense |           |                        |
| Antigrav struts    | Gravitron       | +1 movement rate           | None—1             | Land, air | Graviton theory        |
|                    |                 | repulsor pylons            | (two times reactor |           |                        |
|                    |                 |                            | for air units)     |           |                        |
| Empath song        | Psi lock        | +50 percent attack         | Nonpsi combat      | All       | Centaurs empathy       |
|                    |                 | vs. psi                    | units only—2       |           |                        |
| Fungicide tanks    | Boron defoilant | Clear fungus at            | Terraformer unit   | All       | Synthetic fossil fuels |
|                    |                 | system                     | double speed       |           | only—1                 |
| High morale        | Advanced        | Gains +1 morale            | Combat units       | All       | Intellectual Integrity |
|                    |                 | warfare training           | upgrade            |           | only—1                 |

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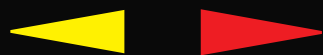


## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

| Ability           | Description        | Effect                | Limits—Cost        | Domain    | Prerequisite           |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Heavy artillery   | Reactor chamber    | Bombards; -50         | Nonpsi units       | Land      | Polymorphic software   |
|                   | upgrade            | percent armor         | only—Defense       |           |                        |
|                   |                    | and move              | plus speed minus 2 |           |                        |
| Clean reactor     | Reactor emission   | Requires no support   | None—2             | All       | Bio-engineering        |
|                   | containment system |                       |                    |           |                        |
| Blink displacer   | Temporal           | Bypass base defenses  | Combat units       | All       | Matter transmission    |
|                   | distortion field   |                       | only—1             |           |                        |
| Hypnotic trance   | Psychic            | +50 percent defense   | Nonpsi combat      | All       | Secrets of the Human   |
|                   | amplification      | vs. psi               | units only—Attack  |           | Brain                  |
|                   | module             |                       | divided by defense |           |                        |
| Nerve gas pods    | Mk. 1 VX           | +50 percent offense   | Nonpsi combat      | Land, air | High-energy chemistry  |
|                   | delivery system    | (atrocities)          | units only—1       |           |                        |
| AAA tracking      | Mk. 190 FUBR       | +100 percent against  | Not for use with   | Land, Sea | Advanced military      |
|                   | fire control       | air and missile       | psi or air units—1 |           | algorithms             |
|                   | system             | attack                |                    |           |                        |
| Nonlethal methods | N/A                | +100 percent police   | None—1             | Land      | Intellectual integrity |
|                   |                    | powers (each unit     |                    |           |                        |
|                   |                    | eliminates two drones |                    |           |                        |
|                   |                    | rather than one)      |                    |           |                        |
| Polymorphic       | Doubles a unit's   | Two times cost to     | None—1             | Land      | Presentient algorithms |
| encryption        | resistance to      | subvert               |                    |           |                        |
|                   | probe team         |                       |                    |           |                        |
|                   | subversion         |                       |                    |           |                        |
| Repair bay        | Modified supply    | Repairs ground        | Transport units    | Air, sea  | Nanometallurgy         |
|                   | transport module   | units on board        | only—1             |           |                        |

# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

TECHNOLOGY  
ADVANCES





**N**othing much happens in a world without technology; the world of Alpha Centauri is no different. Technology advances are the backbone of any Alpha Centauri colony. Without them, a colony can't design new units, base facilities, or research secret projects. By devoting sufficient resources and manpower to labs, a colony can climb the technology tree and acquire the ability to construct new items, from helpful terraforming units and powerful war planes to base facilities and projects that assist various aspects of your colony's development.

This chapter provides a listing of all the technology advances. Under each advance, you'll find several statistics, including the type of advance (each advance is divided into one of four categories: build, conquer, discover, explore), the faction that begins with the advance, the items provided by the advance, and the technologies that lead to and from the advance. Also, you'll find helpful items such as the shortest route to the advance as well as various benefits and game-play suggestions.

## ADVANCED ECOLOGICAL ENGINEERING

An excellent technology, advanced ecological engineering rewards the player with super former abilities and leads to Centauri psi, which provides a psi attack. Gaia's Stepdaughters have a quick route to this technology.

- **Type: Build 7**
- **Abilities: Super former**
- **Comes from: Fusion power, environmental economics**
- **Leads to: Centauri psi**



## ADVANCED MILITARY ALGORITHMS

Being the advance that permits the use of power values, advanced military algorithms should be high on your list—especially if you are planning a military force.

- **Type:** Conquer 4
- **Abilities:** Deep radar, AAA tracking
- **Base facilities:** Punishment sphere
- **Socio-economic model:** Power
- **Comes from:** Doctrine Flexibility, optical computers
- **Leads to:** Presentient algorithms, retroviral engineering

## ADVANCED SPACEFLIGHT

Leading to two beefy technologies (super tensile solids and self-aware machines), advanced spaceflight also provides two excellent improvements, especially for those interested in massing an inexpensive military force.

- **Type:** Discover 8
- **Weapons:** Plasma shard (13)
- **Base facilities:** Orbital power transmitter
- **Secret projects:** The Living Refinery
- **Comes from:** Orbital spaceflight, organic superlubricant
- **Leads to:** Super tensile solids, self-aware machines



## ADVANCED SUBATOMIC THEORY

Against a player who has constructed loads of fast units (rovers, speeders, or hovertanks), the comm jammer could turn the tide of war in your favor, providing a +50 percent defense bonus.

- **Type:** Discover 3
- **Abilities:** Comm jammer
- **Base facilities:** Skunkworks
- **Comes from:** High-energy chemistry, polymorphic software
- **Leads to:** Applied relativity, silksteel alloys

## APPLIED GRAVITONICS

Awarding the researcher with a powerful weapon, applied gravitonics rests high on the technology tree, only two steps away from transcendent thought.

- **Type:** Explore 14
- **Weapons:** Graviton gun (20)
- **Comes from:** Graviton theory, digital sentience
- **Leads to:** Controlled singularity

## APPLIED PHYSICS

The bottom of the technology tree, applied physics can instantly boost your military force with the acquisition of the laser weapon.

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## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: NEEDLEJETS

Most players, particularly in multiplayer, aim their sights to air power, or needlejets, as soon as possible. Below are some paths to the discovery of Doctrine Air Power, the prerequisite for needlejets.

### FAST PATH TO NEEDLEJETS

1. Doctrine Mobility
2. Doctrine Flexibility
3. Doctrine Air Power

Because the Spartan Federation begins with Doctrine Mobility, its path to air power is usually quick, depending on the amount of research stressed by the colony. The Believers' default advance begins the longest path; coupled with poor research ability, air power could be far out of their grasp.

### LONGEST PATH NEEDLEJETS

1. Social psych
2. Ethical calculus
3. Gene splicing
4. Synthetic fossil fuels
5. Doctrine Air Power





- **Type: Conquer 1**
- **Weapons: Laser (2)**
- **Leads to: Nonlinear mathematics, high-energy chemistry, optical computers**

## APPLIED RELATIVITY

Head to unified field theory next to acquire the tachyon bolt weapon as well as the ability to construct The Theory of Everything, which doubles lab scores. Combine that with the Supercollider secret project, offered here, for explosive research and development.

- **Type: Discover 5**
- **Secret projects: The Supercollider**
- **Comes from: Superconductor, advanced subatomic theory**
- **Leads to: Unified field theory, photon wave mechanics**

## BIO-ENGINEERING

Using the clean reactor will decrease unit costs and the Longevity Vaccine secret project combats drone rioting depending on the economy.

- **Type: Build 5**
- **Abilities: Clean reactor**
- **Secret projects: The Longevity Vaccine**
- **Comes from: Gene splicing, neural grafting**
- **Leads to: Retroviral engineering**



## BIOGENETICS

The Peacekeepers' default technology leads quickly to the Secrets of the Human Brain (the first to discover this receives a free technology). Move on to gene splicing as well to acquire the research hospital to help boost development.

- **Type: Discover 1**
- **Faction: Peacekeepers**
- **Base facilities: Recycling tanks**
- **Secret projects: The Human Genome Project**
- **Leads to: Secrets of the Human Brain, gene splicing**

## BIOMACHINERY

If you've got plenty of base room and nutrient resources, consider climbing to this technology and acquiring the Cloning Vats secret project. The population boom that results could hasten your trip further up the tech tree.

- **Type: Build 7**
- **Secret projects: The Cloning Vats**
- **Comes from: Mind-machine interface, retroviral engineering**
- **Leads to: Homo superior**

## CENTAURI ECOLOGY

The Gaians' default technology lets them create formers immediately. Research the weather paradigm to speed terraforming by 50 percent.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- **Type:** Explore 1
- **Faction:** Gaia's Stepdaughters
- **Weapons:** Terraforming unit (equipment)
- **Unit types:** formers
- **Base facilities:** The weather paradigm
- **Leads to:** Centauri empathy, ecological engineering

## CENTAURI EMPATHY

A significant advance, particularly for the Gaians, Centauri empathy provides the ability to breed mind worms and build the biology lab. Further, the Gaians' preferred social model, green, becomes available.

- **Type:** Explore 3
- **Abilities:** Empath song
- **Unit types:** Mind worms
- **Base facilities:** Biology lab
- **Secret projects:** The Empath Guild
- **Socio-economic model:** Green
- **Comes from:** Secrets of the Human Brain, Centauri ecology
- **Leads to:** Centauri meditation

## CENTAURI GENETICS

A Gaian player interested in staying with Deirdre's philosophy should continue through the Centauri advances. Here, construct the Pholus Mutagen secret project to further reduce the effect of industry on the planet's ecosystem.



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

- **Type:** Explore 7
- **Unit types:** Locusts of Chiron
- **Secret projects:** The Pholus Mutagen
- **Comes from:** Centauri meditation, retroviral engineering
- **Leads to:** Centauri psi

## CENTAURI MEDITATION

Offering the sea-based alien lifeform (Isle of the Deep), Centauri meditation can assist in breeding a powerful lifeform force. The Gaians gain the most from this advance, as they are usually the quickest to acquire it.

- **Type:** Explore 5
- **Unit types:** Isle of the Deep
- **Base facilities:** Centauri preserve
- **Secret projects:** The Xenoempathy Dome
- **Citizens:** Empath
- **Comes from:** Ecological engineering, Centauri empathy
- **Leads to:** Centauri genetics

## CENTAURI PSI

Adding a psi attack to your unit design can provide a significant military advantage. Continue on through Secrets of Alpha Centauri for the short road to psi gates, the teleportation device.

- **Type:** Explore 8
- **Weapons:** Psi attack (psi)
- **Comes from:** Centauri genetics, advanced ecological engineering
- **Leads to:** The Will to Power, Secrets of Alpha Centauri



## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: CLOAKING DEVICE

One of the more unique military offenses is disguising the power (and abilities) of your units through the cloaking device. Research this intriguing ability by following this path:

1. Information networks
2. Planetary networks
3. Industrial automation
4. Industrial nanorobotics
5. Frictionless surfaces

## CONTROLLED SINGULARITY

Only one step away from transcendent thought, this advance also provides a powerful weapon and a profitable secret project (+50 percent minerals at every base).

- **Type:** Conquer 15
- **Weapons:** Singularity laser (24)
- **Secret projects:** The Singularity Inductor
- **Comes from:** Singularity mathematics, applied gravitonics
- **Leads to:** Transcendent thought

## CYBERETHICS

Extremely worthwhile for the researcher, cyberethics provides the knowledge value system as well as the potentially technically rich and



## GAMESPOT UNOFFICIAL GAME GUIDE TO ALPHA CENTAURI

rewarding Planetary Datalinks special project. Both Hive and University players have quick paths to this technology.

- **Type: Build 4**
- **Secret projects: The Planetary Datalinks**
- **Socio-economic model: Knowledge**
- **Comes from: Planetary networks, intellectual integrity**
- **Leads to: Superstring theory, presentient algorithms**

## DIGITAL SENTIENCE

Introducing an endgame social model (cybernetic) and a research-boosting secret project, digital sentience should be a natural progression for the research-minded player.

- **Type: Discover 10**
- **Secret projects: The Network Backbone**
- **Socio-economic model: Cybernetic**
- **Comes from: Industrial nanorobotics, mind-machine interface**
- **Leads to: Applied gravitonics, self-aware machine, sentient econometrics**

## DOCTRINE AIR POWER

Most players will aim their research toward this advance for the ability to produce fighter planes. Though the Spartan Federation has the shortest route to air power, the road through synthetic fossil fuels could have more rewards.

- **Type: Explore 5**
- **Chassis type: Needlejet (8)**



- **Abilities:** Air superiority
- **Base facilities:** Aerospace complex
- **Comes from:** Synthetic fossil fuels, Doctrine Flexibility
- **Leads to:** Mind-machine interface, orbital spaceflight

## DOCTRINE FLEXIBILITY

Providing all the necessary building blocks for sea expansion, Doctrine Flexibility comes from only one low-level advance, the ability to mobilize.

- **Type:** Explore 2
- **Chassis types:** Foil (4)
- **Weapons:** Troop transport (equipment)
- **Unit types:** Transport foil, sea formers
- **Base facilities:** Pressure dome
- **Comes from:** Doctrine Mobility
- **Leads to:** Advanced military algorithms, Doctrine Initiative, Doctrine Air Power

## DOCTRINE INITIATIVE

A counterpart to Doctrine Flexibility, this advance provides battleships (with the cruiser chassis) and facilities and projects that allow production of +2 morale sea units.

- **Type:** Explore 4
- **Chassis types:** Cruiser (6)
- **Abilities:** Amphibious pods
- **Base facilities:** Naval yard





- **Secret projects:** The Maritime Control Center
- **Comes from:** Doctrine Flexibility, industrial automation
- **Leads to:** Nanometallurgy, homo superior

## DOCTRINE LOYALTY

The default advance of the Hive, Doctrine Loyalty means the Hive can instantly switch to its desired police state as well as gain the benefits of the Command Nexus, which puts a command center in every base.

- **Type:** Conquer 2
- **Faction:** The Human Hive
- **Base facilities:** Perimeter defense
- **Secret projects:** The Command Nexus
- **Socio-economic model:** Police state
- **Comes from:** Doctrine Mobility, social psych
- **Leads to:** Intellectual integrity

## DOCTRINE MOBILITY

Providing the ability to produce fast land-based units, Doctrine Mobility is also the default advance of the Spartan Federation. Head through flexibility to reach air power.

- **Type:** Explore 1
- **Faction:** Spartan Federation
- **Chassis types:** Speeder (2)
- **Base facilities:** Command center
- **Leads to:** Doctrine Flexibility, Doctrine Loyalty



## ECOLOGICAL ENGINEERING

An important junction for the resource gatherer, head to environmental economics to gain the benefit of the tree farm, particularly if you are forest-rich.

- **Type: Explore 4**
- **Comes from: Centauri ecology, gene splicing**
- **Leads to: Centauri meditation, environmental economics**

### ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: SUPER FORMER

Gaining the ability to speed terraforming rate can significantly increase growth and production. Though the ability can be garnered from the weather paradigm, others may have to resort to constructing units. Here's a simple path to obtaining super formers:

1. **Centauri ecology**
2. **Ecological engineering**
3. **Environmental economics**
4. **Advanced ecological engineering**

## ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS

Moving on to planetary economics and combining the tree farm with the hybrid forest can have significant resource effects if you terraform an ample amount of forest squares.



- **Type: Build 5**
- **Base facilities: Tree farm**
- **Comes from: Industrial economics, ecological engineering**
- **Leads to: Planetary economics, advanced ecological engineering**

## ETHICAL CALCULUS

An important early advance, ethical calculus provides the children's creche, a facility vital to the growth and efficiency of early base development.

- **Type: Explore 2**
- **Base facilities: Children's creche**
- **Socio-economic model: Democratic**
- **Comes from: Social psych**
- **Leads to: Intellectual integrity, gene splicing**

## EUDAIMONIA

With a late-game social model and a drone-crushing secret project, eudaimonia rests only two steps away from the final advance.

- **Type: Explore 12**
- **Defenses: Psi defense (psi)**
- **Secret projects: The Telepathic Matrix**
- **Socio-economic model: Eudaimonic**
- **Comes from: Sentient econometrics, the Will to Power**
- **Leads to: Temporal mechanics**



## FRictionless Surfaces

The ability to produce cloaked units could provide a military edge against neighbors. Move to quantum power and gain the benefits of the quantum lab, an improvement to both economy and research.

- **Type:** Discover 10
- **Abilities:** Cloaking device
- **Comes from:** Unified field theory, industrial nanorobotics
- **Leads to:** Quantum power

## FUSION POWER

Providing a new reactor and a useful facility, fusion power also adds an efficient base citizen, the engineer.

- **Type:** Discover 6
- **Reactors:** Fusion power
- **Base facilities:** Fusion lab
- **Citizens:** engineer
- **Comes from:** Presentient algorithms, superconductor
- **Leads to:** Advanced ecological engineering, organic superlubricant

## GENE SPLICING

Being low on the tree but with several important branches, most players should steer their path through gene splicing. Build research hospitals to improve research and to keep workers efficient and happy.



- **Type:** Build 3
- **Base facilities:** Research hospital
- **Comes from:** Biogenetics, ethical calculus
- **Leads to:** Synthetic fossil fuels, bio-engineering, ecological engineering

## GRAVITON THEORY

Providing the building blocks of graviton units, this advance also lies only one step away from applied gravitonics, which provides one of the more powerful unit-based weapons in the game.

- **Type:** Explore 13
- **Chassis types:** Gravship (8)
- **Abilities:** Antigrav struts
- **Comes from:** Quantum machinery, mind-machine interface
- **Leads to:** Applied gravitonics

## HIGH ENERGY CHEMISTRY

Morgan Industries begins only one step away from this advance. Build better defensive units with plasma steel armor and consider the future use of nerve gas pods only if you can withstand economic sanctions.

- **Type:** Conquer 2
- **Defenses:** Plasma steel armor (3)
- **Abilities:** Nerve gas pods
- **Comes from:** Industrial base, applied physics
- **Leads to:** Advanced subatomic theory, synthetic fossil fuels



## HOMO SUPERIOR

The nanohospital can be used in conjunction with a research hospital to provide a serious boom to research and development. Acquire the Universal Translator secret project if you possess several alien artifacts and don't have any network nodes.

- **Type: Explore 8**
- **Base facilities: Nanohospital**
- **Secret projects: The Universal Translator**
- **Comes from: Biomachinery, Doctrine Loyalty**
- **Leads to: The Will to Power**

## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: SUPPLY CRAWLER

Using supply crawlers can improve commerce rate, in turn improving income and energy reserves. Certainly helpful to the economic-minded Morganites, the supply crawler assists any faction with money concerns. Check out this fast path to building supply crawlers:

1. **Information networks**
2. **Planetary networks**
3. **Industrial automation**

Because the Morgan player might find supply crawlers the most useful, below is the path from his starting technology to the commerce-boosting unit.

1. **Industrial base**
2. **Industrial economics**
3. **Planetary networks**
4. **Industrial automation**



## INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION

A packed advance, industrial automation can be a powerful tool for the Morgan player, awarding supply crawlers (which will elevate commerce) and much-needed hab complexes. The addition of the wealth value system makes this a must-have for Morgan Industries.

- **Type:** Build 3
- **Weapons:** Supply transport (equipment)
- **Unit types:** Supply crawler
- **Base facilities:** Hab complex
- **Secret projects:** The Planetary Transit System
- **Socio-economic model:** Wealth
- **Comes from:** Industrial economics, planetary networks
- **Leads to:** Silksteel alloys, Doctrine Initiative, neural grafting, industrial nanorobotics

## INDUSTRIAL BASE

The default advance for Morgan players lets them produce synth-metal sentinels, a sturdy defensive unit, immediately. Move on to industrial economics to acquire the Morganites' preferred free market social model.

- **Type:** Build 1
- **Faction:** Morgan Industries
- **Defenses:** Synthmetal armor (2)
- **Secret projects:** The Merchant Exchange
- **Leads to:** Superconductor, high-energy chemistry, polymorphic software, industrial economics





## INDUSTRIAL ECONOMICS

With the energy bank and free market economics, grab this advance only if your faction can support the social model or use its benefits.

- **Type: Build 2**
- **Base facilities: Energy bank**
- **Socio-economic model: Free market**
- **Comes from: Industrial base**
- **Leads to: Industrial automation, environmental economics**

## INDUSTRIAL NANOROBOTICS

This technology advance can assist in building and repairing a wide military force. The robotic assembly plant includes mineral bonuses while the Nano Factory secret project allows for unit repair even outside base squares.

- **Type: Build 9**
- **Base facilities: Robotic assembly plant**
- **Secret projects: The Nano Factory**
- **Comes from: Nanominiaturization, industrial automation**
- **Leads to: Frictionless surfaces, digital sentience**

## INFORMATION NETWORKS

As the default technology of the University, information networks provide the network node, which can help facilitate research as well as study alien artifacts. Move on to planetary networks to gain the Virtual World secret project, which will apply additional bonuses to your network nodes.



- **Type:** Discover 1
- **Faction:** University of Planet
- **Base facilities:** Network node
- **Leads to:** Nonlinear mathematics, polymorphic software, planetary networks

## INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY

Reaching this advance can provide significant defensive bonuses, particularly if you have or plan to have a large number of bases. Discover the Citizens' Defense Force secret project to secure a free perimeter defense in each base.

- **Type:** Explore 3
- **Abilities:** High morale, nonlethal methods
- **Secret projects:** The Citizens' Defense Force
- **Comes from:** Ethical calculus, Doctrine Loyalty
- **Leads to:** Cyberethics, planetary economics

## MATTER COMPRESSION

Providing heavy-duty armor, matter compression is also one path to super tensile solids, which provides the ability to construct larger bases with the habitation dome.

- **Type:** Conquer 9
- **Defenses:** Neutronium armor (8)
- **Comes from:** Nanometallurgy, nanominiaturization
- **Leads to:** Super tensile solids



## MATTER EDITATION

With a mineral-boosting facility, strong defense rewards, and one step away from the ability to construct psi gates, matter editation should be high on your list of advances.

- **Type:** Build 12
- **Defenses:** Antimatter plate (10)
- **Base facilities:** Nanoreplicator
- **Secret projects:** Clinical Immortality
- **Comes from:** Self-aware machines, super tensile solids
- **Leads to:** Matter transmission

## MATTER TRANSMISSION

The psi gate, with its ability to teleport units across bases, can be vital in mobilizing a huge army. If your colony contains many installations, consider the Bulk Matter Transmitter secret project and its widespread mineral bonus.

- **Type:** Build 13
- **Abilities:** Blink displacer
- **Base facilities:** Psi gate
- **Secret projects:** The Bulk Matter Transmitter
- **Comes from:** Matter editation, Secrets of Alpha Centauri
- **Leads to:** Temporal mechanics

## MIND-MACHINE INTERFACE

Another important advance crossroads and one step up from air power, mind-machine interface produces 'copters, drop pods, and the military morale boosting Cyborg Factory secret project.



- **Type: Conquer 6**
- **Chassis types: 'Copter (8)**
- **Abilities: Drop pods**
- **Secret projects: The Cyborg Factory**
- **Citizens: Thinker**
- **Comes from: Doctrine Air Power, neural grafting**
- **Leads to: Graviton theory, digital sentience, biomachinery**

## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: MISSILES

When molding some military muscle, every player will want to seek out new and powerful weapons. One with a punch, especially early in the game, is a missile. Follow this path to discover missile weapons (and in turn, discover the devastating planet buster):

1. **Doctrine Mobility**
2. **Doctrine Flexibility**
3. **Doctrine Air Power**
4. **Orbital spaceflight**

For the Human Hive player, reaching missiles takes a few more steps, especially when sticking to the Hive's technology line. Here's another path to missile technology, starting with the Hive's default advance:

1. **Doctrine Loyalty**
2. **Intellectual integrity**
3. **Cyberethics**
4. **Presentient algorithms**
5. **Orbital spaceflight**



## MONOPOLE MAGNETS

Move up through nanominiaturization to discover the hovertank chassis. Moving into unified field theory will discover a new weapon, the tachyon bolt.

- **Type:** Build 6
- **Comes from:** Superstring theory, silksteel alloys
- **Leads to:** Unified field theory, nanominiaturization

## NANOMETALLURGY

With some unique abilities, particularly for sea-based and transport units, nanometallurgy becomes a vital advance when beginning a military force.

- **Type:** Explore 8
- **Abilities:** Deep pressure hull, carrier deck, repair bay
- **Comes from:** Probability mechanics, Doctrine Initiative
- **Leads to:** Matter compression, quantum machinery

## NANOMINIATURIZATION

Discovering the hovertank chassis will speed land-based units. Move to industrial nanorobotics for additional new facilities and projects.

- **Type:** Build 8
- **Chassis types:** Hovertank (3)
- **Comes from:** Monopole magnets, organic superlubricant
- **Leads to:** Matter compression, industrial nanorobotics



## NEURAL GRAFTING

With the bioenhancement center, a player can begin producing +2 morale military units immediately. Move through mind-machine interface to reach one of the more powerful advances.

- **Type:** Conquer 4
- **Base facilities:** Bioenhancement center
- **Secret projects:** The Neural Amplifier
- **Comes from:** Secrets of the Human Brain, industrial automation
- **Leads to:** Mind-machine interface, bio-engineering

## NONLINEAR MATHEMATICS

As a low technology, nonlinear mathematics can quickly provide a decent weapon for early skirmishes or base defenses.

- **Type:** Conquer 2
- **Weapons:** Particle impactor (4)
- **Comes from:** Applied physics, information networks
- **Leads to:** Superstring theory

## OPTICAL COMPUTERS

Move to advanced subatomic theory to construct the skunkworks, which provides free prototyping at the base in which it was built. Moving to superconductor can provide a new weapon and lead to fusion power.

- **Type:** Discover 3
- **Comes from:** Applied physics, polymorphic software
- **Leads to:** Superconductor, advanced subatomic theory



## ORBITAL SPACEFLIGHT

Arriving from Doctrine Air Power, the player who researches orbital spaceflight can gain missiles, planet busters, and move on to advanced spaceflight.

- **Type:** Discover 6
- **Chassis types:** Missile (12)
- **Weapons:** Planet buster (99), conventional payload (12)
- **Base facilities:** Sky hydroponics lab
- **Comes from:** Doctrine Air Power, Presentient algorithms
- **Leads to:** Advanced spaceflight

## ORGANIC SUPERLUBRICANT

Because this provides a powerful weapon, moving on to advanced spaceflight (which provides plasma shards) might be excessive. Alternatively, move to nanominiaturization to produce speedy land units with the hovernk chassis.

- **Type:** Conquer 7
- **Weapons:** Fusion laser (10)
- **Comes from:** Fusion power, synthetic fossil fuels
- **Leads to:** Nanominiaturization, advanced spaceflight

## PHOTON / WAVE MECHANICS

Being in a line of strong defense advances, photon/wave mechanics leads to probability mechanics, which provides further defenses, including the tachyon field facility.





- **Type: Conquer 6**
- **Defenses: Photon wall (5)**
- **Comes from: Applied relativity, silksteel alloys**
- **Leads to: Probability mechanics**

## PLANETARY ECONOMICS

A short advance for the Human Hive (though an important advance to the Gaians), planetary economics leads to quantum power or sentient econometrics, an advance that climbs faster up the tech tree.

- **Type: Explore 6**
- **Base facilities: Hybrid forest**
- **Secret projects: The Ascetic Virtues**
- **Comes from: Environmental economics, intellectual integrity**
- **Leads to: Quantum power, sentient econometrics**

## PLANETARY NETWORKS

Another stuffed advance, planetary networks and its probe team rewards could be vital to the Lord Believers' who will need the probes to gather research quickly.

- **Type: Discover 2**
- **Weapons: Probe team (equipment)**
- **Unit Types: Probe team**
- **Base facilities: Hologram theatre**
- **Secret projects: The Virtual World**
- **Socio-economic model: Planned**



- **Citizens:** Librarian
- **Comes from:** Information networks
- **Leads to:** Industrial automation, cyberethics

## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: 'COPTERS

A more potent air unit, the 'copter improves on the positives of aerial combat while diminishing some of the negative aspects of the needlejet. Check below for some tech tree paths to the 'copter. Reaching the 'copter also allows construction of drop pods.

1. **Biogenetics**
2. **Secrets of the Human Brain**
3. **Neural grafting**
4. **Mind-machine interface**

A faction can also reach the mind-machine interface and can construct copters through Doctrine Air Power (see the needlejet sidebar) as well as climbing through industrial automation via the University of Planet or Morganites' default advances.

## POLYMORPHIC SOFTWARE

A short road for both the University and the Morganites, polymorphic software introduces artillery, allowing long range firing.

- **Type:** Discover 2
- **Abilities:** Heavy artillery
- **Comes from:** Industrial base, information networks
- **Leads to:** Advanced subatomic theory, optical computers



## PRESENTIENT ALGORITHMS

An important advance for the University of Planet, Presentient algorithms provides the Hunter-Seeker Algorithm secret project, the project that immunizes your bases from probe infiltration.

- **Type:** Discover 5
- **Abilities:** Polymorphic encryption
- **Secret projects:** The Hunter-Seeker Algorithm
- **Comes from:** Advanced military algorithms, cyberethics
- **Leads to:** Fusion power, probability mechanics, orbital spaceflight

## PROBABILITY MECHANICS

One in a line of important defensive advances, probability mechanics leads to nanometallurgy, which provides several unique abilities to sea and transport units.

- **Type:** Build 7
- **Defenses:** Probability sheath (6)
- **Base facilities:** Tachyon field
- **Comes from:** Photon/wave mechanics, presentient algorithms
- **Leads to:** Nanometallurgy

## QUANTUM MACHINERY

With a powerful weapon and a mineral boosting facility, this high-level advance can begin a productive, and successful, end of game.



- **Type:** Build 12
- **Weapons:** Quantum laser (16)
- **Base facilities:** Quantum converter
- **Comes from:** Quantum power, nanometallurgy
- **Leads to:** Graviton theory

## QUANTUM POWER

Reaching the quantum level can be an important milestone to any faction. With the lab bonus gained from the quantum lab and the reduction in unit costs through the new reactor, quantum power is an important step for any player.

- **Type:** Discover 11
- **Reactors:** Quantum chamber
- **Base facilities:** Quantum lab
- **Comes from:** Frictionless surfaces, planetary economics
- **Leads to:** Quantum machinery

## RETROVIRAL ENGINEERING

Though the genejack factory provides significant bonuses, this low-level facility also comes with negative effects. You might want to continue on and wait until similar facilities, without downsides, are discovered.

- **Type:** Conquer 6
- **Base facilities:** Genejack factory
- **Comes from:** Bio-engineering, advanced military algorithms
- **Leads to:** Biomachinery, Centauri genetics



## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE PATH: NERVE GAS

An atrocity if used, the nerve gas pods pack a serious offensive punch, typically bringing the victim near complete destruction. Be prepared for serious repercussions if used, though; economic sanctions and vendettas are sure to follow.

1. Industrial base (or applied physics)
2. High energy chemistry

## SECRETS OF ALPHA CENTAURI

One step away from psi gates, this advance also provides additional reduction of industry's effect on ecology with the base facility, the Temple of Planet.

- **Type:** Discover 12
- **Base facilities:** Temple of Planet
- **Citizens:** Transcend
- **Comes from:** Centauri psi, sentient econometrics
- **Leads to:** Matter transmission

## SECRETS OF CREATION

Move on to Threshold of Transcendence to arrive at the threshold of end-of-game research. If the military is more your style, move on to singularity mechanics.



- **Type:** Discover 10
- **Comes from:** Unified field theory, the Will to Power
- **Leads to:** Singularity mechanics, Threshold of Transcendence

## SECRETS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN

Though the Lord's Believers and Peacekeepers have the shortest route to this advance, the Peacekeepers will likely arrive first. Head through neural grafting for more military-heavy rewards.

- **Type:** Discover 2
- **Abilities:** Hypnotic trance
- **Bonus:** First faction to discover this advance is awarded with a free technology advance
- **Socio-economic model:** fundamentalist
- **Comes from:** Social psych, biogenetics
- **Leads to:** Neural grafting, Centauri empathy

## SELF-AWARE MACHINES

Loaded with facilities and secret projects, self-aware machines are also an important prerequisite to significant advances.

- **Type:** Discover 11
- **Base Facilities:** Nessus mining station, orbital defense pod
- **Secret projects:** The Self-Aware Colony
- **Comes from:** Advanced spaceflight, digital sentience
- **Leads to:** Singularity mechanics, matter editation



## SENTIENT ECONOMETRICS

A stepping stone to end-of-game social effects and discoveries, sentient econometrics also can provide a hefty talent bonus with the construction of paradise gardens.

- **Type:** Explore 11
- **Base facilities:** Paradise garden
- **Comes from:** Planetary economics, digital sentience
- **Leads to:** Eudaimonia, Secrets of Alpha Centauri

## SILKSTEEL ALLOYS

Another stepping stone in a line of defensive advances, move on to photon/wave mechanics for further defensive study.

- **Type:** Build 4
- **Defenses:** Silksteel armor (4)
- **Comes from:** Advanced subatomic theory, industrial automation
- **Leads to:** Monopole magnets, photon/wave mechanics

## SINGULARITY MECHANICS

A high-level advance, singularity mechanics provide cheaper units with the new reactor. With the discovery of controlled singularity, you can have a cheap, but very powerful, end-of-game military force.

- **Type:** Discover 12
- **Reactors:** Singularity engine
- **Comes from:** Secrets of creation, self-aware machines
- **Leads to:** Controlled singularity





## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE

### PATH: PLASMA SHARDS

One of the most powerful weapons in the game lies just one step from orbital spaceflight. Upgrade your units to this powerful weapon to begin middle-game military conquest. Follow this path to discover the technology:

1. Industrial base
2. High-energy chemistry
3. Synthetic fossil fuels
4. Organic superlubricant
5. Advanced spaceflight

## SOCIAL PSYCH

The default advance for the Believers contains multiple paths, leading to research, military, or building. Because the Believers have trouble with research, choose the path wisely and adjust your strategy accordingly.

- **Type:** Build 1
- **Faction:** The Lord's Believers
- **Base facilities:** Recreation commons
- **Leads to:** Doctrine Loyalty, ethical calculus, Secrets of the Human Brain

## SUPER TENSILE SOLIDS

Required for significant base expansion in the end of the game, super tensile solids provide the hab dome as well as the space elevator, which allows a crafty military gambit, orbital drop pods.



- **Type:** Build 10
- **Base facilities:** Habitation dome
- **Secret projects:** The Space Elevator
- **Comes from:** Matter compression, advanced spaceflight
- **Leads to:** Matter editation

## SUPERCONDUCTOR

A short path for the Morganites, the superconductor can provide a powerful early game weapon and a quick climb to fusion technologies.

- **Type:** Conquer 4
- **Weapons:** Gatling laser (5)
- **Comes from:** Optical computers, industrial base
- **Leads to:** Applied relativity, fusion power

## SUPERSTRING THEORY

Though the path through here is narrow, the rewards of the chaos gun can be plenty, particularly in times of war and military construction.

- **Type:** Conquer 5
- **Weapons:** Chaos gun (8)
- **Comes from:** Nonlinear mathematics, cyberethics
- **Leads to:** Monopole magnets

## SYNTHETIC FOSSIL FUELS

Being one path to Doctrine Air Power, synthetic fossil fuels also reward its discoverers with missile launchers and fungicide tanks.



- **Type:** Explore 4
- **Weapons:** Missile launcher (6)
- **Abilities:** Fungicide tanks
- **Comes from:** High-energy chemistry, gene splicing
- **Leads to:** Doctrine Air Power, organic superlubricant

## ALPHA CENTAURI TECH TREE

### PATH: GRAVSHIPS

With the ability to move over fungus squares unhindered, gravships are an important tool in moving units great distances and organizing offenses. Check this path for a quick route to the gravship:

1. Biogenetics
2. Secrets of the Human Brain
3. Neural grafting
4. Mind-machine interface
5. Graviton theory

A longer path, but one that moves through important quantum discoveries, can also be followed:

1. Information networks
2. Planetary networks
3. Industrial automation
4. Industrial nanorobotics
5. Frictionless surfaces
6. Quantum power
7. Quantum machinery
8. Graviton theory



## TEMPORAL MECHANICS

Temporal mechanics is powerful end-of-game defense leads to the final advance before the Ascent to Transcendence. Use the stasis generator to protect yourself long enough to research the winning secret project.

- **Type: Build 14**
- **Defenses: Stasis generator (12)**
- **Comes from: Eudaimonia, matter transmission**
- **Leads to: Threshold of Transcendence**

## THE WILL TO POWER

A potentially powerful advance for the Gaian player, the Dream Twister secret project can add bonuses to psi attack (which the mind worms use). The Will to Power is also an important step to end-of-game social effects such as thought control and eudaimonic.

- **Type: Explore 9**
- **Secret project: The Dream Twister**
- **Socio-economic model: Thought control**
- **Comes from: Homo superior, Centauri psi**
- **Leads to: Eudaimonia, Secrets of Creation**

## THRESHOLD OF TRANSCENDENCE

Discover this advance, and you're ready to research the most important secret projects in the game.



- **Type: Explore 15**
- **Secret projects: The Voice of the Planet, the Ascent to Transcendence**
- **Comes from: Secrets of Creation, temporal mechanics**
- **Leads to: transcendent thought**

## TRANSCENDENT THOUGHT

The highest technology advance in Alpha Centauri, transcendent thought will arise as you ready your game-winning secret projects as you ascend to transcendence.

- **Type: Discover 16**
- **Comes from: Threshold of Transcendence, controlled singularity**

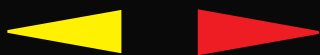
## UNIFIED FIELD THEORY

Providing an important weapon (particularly for a relatively low-level technology), unified field theory becomes an important advance to middle-of-game wars.

- **Type: Conquer 7**
- **Weapons: Tachyon bolt (12)**
- **Secret projects: The Theory of Everything**
- **Comes from: Monopole magnets, applied relativity**
- **Leads to: Frictionless surfaces, secrets of creation**

# CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SECRET  
PROJECTS







**E**xpensive and time-consuming, Alpha Centauri's secret projects often decide the outcome of a game. Choose your developments wisely; end-of-game advantages are determined by critical decisions you've made along the way. The faction that builds the secret project is the only one to gain its benefits (unless its conquered by another faction). With a finite number of opportunities to reap the rewards of a researched project, the savvy player must plan ahead and gain sufficient wealth and bonuses to benefit from the advantage a project can provide.

This chapter will outline each secret project, providing cost, prerequisites, and benefits. Also included are tips to researching the correct projects for your colony and belief system as well as how to put the projects to their best use. Haphazardly researching secret projects wastes time and resources and creates an uphill battle for most of the game.

## THE ASCENT TO TRANSCENDENCE

The first faction to research this secret project essentially wins the game. Don't worry about making Ascent plans early on; the technology required is high up the tech tree. Any faction (that has discovered the prerequisite) can construct this project once the Voice of the Planet has been built.

### W A R N I N G

*If an announcement is made that an opposing faction has begun construction of the Ascent to Transcendence, you must make preparations to either stop them or beat them through construction. Once it's built, the game is over.*





- **Cost: 2,000**
- **Prerequisite: Threshold of Transcendence**
- **Benefits: Completes the Transcendence sequence and ends the Human Era; the Ascent cannot be started until the Voice of the Planet is operational**

## THE ASCETIC VIRTUES

Because of their initial technologies, the Gaians and the Human Hive have the shortest route to the Ascetic Virtues. However, the Hive's already strong police bonus (particularly if its using police state politics) means this might be one to pass up. Also, if you've already begun construction of hab complexes, the population limit bonus of this secret project won't be as valuable.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Planetary economics**
- **Benefits: Increases the population limit of your base by two and increases your society's tolerance for use of police and military units (+1 police)**

## THE BULK MATTER TRANSMITTER

The road to the Bulk Matter Transmitter is filled with additional interesting facilities, weapons, and projects—reaching this project could have more benefits than just its rewards. If your colony houses many bases, this secret project becomes even more beneficial, providing an income boost to every single one. Don't waste your time if you're an isolationist.



*"When you make the finding yourself—even if you're the last person on Earth to see the light—you'll never forget it."*

*—Carl Sagan*

- **Cost: 600**
- **Prerequisite: Matter transmission**
- **Benefits: +2 minerals at every base**

## THE CITIZENS' DEFENSE FORCE

Worthless to the Human Hive (though it can build it almost immediately), the Citizens' Defense Force virtually doubles a base's defense with the addition of perimeter defenses. Don't construct it unless you plan to expand to more than—or already have—six bases. A single perimeter defense only costs 50. Thus, this secret project becomes more of a convenience than anything else.

# TIP

COMBINE THE CITIZENS' DEFENSE FORCE WITH THE TACHYON FIELD BASE FACILITY TO TRIPLE BASE DEFENSES.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Intellectual integrity**
- **Benefits: Counts as a perimeter defense at every base**



## CLINICAL IMMORTALITY

Some refer to this as the "Peacekeeper secret project" as the benefits mirror those of the Peacekeeper faction. Providing double votes for any planetary election, Clinical Immortality can offset the Peacekeepers' vote bonus. Then again, if you were to discover this secret project as the Peacekeepers, you would have no trouble being voted into office.

The one extra talent per base helps if your colony suffers from drone rioting. Only build Clinical Immortality if you feel you must be elected (and don't think you will be) or have problems with drone rioting.

- **Cost: 500**
- **Prerequisite: Matter editation**
- **Benefit: One extra talent at every base; doubles your votes in elections for planetary governor and supreme leader**

## THE CLONING VATS

Need to expand your population in a hurry? The Cloning Vats will certainly accomplish that with the added bonus of eliminating the negative effects of two powerful social engineering choices. Don't forget about the prerequisites (keeping nutrients and habitats available); if you can't keep up with the boom, don't bother.

# TIP

SECRET PROJECTS AREN'T EXACTLY SECRET. WHEN CONSTRUCTION BEGINS, IT'S ANNOUNCED TO ALL OTHER FACTIONS. STAY ALERT OF THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS. DON'T BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OF A PROJECT WHEN YOU KNOW IT'S BEING BUILT BY ANOTHER FACTION. BUT, IF YOU CAN HURRY PRODUCTION THROUGH AMPLE ENERGY RESERVES, YOU COULD STEAL A PROJECT FROM UNDER ANOTHER FACTION'S NOSE.



- **Cost: 500**
- **Prerequisite: Biomachinery**
- **Benefits: All your bases enter a permanent state of population boom and will grow every turn provided nutrient output is sufficient and habitat facilities are adequate; negative effects of the power (+2 industry) and thought control (+3 support) social engineering choices are eliminated**

## THE COMMAND NEXUS

Because the Command Nexus provides a bonus at every base, only acquire it if you plan to expand your empire to more than five bases. The Human Hive, with the prerequisite already in hand, has the shortest path to the Command Nexus. Being relatively inexpensive, if you choose the Hive and plan to expand, discover the Nexus as early as possible.

### W A R N I N G

*Building a project, then failing to capitalize on its benefits, creates problems when your playing against experienced players. After building the Command Nexus, use your bases often to quickly heal military units before returning them to battle.*

- **Cost: 200**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine Loyalty**
- **Benefits: Counts as a command center at every base**

## THE CYBORG FACTORY

A bioenhancement center can greatly improve military morale, providing a +2 bonus for each unit built at that base. With the Cyborg



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Factory, though, each base will act as a bioenhancement center, providing morale bonuses to military units built at each base. Again, only discover it if you plan on expanding to several bases. If not, building one or two bioenhancement centers will be cheaper.

*"All men have an instinct for conflict: at least, all healthy men."*

*—Hilaire Belloc*

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: Mind/machine interface**
- **Benefits: Counts as a bioenhancement center at every base**

## THE DREAM TWISTER

Don't both with the Dream Twister if your military is geared around conventional weapons. The Gaians ability to capture and breed mind worms makes this project hard to pass up—mind worms become a powerful force with the additional attack bonus.

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: The Will to Power**
- **Benefits: +50 percent to psi attack**

## THE EMPATH GUILD

The Gaians possess the fastest road to this project, and it's a good choice if you plan to play peacefully early on. With the ability to contact any leader, you can begin to make pacts and treaties and start



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trading technologies. Further, the vote bonus helps counter (or complement) the Peacekeepers' predesigned advantage in elections.

**TIP**

USE THE EMPATH GUILD TO GAIN FAVOR WITH OTHER FRACTIONS BY CONTACTING THEM EARLY ON IN THE GAME. ONCE YOU'VE USED THEM SUFFICIENTLY, DON'T HESITATE YOU PUT THE INFILTRATORS TO WORK.

- **Cost: 200**
- **Prerequisite: Centauri empathy**
- **Benefits: Lets you contact any leader and gives you an infiltrator in every faction; gives you +50 percent votes in elections for planetary governor and supreme leader**

## THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

Helping combat drone riots, the Human Genome project can be constructed by the Peacekeepers immediately. However, because that faction already includes a talent bonus, it'll probably be passed up. If your colony features a low support score, consider this secret project to help balance out the inevitable drone riots inside your bases.

- **Cost: 200**
- **Prerequisite: Biogenetics**
- **Benefits: One extra talent at every base**

## THE HUMAN-SEEKER ALGORITHM

Though the Human Hive has the shortest route to this secret project, it's almost a must-have for the technology-rich University of Planet.



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As a University player, keep an eye on the path to this excellent secret project, which will help you protect your valuable research.

**W A R N I N G**

*Use your most productive bases to construct secret projects. Because the resources required are often hefty, attempting to construct a project at an undermanned base could cost you the benefits if another faction beats you to the punch.*

- **Cost:** 300
- **Prerequisite:** Presentient algorithms
- **Benefits:** Renders your units and bases completely immune to probe team infiltration of any kind

**THE LIVING REFINERY**

Not as necessary if you're running a police state or have power values, the faction that begins military construction late in the game best implements the Living Refinery. One of the few ways to counter a poor support rating (without changing social engineering), the Living Refinery might best be used by the Morgan player who wants to turn his ample energy reserves into late-game military success.

*"Money is the barometer of a society's virtue."*

*—Ayn Rand*

- **Cost:** 400
- **Prerequisite:** Advanced spaceflight
- **Benefits:** Decreases minerals required to support military units; +2 support on social engineering table





## THE LONGEVITY VACCINE

Since this secret project depends on the type of economy you're using, so be sure to get the most out of your resources. If you are using simple or green economics, the benefit of one less drone might not be worth the effort and resources spent.

**TIP**

DISCOVERING THE LONGEVITY VACCINE AS THE MORGANITES COULD EXPLODE ENERGY RESERVES THROUGH THE ROOF. A MORGAN PLAYER SHOULD SEEK TO GAIN THE MONETARY BENEFITS FROM THIS PROJECT, NOT THE REDUCTION OF DRONES.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Bio-engineering**
- **Benefits: Two less drones at every base if using planned economics; one less drone at every base if using simple or green economics; energy reserves increased by 50 percent at this base for using free market economics**

## THE MARITIME CONTROL CENTER

Don't bother researching this project on land-heavy maps and certainly don't waste your resources if you don't plan to use transport foils or other assault naval units. Keep the naval base bonus in mind as well; repair your naval units quickly by docking them at offshore bases.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Doctrine Initiative**



- **Benefits:** Increases the movement rate of all naval units by two; counts as a naval base at every base

## THE MERCHANT EXCHANGE

With the ability to construct immediately, the Morganites will likely be the first to construct the Merchant Exchange. Once you've constructed the project, develop the particular base into your colony's chief production center. With the extra energy bonuses, the ability to produce units, facilities, and projects quickly will be much easier.

- **Cost:** 200
- **Prerequisite:** Industrial base
- **Benefits:** +1 energy in every square at this base

## THE NANO FACTORY

Think of the Nano Factory as a mobile command center. With this project, you can repair units quickly and completely even when they aren't inside a base square.

**TIP**

BECAUSE THE NANO FACTORY DECREASES UPGRADE COSTS, TRY TO CONSTRUCT THIS PROJECT BEFORE YOU BEGIN HEAVY PROTOTYPING AND UNIT UPGRADING.

- **Cost:** 400
- **Prerequisite:** Industrial nanorobotics
- **Benefits:** Units can be repaired quickly and completely even when not in base squares; the cost to upgrade units is reduced by 50 percent



## THE NETWORK BACKBONE

One of the most powerful secret projects in the game, particularly related to research, the Network Backbone provides research bonuses to heavy commercial factions as well as a bonuses for every network node in existence. Acquiring the Network Backbone can create a huge research boom, driving the faction toward the Ascent to Transcendence.

*"There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still."*

*—Franklin D. Roosevelt*

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: Digital sentence**
- **Benefits: +1 research at this base for every point of commerce this base receives; +1 research for every network node in existence on Alpha Centauri, regardless of the player owning the network node; eliminates the negative effects of cybernetic society (+3 police)**

## THE NEURAL AMPLIFIER

In a war against a mind-worm-heavy Gaian faction, the Neural Amplifier becomes almost vital. Providing much-needed defense against psi attacks, this secret project should provide the necessary means to overcome scores of mind worm assaults.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Neural grafting**
- **Benefits: +50 percent to psi defense**



## THE PHOLUS MUTAGEN

Though the Gaians have the shortest road to this project, their already solid efficiency rating might make this overkill. But, then again, don't underestimate the benefits of efficiency, nor the bonus to the alien lifeform lifecycle. If you plan on breeding mind worms or and Isle of the Deep, these extra bonuses can help significantly.

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: Centauri genetics**
- **Benefits: Reduces the effect of industry on Planet's ecology at all your bases; alien lifeforms you breed gain a +1 lifecycle bonus**

## THE PLANETARY DATALINKS

Best discovered by research-deprived factions (such as the Believers or the Human Hive), the Planetary Datalinks award your faction any technology discovered by three others. Don't rely on this project to be your sole supply of advances, however; use other means, such as your own research, bribery, or probe teams to acquire others.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Cybernetics**

### W A R N I N G

*Relying on particular advances with the Planetary Datalinks is impossible. It's unpredictable to determine which technologies you'll be awarded. Because of this, some research time could be wasted on advances you are awarded one turn later.*



- **Benefits:** You automatically discover any technology discovered by any three other factions

## THE PLANETARY TRANSIT SYSTEM

Planning to expand? Don't forget about the Planetary Transit System. After you've acquired this project, all new bases will begin at population level 3. The Morganites have the quickest road to this project; and with their love of expansion and wealth, they'll probably research it.

*"The world is so fast that there are days when the person who says it can't be done is interrupted by the person who is doing it."*

— *Anonymous*

- **Cost:** 300
- **Prerequisite:** Industrial automation
- **Benefits:** Any new bases you found begin at population level 3; one less drone at all bases of population level 3 and less

## THE SELF-AWARE COLONY

Like most projects, the Self-Aware Colony requires some planning ahead. If you have constructed lots of energy-hungry base facilities, this secret project can cut all maintenance costs by half. The extra money will soon fill your reserves; the Self-Aware Colony is an excellent way of kicking in mid- and late-game expansion.



- **Cost: 500**
- **Prerequisite: Self-aware machines**
- **Benefits: Energy maintenance cost for facilities is halved at all your bases; if use of police is allowed under current social model, all your bases are considered to have an extra police unit**

## THE SINGULARITY INDUCTOR

Counting as a quantum converter at every base, don't research the Singularity Inductor unless you have either expanded or plan to expand. If so, the mineral benefits (+50 percent mineral output at every base) can increase production rates dramatically. Further, efficiency won't be affected by the new mineral bonuses.

- **Cost: 600**
- **Prerequisite: Controlled singularity**
- **Benefits: Counts as a quantum converter at every base and reduces the ecological effects of mineral production**

## THE SPACE ELEVATOR

Essential for the player building orbital improvements, the Space Elevator can also be used in effective sneak attacks. With the discovery of this project, your units, equipped with drop pods, can be inserted anywhere on Planet.

*"To confine our attention to terrestrial matters would be to limit the human spirit."*

*—Stephen Hawking*



- **Cost: 500**
- **Prerequisite: Super tensile solids**
- **Benefits: Doubles energy reserves production at this base and doubles mineral production rate at all your bases when producing orbital improvements; your units equipped with drop pods may now make orbital insertions anywhere on Planet; this project also waives any aerospace complex restrictions on orbital improvements**

## THE SUPERCOLLIDER

Because this secret project is base-specific, be sure to construct the Supercollider in the base where you plan to do the most research and lab work. After discovery, increase the level of lab output of the base and turn it into a technology-producing machine.

### W A R N I N G

*The Supercollider is base-specific. This project only affects the base in which it was built. If you waste this project on an underdeveloped base, you will cost yourself valuable research bonuses.*

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Applied relativity**
- **Benefits: Research output at this base is doubled**

## THE TELEPATHIC MATRIX

An extremely advanced secret project, the Telepathic Matrix assists both probe teams and keeps drones from rioting at your base. Because





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creation of the Telepathic Matrix probably won't occur for many, many years into the game, plan ahead and have many probe teams ready to reap the benefits of the bonus morale.

*"Reasonable people adapt themselves to the world. Unreasonable people attempt to adapt the world to themselves. All progress, therefore, depends on unreasonable people."*  
—George Bernard Shaw

- **Cost: 600**
- **Prerequisite: Eudaimonia**
- **Benefits: Drones never riot at your base; all your probe teams receive a +2 morale modifier**

## THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING

Another effective method of speeding research, the Theory of Everything should be constructed at a base already producing solid amounts of research. Don't waste this, or any project, at under-developed bases. Discovering the Theory of Everything at a base with low lab output is the equivalent of building the Maritime Control Center when you have no naval units.

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: Unified field theory**
- **Benefits: Lab output doubled at this base**

## THE UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR

Providing two free technology advances upon completion, the Universal Translator can speed a faction's climb up the technology



tree. Additionally, this project eschews the need for network nodes at multiple bases; with the Universal Translator, any number of artifacts can be hooked up to this base.

- **Cost: 400**
- **Prerequisite: Homo superior**
- **Benefits: Two free tech advances on completion; any number of alien artifacts can be cashed at this base**

## THE VIRTUAL WORLD

An excellent way of containing drone riots, especially if you've constructed several network nodes, the Virtual World reduces the number of drones at each base with a network node by two and increases psych output by 50 percent. Because this project only affects bases with network nodes, don't bother unless you either have them or plan to construct them.

### NOTE

The Virtual World assists factions with low police scores, particularly in wartime when your military won't be around to help combat drone riots.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Planetary networks**
- **Benefits: In addition to their normal effect, network nodes count as hologram theatres at each base (reduces number of drones by two and increases psych output of base by 50 percent)**

## THE VOICE OF THE PLANET

Essentially the prerequisite for the Ascent to Transcendence, once a faction has built this secret project, any other faction can begin con-



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struction of the final, and perhaps most important, project, the Ascent to Transcendence. If another faction has begun construction of this project, prepare your bases to begin the Ascent.

*"Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity a greater."*  
—William Hazlitt

- **Cost:** 600
- **Prerequisite:** Threshold of transcendence
- **Benefits:** Begins the Ascent to Transcendence sequence; any faction can now begin the Ascent to Transcendence; any alien lifeforms you breed gain a +1 lifecycle bonus

## THE WEATHER PARADIGM

With the ability to produce it right from the start, the Gaians have the shortest route to the Weather Paradigm. Playing as the Gaians, this project is a solid choice early on, providing the ability to raise and lower terrain as well as construct condensers and boreholes.

**TIP**

UNLESS YOU PLAN TO DO PLENTY OF TERRAFORMING, DON'T BOTHER CONSTRUCTING THE WEATHER PARADIGM.

- **Cost:** 200
- **Prerequisite:** Centauri ecology
- **Benefits:** Increases terraforming speed by 50 percent for all tasks except for remove fungus; your formers may build condensers and boreholes and may raise and lower terrain, even if you have not yet discovered the appropriate technologies.



## THE XENOEMPATHY DOME

The Gaians have the quickest road to this secret project, which improves the rate of formers (against fungus) and also treats all fungus squares as roads. Because of this, you won't need to alter any fungus squares unless you plan on terraforming them into farms, mines, and so on.

- **Cost: 300**
- **Prerequisite: Centauri meditation**
- **Benefits: All fungus squares are treated as roads, and the rate at which your formers remove or plant fungus is doubled; additionally, the fungus confers on all your units the same combat benefits normally reserved for alien life forms; any alien lifeforms you breed gain a +1 lifecycle bonus**

## SECRET PROJECT TREE

Use this chart to quickly determine a secret project's build cost, prerequisite, and prerequisite level. Because the secret projects are sorted by prerequisite level, you can quickly determine how far up the technology tree that you must go before the project becomes available. Use this chart to plan your project constructions; advance your colony to the technology required to build the project and carefully choose bases that can handle the hefty costs.

| Secret Project       | Cost | Level | Prerequisite     |
|----------------------|------|-------|------------------|
| Merchant Exchange    | 200  | 1     | Industrial base  |
| Human Genome Project | 200  | 1     | Biogenetics      |
| Weather Paradigm     | 200  | 1     | Centauri ecology |
| Command Nexus        | 200  | 2     | Doctrine Loyalty |

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| Secret Project           | Cost  | Level | Prerequisite               |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| Virtual World            | 300   | 2     | Planetary networks         |
| Planetary Transit System | 300   | 3     | Industrial automation      |
| Citizens' Defense Force  | 300   | 3     | Industrial integrity       |
| Empath Guild             | 200   | 3     | Centaury empathy           |
| Planetary Datalinks      | 300   | 4     | Cyberethics                |
| Neural Amplifier         | 300   | 4     | Neural grafting            |
| Maritime Control Center  | 300   | 4     | Doctrine Initiative        |
| Longevity Vaccine        | 300   | 5     | Bio-engineering            |
| Hunter-Seeker Algorithm  | 300   | 5     | Presentient algorithms     |
| Supercollider            | 300   | 5     | Applied relativity         |
| Xenoempathy Dome         | 300   | 5     | Centaury meditation        |
| Ascetic Virtues          | 300   | 6     | Planetary economics        |
| Cyborg Factory           | 400   | 6     | Mind-machine interface     |
| Cloning Vats             | 500   | 7     | Biomachinery               |
| Theory of Everything     | 400   | 7     | Unified field theory       |
| Pholus Mutagen           | 400   | 7     | Centaury genetics          |
| Living Refinery          | 400   | 8     | Advanced spaceflight       |
| Universal Translator     | 400   | 8     | Homo superior              |
| Nano Factory             | 400   | 9     | Industrial nanorobotics    |
| Dream Twister            | 400   | 9     | The Will to Power          |
| Network Backbone         | 400   | 10    | Digital sentience          |
| Space Elevator           | 500   | 10    | Super tensile solids       |
| Self-Aware Colony        | 500   | 11    | Self-aware machines        |
| Telepathic Matrix        | 600   | 11    | Eudiamonia                 |
| Clinical Immortality     | 500   | 12    | Matter editation           |
| Bulk Matter Transmitter  | 600   | 13    | Matter transmission        |
| Singularity Inductor     | 600   | 15    | Controlled singularity     |
| Voice of Planet          | 600   | 15    | Threshold of Transcendence |
| Ascent to Transcendence  | 2,000 | 15    | Threshold of Transcendence |



# PART FOUR

## MULTIPLAYER CONQUEST



**T**he knowledge we've given you up to this point all but guarantees your victory in the single-player campaign, where your foes will be crafty artificial intelligences, but artificial nonetheless. Once you've conquered the digital foes of Alpha Centauri on all difficulty levels, you might wonder what's next. Is there life beyond Alpha Centauri? Indeed there is.

The game has offers two tracks to replayability. The first is multiplayer gaming. You can play Alpha Centauri with your friends, and compete to see who can build the greatest empire on Planet. Alternatively, you can use the game's editor to create your own scenarios and maps to continue the single-player challenge. How you do that is covered in the Appendices. That said, in this multiplayer chapter to our game guide, we'll tell you how to:

- Set up a multiplayer game and choose game perimeters for different play styles
- Show you how to deal with computer opponents
- Advise you on how to deal with human opponents
- Give you tips on ganging up on the computer

So what are you waiting for? Let's go!





# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

## MULTIPLAYER STRATEGIES





**A**s intriguing and challenging as Alpha Centauri is as a single-player game experience, the entire atmosphere changes when you add other humans to the mix. Played over the Internet or LAN, Alpha Centauri lets up to seven human players engage in a game. Suddenly, diplomatic discussions carry significantly more weight. The question of who to trust and who not to turn your back on becomes considerably more murky. This chapter will guide you through the setup concepts that affect the flavor of the game as well as in-depth strategies to overcome human opposition.

## SETTING UP A MULTIPLAYER GAME

When hosting your own multiplayer game, you should take the time to consider the many options available. How you set the game up will have a big influence not only on pacing, but also on the activities all the human players can engage in.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS

The number of players can have a big impact on the game. While Alpha Centauri is perfectly balanced for seven factions, any and all of which can be human or computer controlled, you should consider how this affects the length of the game. If you're in the market for a short game, having seven factions is not the way to go about it. Instead, for short and fun play sessions, bring the number of players down to four or lower.



## PLANET SIZE

The larger you make the planet, the longer the game will take. If your game is just going to be you and another human, select the small planet and four players for a balanced play session. Planet size can greatly affect early game conflict. Selecting a tiny planet could create some tense early game situations and some quick skirmishes. While this could create exciting games, it could also create huge disadvantages for some human players stuck in the middle of several computer-controlled factions who ally together. Larger planets unusually mean that contact and conflict will occur much later, giving you more time to build up defenses or advance through the technology tree.

## SIMULTANEOUS MOVES

This is an important feature that really affects the flow of the game. Under normal circumstances, when Simultaneous moves is off, each player will engage in his turn, move his units, engage in research, and so on. When he's done, he clicks End Turn and play moves to the next player. For games with two or more human opponents, set Simultaneous Moves on. This lets each player play the game at the same time, virtually making Alpha Centauri a real-time game with no turns. This is a great way to speed up the flow of the game and make it infinitely more enjoyable. The alternative is that every player will have to wait his turn, transforming the game into a long waiting session with only intervals of real playing time.

## DO OR DIE

It happens. You start a new game with a pal over the Internet and one of you dies within a couple of turns because of an irritable mind worm



infestation. Under normal circumstances, the game is over for that particular player, rendering your multiplayer game a little hollow. To prevent this from happening, toggle on Do or Die, which will let dead players restart.

## SPOILS OF WAR

Toggling on Spoils of War is a great way to speed up the game and inject some intrigue into the proceedings. When toggled on, any new base that you capture will find you gaining a new technology!

Spoils of War can greatly enhance the speed of the game, especially when war breaks out and cities begin falling like flies. The conquering hero will suddenly find all manner of new technologies streaming into his empire. If used in conjunction with the conquest victory condition, Spoils of War can make for a quick and brutal play experience.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

Setting the variables on winning will have a big impact on the flavor of the game. While leaving the paths to victory completely open has its merits, narrowing the focus can give players, especially newer ones, the ability to focus on a particular area of the game.

## DIPLOMATIC VICTORY

You may win the game diplomatically by convincing enough faction leaders to unite behind you as supreme leader of Planet. A three-quarters vote of the planetary council is required to secure the election.



Only the leader of one of the two factions with the highest vote totals may stand for election as governor or supreme leader.

When a supreme leader is elected, a faction leader may choose to defy the will of the council and refuse to submit. When this happens, the supreme leader must, with the help of loyal factions, conquer all defiant factions to achieve a conquest victory. Because of the military power usually required to secure elections as supreme leader, defying the will of the council borders on lunacy. Other factions will usually only take this course of action if you have committed atrocities against them or betrayed them at some point.

If you win a diplomatic victory, you will be awarded 1,200 points minus two for every game turn that has elapsed. If cooperative victory is enabled and your pact brother is elected supreme leader, you will be awarded half this value. Choose this victory condition if you and your friends want to allow victory through peaceful means. Set this goal if players don't want the stress of constantly worrying about combat and instead want to concentrate on the political and social aspects of gameplay.

## TOTAL WAR

A player will win the game through conquest if he manages to eliminate all remaining factions. Factions that surrender and swear a pact to serve you will count as eliminated for purposes of this win. If cooperative victory is enabled, you needn't conquer factions that have signed a Pact of Brotherhood with you.

By winning through conquest, you will be awarded 1,000 points minus two for every game turn elapsed. If cooperative victory is enabled and more than one factions survives the game, the points are split between them based on relative population. Choose this victory condition if you all just want to fight. However, this victory condition often takes a long time to achieve because it requires finding and taking every enemy base.





## MINE, ALL MINE

You may win an economic victory by cornering the market on energy. You must have discovered planetary economics to achieve this. Cornering global energy will require a sum of energy credits roughly equal to the cost to mind control every remaining base on Planet. When you are ready to make such an attempt, select Corner Global Energy Market from the HQ menu. When a faction attempts to corner the global energy market, all other factions will be given an allotted period of time in which they can capture or destroy the cornering faction's headquarters, in turn foiling the plan.

For economic victory, you will be awarded 1,200 points minus two for every game turn elapsed. If cooperative victory is enabled, pact brothers of the winning faction receive half the bonus points.

## HIGHER GOAL

The highest form of victory is the Ascent to Transcendence, a fancy name that represents the ultimate step in human evolution. To achieve transcendence, the player must research Ascent to Transcendence, which can only be started after your faction has completed the Voice of Planet project.

Players that finally ascend will be awarded 2,000 points minus two for every game turn elapsed. If cooperative victory is enabled, all pact brothers will participate in the win, and points will be split between all winning factions based on relative population. This is another victory condition you can set if you don't want your game to degenerate into a brawl. However, watch out for the University of Planet faction because they have a distinct research advantage in this type of game.



## U S I N G C U S T O M S C E N A R I O S A N D M A P S I N M U L T I P L A Y E R

Having put your design skills to use, you might want to test out your custom scenarios or maps against other computer and human opponents. Before beginning the multiplayer game, make sure all the files related to your custom scenario or map are located in the same directory. You should create a new directory (don't use the Alpha Centauri root directory) and place all the text and map files inside.

Once you are inside the multiplayer lobby, just change the game format by clicking on the planet size section. A pop-up window will open up, permitting you to load up a custom map or scenario. Load your scenario file and begin the game. Because the multiplayer host decides the map or scenario, any player who joins the game can't use his own set of custom rules or factions. The host's settings override any other player settings.

### NOTE

For more on creating your own custom rules, factions, scenarios and maps, check out Appendices A to C.

## M U L T I P L A Y E R G A M E P L A Y T A C T I C S

Once you're involved in a multiplayer game, you'll quickly notice the change in atmosphere, especially in terms of diplomacy. During





a single-player game, diplomacy takes on a fairly consistent tone, but once the human element is injected, everything changes. What you need are some tips and pointers for dealing with multiplayer diplomacy!

## DEALING WITH COMPUTER-CONTROLLED FACTIONS

Most multiplayer contests will feature computer-controlled factions. Though one-on-one human games are possible, more often than not, when you play against a friend or a stranger via the Internet, you must deal with the unpredictable computer enemy (or ally) as well as the more unpredictable human opponent (or opponents).

With the mixture of computer and human opponents, diplomacy becomes a much more important matter, especially in gaining an advantage against a stronger computer-controlled or human-lead faction. Should you gain favor with computer-controlled factions, only to be called to assist when a human player engages them? Or should you maintain an alliance with your human counterparts and overtake the computer opponents one-by-one? Though each new game creates loads of different possibilities, the following section will detail some and help prepare you for multiplayer games.

### NOTE

For more on the ins and outs of diplomacy, check out Chapter 8.



## ALLYING WITH COMPUTER FACTIONS AGAINST HUMANS

Aggressing against computer opponents early in the game can spell disaster if you're hoping to defeat an experienced human opponent. Make contact with any computer factions you locate and attempt to maintain friendly relations. A treaty or a pact can mean technology advances, assistance during wartime, and financial help. Best of all, if you've gained favor with several computer-controlled factions, they could very well come to your aid if you engage in battle with the human opponent.

Upon making contact with a computer faction, you might have to give up more than you receive to maintain peaceful relations. While you shouldn't "sell the farm," so to speak, you should make every effort to remain friendly. Combating a human opponent, both militarily and up the technology tree, becomes much easier with a few allies by your side.

## ALLYING WITH HUMAN FACTIONS AGAINST THE COMPUTER

In instances where the computer-controlled factions outnumber the human players, it's often wise for the humans to make a pact or treaty and begin the exchange of technology and commerce. Make contact with your human colleagues early in the game and strengthen the relationship with the exchange of initial technologies and the world



map. A combined force against the computer factions can be a devastating gambit; world expansion and advancing through the technology tree will provide distinct advantages. The farther you climb up the tree, the more access you (and your human ally) will have to bigger and better weaponry, projects, and units.

As in most of Alpha Centauri, there's two (or even three or four) ways to play every situation. Say, for instance, you ally with the human opponent early in the game. Though you agree to a treaty or pact and begin the exchange of technologies, don't feel the need to give him everything you've got. Your human opponent won't know what technology advances you've secured. Instead of giving him the three advances you have, only trade him one. Tell him you just aren't researching that well. Meanwhile, you are, hopefully, gathering plenty of new advances from his coffers.

Further, you can make alliances or pacts with computer factions at the same time in a possible move to stab your human "friend" in the back. Chances do exist, of course, that your opponent is doing the same thing to you. The possibilities are endless. Stay on your toes and don't sell your faction short. Get the most out of your negotiations, be it with a computer or a human adversary.

## SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

An important element to conquering the computer or human opponents is investigating their current status. How far have they expanded? How large is their military force? Keep tabs on the Faction Dominance chart to determine which faction is performing the best in certain areas and adjust your tactics accordingly. For instance, the technology-rich faction might be the one to send your probe teams at. Or, perhaps attacking the military-dominant faction would be a bad idea.



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Gaining awareness about each faction comes into play throughout the whole multiplayer contest, but most often during wartime. The time to make an aggressive move against an enemy faction, particularly computer-controlled, is often hazy. If a human opponent who hasn't allied with you knows that you are engaged in a war with a computer faction, he could seize the opportunity and move into your land. Being engaged in battle with a faction will leave you with insufficient units and manpower to withstand two aggressors.

Discover the location of any human opponents as early as you possibly can. This can be accomplished through scout exploration or exchanging world maps with other factions. If the human challenger rests a great distance from your colony, the odds of a quick or early strike against you are slim. Because this type of information is so vital, don't reveal too much to a human opponent unless you feel it's absolutely necessary. A crafty opponent will use every hint or clue about your situation and use it to his advantage.

MATCHING WITS WITH A  
HUMAN OPPONENT

Trust no one. It's as simple as that. Sure, he may seem friendly now. He may be trading you all kinds of technologies and asking for little in return. Everything seems just peachy and you're confident you have a new friend. Suddenly, his forces are amassing on your borders, and he launches an assault, surprising your forces, and quickly beating them into submission. Don't let this happen to you!



## EXPLORATION AND MAKING CONTACT

When the game begins, explore as much territory as quickly as possible. Stake your claim to the landscape and set up patrol units on guard duty. Most importantly, track down as many opponents as possible and determine who your temporary friends are. It's of utmost importance that you develop some strong ties in the early portion of the game. Everyone needs support and backup, and this should be your first priority. Examine the following list of duties and make sure you're on the right track:

- 1. Try to be the first to gather all the comm frequencies for the various faction leaders.** Trade and barter as much as you have to and get every number. Once you have the goods, you'll be in a solid position to get elected governor of Planet, giving you the ever-important veto authority.
- 2. Place sentries and sensors along your border so you can easily monitor enemy (and friendly) movement.**
- 3. Try to seal as many Pact of Brotherhood as possible.** This will increase your commerce rate, in turn pumping up the rate at which you'll manufacture new military units and explore new technologies.
- 4. Try not to hand out your most powerful technologies without getting something in return.** Chances are, your high-ticket items will be used against you.
- 5. Build cities as quickly as possible in key regions of your territory.** Claim as many monoliths as possible and make sure you're building water bases for future aircraft movement into enemy territory.



## IMPORTANT MULTIPLAYER PRIORITIES

What follows is an important checklist of critical technologies you should attempt to research as soon as possible:

**1. Doctrine Air Power**—Having a strong air force is critical to your success, as it lets you get your forces to key locations rapidly. If you're stuck with ground forces while the other factions are flying around in shiny new jets, well, you're in a big trouble. Developing a strong air fleet should be one of your main priorities, as it will give you some bargaining chips in diplomacy. If the opposition knows you have a strong military, especially in air power, they'll be slightly more open to technology exchanges... or else.

**2. Get to the Golden Age!** A Golden Age occurs when a base has no drones, and the number of talents at least equals the number of regular workers and specialists. A Golden Age significantly increases a base's growth rate and energy production equivalent to +1 economy and +2 growth on the social engineering table.

**3. Make sure your units have a high morale!** Morale reflects the training and experience of your military units. Morale levels range from very green to green to disciplined to hardened, veteran, commando, and elite. A unit receives a +12.5 percent combat bonus for each morale level. Morale plays a particularly important role in psi combat and in combat between probe teams, since no weapon and armor values are considered in those cases. New units typically begin with green morale, though this may be higher or lower depending on your social engineering. A new unit's morale can also be increased if a base has a command center or other related facility. Alien units such as mind worms have life cycles that correspond to morale levels. Alien



units are not affected by command centers and military facilities, but their life cycle levels can be improved by building biology labs and other similar facilities. The transport capacity of an Isle of the Deep is determined by its life cycle level: one unit for each level. A unit victorious in combat will often receive a morale upgrade (the lower its morale level, the more likely an upgrade). Elite units receive a special bonus—an additional move each turn.

**4. Uncover as many supply pods as possible by building a moderate fleet of scout units to canvass as much territory as possible.**

Most importantly, get as many alien artifacts as possible, as this will give you a huge technological advantage over your opponent. Artifacts are mysterious and unexplained alien devices sometimes discovered on Planet. If you can find an artifact and return it to one of your bases, you will have several options. You can link it to a network node if you have one and receive a free technology breakthrough. You can use it to speed the production of a secret project or unit prototype. You can save it to use later. Artifacts can be captured from other players. An unclaimed artifact can be captured by any player without diplomatic penalty.

**5. Keep an eye on your inefficiency rating and don't let it get out of control!** As your colony grows and you claim more territory and build more bases, this growth will put a strain on your economy. This strain shows up as inefficiency, which can cause you to lose some energy production each turn. The farther away a base is from your headquarters base, the more inefficiency it will experience. Inefficiency can be mitigated at all your bases by making social engineering choices that increase your efficiency value. Democratic politics and green economics each increase efficiency. Inefficiency can be mitigated at a particular base by building a children's creche there.

**6. Don't let your ecological damage of Planet run rampant!** As humans expand and build colonies on Planet, they inevitably begin to





cause ecological damage. Ecological damage can provoke the native life forms and cause other unexpected effects. The more mines, solar collectors, roads, and farms you build, the more the potential damage. Boreholes and condensers cause even greater damage. You can reduce or eliminate this type of damage by planting forests and by building tree farm and hybrid forest facilities. As your industrial output (minerals) increases, ecological damage will also take place. This effect can be reduced by building the Centauri preserve, Temple of Planet, and nanoreplicator.

**7. Attain a high commerce rating!** Commerce is bonus energy generated from trade between two friendly factions. Whenever you sign a treaty or pact with another faction, your bases will automatically begin to accrue commerce (and this benefit extends to your partner faction as well). Commerce is interrupted whenever a vendetta occurs between two factions or when sanctions are applied against a faction that has committed an atrocity. Think of commerce as a reward for peaceful behavior. Between two factions, commerce is more beneficial to the faction that has discovered the most economic technologies. CEO Morgan gains additional bonuses here as part of his faction power. Commerce also tends to benefit the current planetary governor. You can increase your commerce rates by:

- **Signing more treaties**
- **Signing more pacts (pacts receive double commerce)**
- **Increasing the size and economy of your bases**
- **Discovering more economic-related technologies**

Economic-related technologies include industrial economics, industrial automation, planetary economics, industrial nanorobotics, sentient econometrics, and environmental economics.

**8. Build up a strong naval fleet for massive bombardment attacks!** Naval units and land units with the heavy artillery ability may conduct bombardment by selecting the Long Range Fire option from the Action



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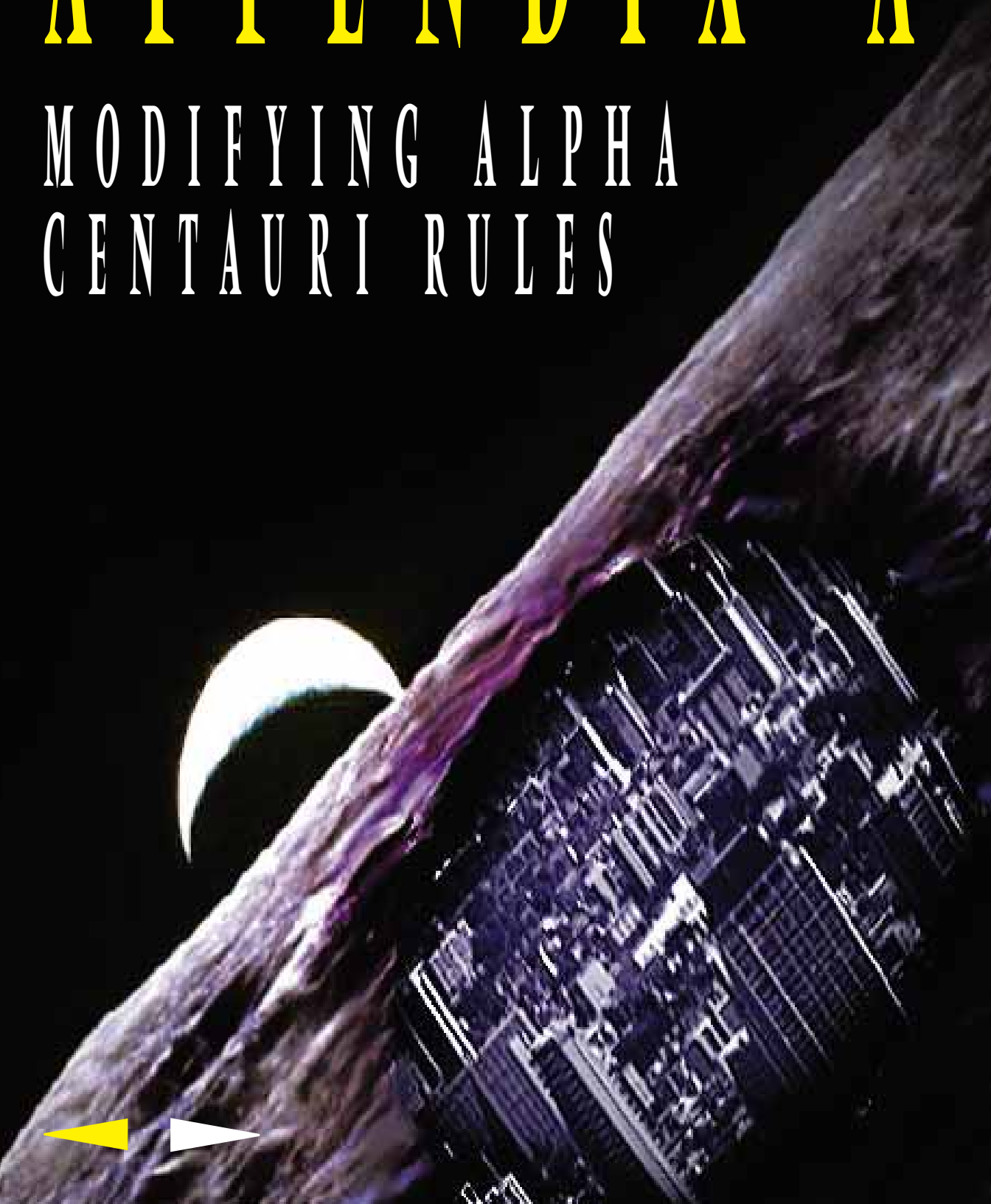
menu. Bombardment has the advantage of potentially damaging every enemy unit in a particular square and the disadvantage that land units can never be reduced below 50 percent damage by bombardment. If bombardment is attempted against a square containing an enemy naval or artillery unit, the bombardment is cancelled and an artillery duel is initiated, with the attacking and defending artillery or naval units fighting attack-vs.-attack strength. Armor values are ignored for artillery duels.

**9. Claim terrain landmarks as soon as possible!** Certain major landmarks on Planet's surface convey special bonuses:

- ▶ **Garland Crater confers +1 mineral in interior squares.**
- ▶ **Mount Planet confers +1 mineral and +1 energy in each square around the mouth.**
- ▶ **Uranium Flats confer +1 energy in each square.**
- ▶ **Geothermal Shallows confer +1 energy in each square.**
- ▶ **Pholus Ridge confers +1 energy in each square.**
- ▶ **Monsoon Jungle confers +1 nutrient in each square.**
- ▶ **Freshwater Sea confers +1 nutrient in each square.**

# APPENDIX A

## MODIFYING ALPHA CENTAURI RULES





**N**ot only can you create scenarios, maps, and factions for Alpha Centauri, you can alter nearly every rule in the game. While you can modify some rules from Alpha Centauri's in-game menu system, the significant changes can only be made by tinkering with the game's files.

This appendix focuses on `alpha.txt`—the text document that contains Alpha Centauri's rules. By tweaking `alpha.txt`, you can create your own Alpha Centauri world. If you want to gear the game more toward combat, you can make adjustments accordingly (lowering the prerequisites for military units, for instance). Conversely, you can make war more difficult by making units weaker or more expensive to build. The more subtle and careful your changes, the more balanced and fun your scenario or game will be.

To get the most out of `alpha.txt`, you should concentrate on creating your own scenarios, complete with custom factions and maps, as discussed in Appendices B and C.

## HANDLE WITH CARE

Each time Alpha Centauri loads, the program looks for a series of text files inside your root Alpha Centauri directory (the root directory will fall wherever you originally installed the game). These text files govern the rules, story text, and qualities of the factions in the game. If you take the time to learn about each file and the tips and tricks associated with customizing it, you can virtually create your own game based around Alpha Centauri! (However, you should read Appendices A to C thoroughly before diving into any of Alpha Centauri's text files.)

It's very important to take precautions if you're going to be dealing with critical files like these. Before altering any of Alpha Centauri's text files, you should definitely back them up, either inside another directory or on a floppy disk. If you change the files and subsequent-



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ly find that you want them back in their original state, you can move your backups into the original installation directory.

**W A R N I N G**

*It can't be stressed enough—take extreme caution when tinkering with the files mentioned in the appendices. Any mistakes you make can have drastic repercussions.*

If you ignore these warnings and mess up some of the files required for the game without backing them up, you'll find the original files on your Alpha Centauri CD; drag them to your root directory, and you're back in business. As a last resort, you can return everything to its original state by reinstalling the game.

**I N S I D E   A L P H A . T X T**

The file that contains the rules that govern how Alpha Centauri is played is called `alpha.txt`; it's located inside your root Alpha Centauri directory. As mentioned previously, you should back up your `alpha.txt` file before continuing with this chapter. Using the Windows 95/98 Explorer, copy the file onto a floppy disk or into another directory labeled, for example, "backup."

**NOTE**

Because custom scenarios can also use custom rules, you could copy all the Alpha Centauri text files into a new subdirectory along with a customized scenario to test your changes. See Appendix C for more on custom scenarios.

Let's dive into some elements that make up `alpha.txt`, looking closely at how changes will affect the game. To edit `alpha.txt`, you



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should open the file with any Windows 95/98-based word processing program, such as Microsoft Word or even one of Windows 95/98 text-editing programs like Wordpad and Notepad. Remember, you can cancel changes at any time by closing the file and not saving.

After loading the file, study the structure before you do any tinkering. You'll see that the text file is divided into sections; each section is devoted to a particular game element that can be altered. Each section is preceded by a title marked with a pound sign (#), such as #RULES. You shouldn't mess with the titles of the sections.

**NOTE**

You should make a note of any changes you make to the alpha.txt file either on a pad of paper or in another text file. That way, if you must change something back, you will have a quick reference to all the changes you've made.

After some introductory lines, you'll see a bunch of stuff that looks like this:

```
3,      ; Movement rate along roads
2,      ; Nutrient intake requirement for citizens
3,2     ; Numerator & Denominator for artillery fire
        damage
2,      ; Max artillery range (larger will break
        multiplayer)
8,      ; Max airdrop range w/o orbital insertion
10,     ; Nutrient cost multiplier
10,     ; Minerals cost multiplier
100,    ; Technology discovery rate as a percentage
        of standard
```

Notice the semicolons (;). Everything after a semicolon is a REM statement, or a remark, put in there by the designers of the game. These remarks describe how the values affect the gameplay.

**NOTE**

The host of a multiplayer game determines if custom rules will be allowed, so if you alter anything in hopes of gaining an advantage, you'll be out of luck.

While this section won't tell you how to modify every single element of `alpha.txt`, it will provide you with the basics you need to start customizing your own game or scenario.

## GENERAL RULES

The first section in `alpha.txt` is the general game rules section, marked `#RULES`. Let's take a look at a sample rule line:

```
3,      ; Movement rate along roads
```

The number 3 indicates the value of the rule element; the text after the semicolon indicates what the value governs. Don't change the explanation text; it's the value itself that we're interested in. In this example, the movement rate along roads is set at 3. You could make roads much more vital by increasing the value, decrease the importance of roads by lowering the value, or eliminate the movement benefit of roads altogether by decreasing the value to zero.

Although most of the values in the general rules section are explained well by the REMs, let's take a look at some of the most

**NOTE**

Many of the values in the general rules section are fundamental to the game. Any tinkering in this section could alter game balance considerably. Take care when changing these values so you don't create an unbalanced game or scenario!





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important values that you can change to create your own custom game.

10, ; Players' starting energy reserves

Each player's starting energy reserves are governed by this value. If you want all the players to begin with a bit more cash at their disposal, jack this number up a bit; if you want each player to begin the game poor, just set the value to zero.

**NOTE**

Keep the format of alpha.txt consistent with the original. Altering spaces or punctuation can cause strange effects.

8, ; Territory: max distance from base

Every time a base is built, you increase your territory by a distance of eight tiles from the base. By increasing or decreasing this value, you can make territory increases larger or smaller. Set this value to zero to eliminate territories entirely.

CentPsi, ; Technology to improve fungus squares

At the bottom section of the general rules are technology advances that award certain fundamental game elements. For instance, this line indicates that Centauri psi awards the player the ability to improve fungus tiles. The technology advance, indicated on the left, is used in abbreviated form. You could make the technology to improve fungus squares more difficult to obtain by increasing the technology advance required.

7, ; Population limit w/o hab complex



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This line determines the maximum population of a base before a hab complex must be built (which will increase the population limit). If you want to play a scenario in which a hab complex isn't needed 'til later in the game, you can increase this number accordingly.

```
0,      ; Combat % -> for attacking from higher  
        elevation
```

A huge chunk of the general rules section is devoted to combat percentages. The preceding line indicates that there is no advantage when a unit attacks another from a higher elevation. However, you could increase this value (which, remember, is a percentage) to give an advantage to units attacking from higher elevations. Setting this value to a negative number will actually penalize units for attacking from a higher elevation.

There are many other general rules in this section of alpha.txt, but these examples should give you an idea of what the values mean and how to change them.

## TERRAFORMING IMPROVEMENTS

Following the general rules section is one labeled #TERRAIN, which governs the various improvements to terrain that you can construct with a former or sea former. The most important element of this section is the number of turns it takes to make improvements. By altering the number of turns it takes to complete certain improvements, you can drastically alter how terraforming affects the game.

Let's take a look at a sample line from the terraforming improvements section:

```
Farm, None, Kelp Farm, None, 4, Cultivate $STR0, f, F
```



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Reading from the left, the first value, "Farm," is the name of the improvement. The second value, "None," is the prerequisite (most often a technology advance) that is required to build the improvement. The third value, "Kelp Farm," is the underwater or sea equivalent of the improvement. The fourth value, "None," is the prerequisite required to build the sea equivalent. The fifth value, "4," is the number of turns required to complete the improvement. Finally, the rest of the line, "Cultivate \$TRO, f, F," has to do with how the improvement is indicated in the menu system; here "f" and "F" are the keystrokes required to activate the improvement process.

By changing the 4 (the fifth value) to a higher or lower number, you can change how long it takes to construct this improvement.

**NOTE**

If you wanted to construct an air-heavy scenario, you could alter how many turns it takes to build an airbase, which can be used as a refueling station for your needlejets. The default value is 10, but if you decrease the value, a player can construct airbases quickly, making air power even more useful.

## RESOURCE INFORMATION

Temperature, rainfall, rockiness, and other elements determine the resource information in normal squares; however, there are several special squares where you can alter the amount of resources produced. By changing these values, you can give special importance to certain squares. Here's an example:

Forest Square, 1, 2, 1, 0,

From the left, you'll first see the name of the square. This shouldn't be changed, as it is the name the game uses. The second value (the first



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number) indicates the amount of nutrients the square produces. The third value indicates the amount of minerals the square produces. The fourth value indicates the amount of energy the square produces. The fifth and last value, which you will notice is zero for all the squares, is currently unused by the game (you shouldn't change this value). Thus, you can change the nutrients, minerals, and energy produced by the square by editing the second, third, and fourth values, respectively.

**NOTE**

One of the special squares included in this section is the monolith square. You've probably noticed the strange monoliths scattered around the map. These monoliths have a special power, not only upgrading and healing your units, but also providing nutrients, minerals, and energy. The default values for the monolith are 2, 2, 2, 0. By changing these values, you can make the monoliths more or less important.

## WORLD BUILDER

One of the most enjoyable features of Alpha Centauri is that the game constructs a brand new world each time you begin a new game. By changing values in the Worldbuilder section (marked #WORLD-BUILDER) of alpha.txt, you can alter the way this world is built, changing how frequently elements such as hills, deep water, fungus, and rainfall occur. For instance, check out these lines from alpha.txt:

```
36      ; Islands (Higher # increases island count)
25,     ; Peaks (Encourages peaks)
```

The first value is a number governing the relative frequency of the element's occurrence; the second is the name of the element; and the



third is a remark. You can raise or lower the numbers to increase or decrease the chances of islands or peaks appearing on your map (you don't want to mess with the other values). Keep in mind that these numbers don't represent the number of islands or peaks in the game; they only determine the relative likelihood of these features occurring on the randomized map.

Below the Worldbuilder section is one titled #WORLDSize; this section lists the default world names and their respective sizes. If you wish, you can create new names and sizes. If you do add or delete a size, make sure the number under the #WORLDSize heading equals the number of worlds you have underneath.

## MULTIPLAYER TIME CONTROLS

In the section labeled #TIMECONTROLS, you can adjust the amount of time each player has to move his units and conduct base business during a multiplayer game. Note that by setting any value to zero in this section, you actually are disabling the time control for that particular section. For instance, setting minimum base time to zero means the player will have as much time as he needs to conduct base business.

### W A R N I N G

*Be careful when changing the time constraints in a multiplayer game. If you make the time per turn too short, players won't even have a chance to complete their turns, decreasing the fun factor exponentially! Use the Custom line in the #TIMECONTROLS section to experiment with your own time rules.*



# TECHNOLOGY TREE

Perhaps the most complex section of alpha.txt, the technology tree area (labeled #TECHNOLOGY), controls all the technology advances in the game and includes the values given to such things as military and infrastructure (governing how much other factions value the technology), prerequisites required, and special awards the technology gives to the player.

## W A R N I N G

*Because it's so complex, tinkering significantly with the technology tree—particularly altering the prerequisites required to achieve a certain technology advance—can have significant gameplay effects. Take special care if you plan to change anything in this section.*

Let's take a look at a sample line from the technology section:

```
Secrets of the Human Brain, Brain, 1, 5, 0, 3,  
Psych, Biogen, 000000001
```

Reading from the left, the first value ("Secrets of the Human Brain") is the full name of the technology. The second value, here "Brain," is the abbreviation for the technology that is used in other sections throughout alpha.txt. The next four values indicate how valuable the technology is to certain factions. The first number is the military value; the second is the advance-of-knowledge, or discovery, value; the third is the infrastructure value; and the fourth is the colonization, or exploration, value. The next two values are the prerequisites required for the technology (listed in abbreviated form). In this case, the two prerequisites are social psychology ("Psych") and biogenetics



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("Biogen"). The final set of numbers, a series of ones and zeroes, are on/off flags that determine what special awards the technology provides. Included in alpha.txt is a chart listing the various awards; in this case, Secrets of the Human Brain gives the first player who discovers it a free advance.

**NOTE**

If you don't want a technology to require a prerequisite, just change the two relevant values to "None." If you wish to remove the technology from the game completely, just put "Disable" in those two spots. Be careful when disabling a technology! If it is a prerequisite for other technologies, you could have quite a problem advancing in the game.

If you look down the list of technologies, you'll find a series of advances that look like this:

```
User Technology 0, User0, 0, 2, 0, 0, Disable,  
Disable, 000000000
```

By altering these, you can create your own custom technologies, with their own names, abbreviations, values, prerequisites, and special awards. Note that this "User Technology" is disabled by default.

## ALTERING UNIT BUILDING BLOCKS

Beginning with the section labeled #CHASSIS and concluding with the section labeled #ABILITIES, alpha.txt includes all the necessary figures





to adjust each building block of a basic unit, including reactors, weapons, defenses, and special abilities.

By altering chassis elements, you can change how far a unit can move per turn; whether it's a land, sea, or air chassis; how much cargo the chassis can carry; the cost of the particular chassis; and the technology prerequisites required in building the chassis.

The reactor elements include the name, the power produced, and the technology required to construct the reactor. The higher the power number here, the cheaper the overall unit is to produce.

Most players will probably gravitate toward the weapons section while examining the unit building blocks. Let's take a look at a sample line from the weapons section:

Quantum Laser, Quantum, 16, 1,16, -1, QuanMac,

The first two values indicate the full name of the weapon, in this case "Quantum Laser," and the short name, in this case "Quantum." The first numerical value indicates the offensive attack rating (change this value to -1 if you wish the weapon to have psionic abilities). The next value is the offensive mode; in this case, the "1" indicates that this is an energy weapon (the beginning of the weapons section lists what the various numbers mean). The next value, here "16," is the cost of the weapon. The final number, here "-1," is the same for all weapons and should remain unchanged. The last value is the prerequisite required to build the weapon.

## NOTE

**Altering the weapon statistics could be most useful in a scenario geared toward war and combat. Making the weapons more powerful or requiring fewer prerequisites would make it possible to create much more powerful units earlier in the game.**



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The complement to the weapons section is the armor or defenses section (labeled #DEFENSES), which lets you change such elements as the armor rating (how resistant the armor is to damage), cost, and prerequisite.

The final unit building block, the special abilities, is a little different. Special abilities look like this:

```
Super Former, 1, EcoEng2, Super, 00000010111,  
Terraform rate doubled
```

The first four values are the ability's name, cost, and prerequisites. The string of numbers is a flag indicating what kinds of units can have the ability (a table inside alpha.txt shows how to interpret these). The last value is a description of the ability.

While you can change subtle effects of the special ability as well as the prerequisites required for that ability, you can't alter the ability itself. For example, the super former will always double the terraforming rate no matter what tweaks you make to the values. The most complex part of the special abilities is the cost. When you set a positive number, the cost increases by 25 percent of the number; however, if you set it to a negative number, the cost depends on certain other elements. For instance, setting the cost to -2 increases the cost with the weapon value.

Once you've scrolled down past the building blocks, the next section, labeled #UNITS, lists the basic units that are predesigned for each player. You can change the chassis, weapons, armor, cost, carrying capacity, and prerequisites of these units.

**W A R N I N G**

*The predesigned units are predesigned for a reason—most of them are extremely important to gameplay. Take caution when altering these units because they can cause huge swings in game balance.*



## BASE FACILITIES AND SECRET PROJECTS

As with unit special abilities, you can't change the core effects of a base facility or secret project (meaning that the network node will always provide the same bonus to research, no matter how you change the cost or prerequisites). However, like nearly everything in the `alpha.txt` file, you can customize costs and the prerequisites required for each. The values for a base facility and a special project are a bit different; let's take a look at each.

Here's a sample line from the base facility section:

```
Network Node, 8, 1, InfNet, HAL9000, Labs Bonus
```

The first value is the name of the facility. The next value is the start-up cost of the facility (this cost is multiplied by any mineral multiplier specified in the general rules section). The third value is the cost per turn (or maintenance cost) of the facility. The next two values are the prerequisites ("InfNet" and "HAL9000" in this case). The last value ("Labs Bonus") is a brief description of the facility's effect. Each value can be altered, but only the start-up cost, maintenance cost, and prerequisites will have any effect inside the game.

Following the base facilities are the secret projects, some of the most powerful acquisitions in Alpha Centauri. As with the facilities,

# NOTE

**Altering the base facilities in a custom scenario could have a great impact on gearing your game toward exploration, diplomacy, or war. Study the special effects of each facility to take the scenario in the direction you wish.**



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you can't change the core effect of the secret projects, but you can change the prerequisites, cost, and value of each. Let's look at a sample secret project:

The Cloning Vats, 50, 0, BioMac, Disable, Population Boom At All Bases, 0, 0, 0, 1, 2,

First, as in most lines, you have the name of the project. The second value, here "50," is the cost of the project. The third value is the per-turn cost of the project (secret projects have no maintenance costs, so this is always zero). The prerequisites are next; the "Disable" in the second field indicates that only one prerequisite is required. The next phrase ("Population Boom At All Bases") is the effect of the project. You shouldn't alter this line; it has no effect on the game, and without it, you could forget what the special project does.

The final five values indicate how valuable the project is to certain factions. Each faction has a certain mindset; some prefer technology, while others prefer colonization or even warfare. By altering these final five values, you can change which factions are most interested in the project.

The first of these values is unused at this time and shouldn't be changed. The second value indicates how valuable the project is to a military-oriented faction; the third value indicates how valuable the project is to a technology-oriented faction; the fourth value indicates how valuable the project is to an infrastructure-oriented faction; and the fifth value indicates how valuable the project is to a colonization-oriented faction.

## S O C I A L   E N G I N E E R I N G

Beginning with the section labeled #SOCIO, you can alter the effects of the various political and economic styles. Here's a sample line:

Free Market, IndEcon, ++ECONOMY, --PLANET, ---POLICE



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First, we have the name followed by the prerequisite. Next come a series of variables that are acted on by pluses and minuses. For instance, in this example, Free Market gives +2 to economy, -3 to planet, and -5 to police. You can alter these by changing the number of pluses and minuses given to each. You can even change which variables are acted on; the abbreviations for each variable are indicated at the beginning of alpha.txt's social engineering section. See Chapter 5 for more on social engineering.

# APPENDIX B

## CREATING CUSTOM FUNCTIONS





One of the most intriguing elements of modifying Alpha Centauri is the creating customized artificial intelligence opponents, or as they are referred to in the game, factions. Seven factions come predesigned, each with distinct advantages and disadvantages. In your Alpha Centauri root directory, you'll find a text file called `faction.txt`. This file is a template for all the factions. Investigating further, you'll notice a separate text file for each faction inside the directory. In this appendix, we'll take a look at the template, `faction.txt`, and learn the basics of customizing the factions.

Note that although we are looking at `faction.txt` as an example, you must modify each particular faction's text file individually.

## INSIDE FACTION.TXT

Begin by opening up `faction.txt` with any text editor or word processor. In the following sections, we'll look at the various parts of `faction.txt` and how you can use them to create custom factions. You can create any number of unique factions that can behave in any number of ways. You can make a powerful war machine by providing free military technologies or units, or you can make a wealthy empire by rewarding saved money with accruing interest.

A smart way to customize factions is to make sure that for every advantage you give a certain faction, you give it a disadvantage as well. Perhaps the faction is wealthy, but doesn't begin the game with many units. Or maybe the faction is interested in a powerful military, but has more trouble researching new discoveries. As with everything in Alpha Centauri, experiment until you have the perfect mix of advantages and disadvantages.



**W A R N I N G**

*As with alpha.txt or any modifications you make to Alpha Centauri, always back up your files before making changes. You always want an unchanged backup in case you must revert back to the installed state.*

## F A C T I O N   N A M E A N D   I N T E R E S T

The first part of the file describes all the variables that can be changed within each faction. Move down until you see #GAIANS; this begins the section that the game uses to determine how the faction behaves.

**NOTE**

The faction.txt template uses the faction known as Gaia's Stepdaughters or the Gaians as an example. This faction also has its own file, but it's faction.txt that we'll be working with in this appendix.

The first line of the faction variables reads as follows:

```
Gaia's Stepdaughters, The Green, Gaians, F, 2,  
Deirdre, F, -1, 0, 0, 0, 1,
```

The first phrase is the formal name of the faction, in this case "Gaia's Stepdaughters." Following the formal name is a very brief description of the ideology; here the phrase is "The Green," describing Gaia's Stepdaughters' commitment to ecology and the environment. Next is the plural noun describing the faction, in this case "Gaians." The next value is either "M" or "F," depending on whether the faction's



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noun is masculine or feminine. The fifth value is either a 1 or a 2, depending on whether the faction's noun is singular or plural. Following the first two numerical variables is the name of the faction leader, in this case "Deirdre." Following the leader's name is another "M" or "F," indicating the leader's gender.

Following the gender is a series of five numbers that describe the faction's interests:

► **The first number** is the willingness of the faction to use force to achieve goals. Here, you can determine how aggressive you want the faction to be. This value can be -1 for very passive, 0 for neutral, or 1 for aggressive.

► **The second number** describes the faction's interest in power or conquest. This value can be either 0 for low interest or 1 for high interest. For instance, if you wanted an aggressive faction interested in military technology, you could choose a 1 for the first number and a 1 for the second number.

► **The third number** governs the faction's interest in discovery or the pursuit of knowledge. This value can be either 0 for low interest or 1 for high interest. Is your faction interested in gaining superior knowledge over the rival factions? If so, you should choose a 1 for this value.

► **The fourth number** governs the faction's interest in monetary wealth. This value can be either 0 for low interest or 1 for high interest. For example, selecting a 0 for this number would make your faction spend more money, possibly on military or knowledge, depending on how you set the other values.

► **The fifth number** describes the faction's interest in population growth. Like the others, this value can be either 0 for low interest or 1 for high interest.



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Looking at the numbers for Gaia's Stepdaughters, you can gather that they're quite passive and most interested in population growth.

**NOTE**

**Make your faction make sense! For instance, don't make your faction passive, but with a high interest in power and military conquest! Experiment with the variables to get the behavior you want.**

## SOCIAL OUTLOOK AND SPECIAL RULES

The next line of `faction.txt` determines how the faction behaves by giving the A.I certain abilities; for example:

```
TECH, Ecology, SOCIAL, -MORALE, SOCIAL, -POLICE,  
SOCIAL, ++EFFIC, SOCIAL, +PLANET, FUNGNUTRIENT, 1
```

This line is rather complex and contains many different variables that can do everything from providing free energy credits at the start to modifying the faction's social engineering. Let's take a look at Gaia's Stepdaughters first, then explain some other values that can be used in this special rules line.

The first word in the Gaians' special rules line is "TECH." This determines which free technology the faction is given at the beginning of the game. In this case, Gaia's Stepdaughters are provided with the ecology technology at the beginning of any new game. Next, you'll see four appearances of the word "SOCIAL" followed by modifiers. These indicate changes made to the faction's social engineering. Here, the Gaians come predesigned with -1 morale, -1 police, +2 efficiency and



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+1 planet. Finally, the last value is "FUNGNUTRIENT," which is followed by a number that modifies the number of nutrients this faction can produce in fungus squares.

**W A R N I N G**

*The social outlook and special rules should be on a single line. You must keep the line less than 256 characters long if you want your faction to be recognized by Alpha Centauri.*

To balance the game, each faction only carries a certain number of special rules. In the following section, you'll find each special rule you can use to help form your faction's behavior (the special rule is first followed by a parameter in parentheses). If there are no parentheses after the variable, then it's an "on or off" value: Placing the word in the file will turn it on; not putting it in will turn it off.

- **COMMERCE (number):** This value increases commerce rate. If you want to develop an economic faction, increasing this number could have a positive result.
- **COMMFREQ:** The faction receives an extra communication frequency at the beginning of the game.
- **DRONE (number):** The faction receives an extra drone at each base per this number of citizens. Increasing this number will make base management a bit more difficult for the faction.
- **ENERGY (number):** Gives free energy credits at the game's start. If you want the faction to start out wealthy, just crank up this value. Because high energy reserves can unbalance the game, be careful of over-inflating this statistic.
- **FACILITY (number):** With this variable, you can give the faction a free base facility with each new base built. The value is the number of the base facility from the list in alpha.txt. For instance, the



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Hive faction defaults with a facility value of 4, which gives them a free perimeter defense with every base. Keep in mind that this is for facilities only and shouldn't be used for secret projects.

- **FANATIC (number):** A value of 0 gives a 25 percent bonus on attack.
- **FREEPROTO:** Gives the faction free prototype costs.
- **FUNGENERGY (number):** Modifies the amount of energy a faction can gather from fungus squares.
- **FUNGMINERALS (number):** Modifies the amount of minerals the faction can gather from fungus squares.
- **FUNGNUTRIENT (number):** Modifies the amount of nutrients the faction can gather from fungus squares.
- **HURRY (number):** Gives a percentage change to the cost of using the Hurry button in production. By altering this number, you can make using the Hurry button rather expensive for certain factions—or rather cheap!
- **IMMUNITY (+/- social):** Makes the faction immune to minus effects in a particular social area.
- **INTEREST (number):** A nonzero number (positive or negative) provides a constant percentage interest per turn to the energy reserves. If the value is zero, the modifier is +1 per base each turn. Again, because this provides much-needed energy reserves, inflating this can unbalance the game.
- **MINDCONTROL:** Makes bases and vehicles immune to mind control.
- **MORALE (number):** Modifies the faction's morale. Placing a zero in this variable exempts the faction from negative modifiers. If you want the faction to begin the game with a positive outlook, you can increase this number.



► **PENALTY (+/- social):** Doubles the amount of negative effect in a particular social area.

► **POPULATION (number):** This number is added to the population limit of each base.

► **PSI (percentage):** Gives the faction a combat bonus for using psi combat. If you wish to construct a psionic faction, increasing this number would be a good start.

► **RESEARCH (number):** The faction receives this number of research points per base per turn. A research-heavy faction, for instance, could benefit from extra points in this area.

► **ROBUST (+/- social):** Lessens the intensity of minus effects in certain social areas. Again, the variables are gathered from the social engineering section.

► **SHARETECH (number):** The faction gains any technology known to the specified number of players.

► **SOCIAL (+/- social):** Alters the faction's social engineering. Consult alpha.txt (see Appendix A) to see what the variables are. Pluses or minuses modify each variable; this will change the social outlook of the faction by giving it bonuses or penalties in certain areas.

► **TALENT (number):** Gives the faction extra talent at each base per this number of citizens. Increasing this number will make base management a bit easier for the faction.

► **TECH (technology advance):** This determines which technology the faction begins the game with. Keep the tech tree in mind when providing a free technology; you don't want to provide extremely powerful items to one faction at the start.



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- **TECHCOST (number):** This value is a percentage modifier for the technology research rate. For example, if this number is 150, each discovery costs 150 percent of the usual research value.
- **TERRAFORM:** Halves the cost of raising or lowering terrain with your terraforming units.
- **UNIT (number):** Provides a free unit at the start. The value is gathered from the units list inside alpha.txt. This is one of the most powerful ways to differentiate your factions. A military faction, for instance, could begin the game with a few military units, but no scouting or terraforming units.
- **VOTES (number):** Determines the faction's number of election votes.

**W A R N I N G**

*You shouldn't change the names given to these variables (such as TECH and MINDCONTROL) because you can't change what they actually do. You should only alter the values that modify the variable.*

The next section in the faction's text file determines its social outlook. There are two lines for this, letting you choose two default elements for your faction. Let's look at the Gaians again:

```
Economics, Green, PLANET  
None, None, nil
```

Here you see the social element followed by the belief and a modifier. The first line indicates the faction's preferred social model. The Gaians' preferred social model is the green economic model, which, as you see here, modifies the PLANET social effect. The next line indicates a social model the faction can't use. Adding the "nil" at the end





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removes the social model from the faction's attributes. For example, if you wanted the Gaians to be prohibited from using police state politics, you could add the following for your second line:

```
Politics, Police, nil
```

Because the second line actually eliminates that model from the faction's choices, use it with extreme care. Eliminate social models using logic; for instance, don't eliminate power values from a combative faction. Because the next line is filled with "None" and a "nil," the Gaians have no other modification to their default social outlook.

**NOTE**

There are numerous special rules that alter the way the faction behaves. Don't feel like you must modify every one to construct your custom faction. Too much isn't necessarily a good thing.

DESCRIPTIONS AND  
TRANSLATOR TEXT

After you've selected the social outlook, it's time to provide a bit of description and language for your faction. Using `faction.txt` as an example, scroll down in the text until you reach the following line:

GAIAN, GAIAN,

This line contains two versions of your faction name. The first is the long faction name, and the second is a short version. For some reason these are identical in `faction.txt`, but you should use two different



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names for your custom faction. Other factions will use the names from this line when addressing you inside the game.

## LINDLY, SCOTT, LINDLY'S REST,

This line contains names that aren't yours or your faction leader's. Think of these names as acquaintances of your faction. The final phrase, here "Lindly's Rest," is the first name plus some ambiguous object or relic.

LADY, BEAUTIFUL, TREE-CRAZY,  
ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE,  
ECO-DAFT,

This line begins with your faction leader's title, such as Chancellor or President (here, it's "Lady"). Next, you'll find a series of adjectives; these adjectives describe your leader. The first is positive, the second is negative, the third is positive, and the fourth is negative.

## W A R N I N G

*In-game text follows the rules laid out in the faction.txt template. You should adhere to the rules that govern the description and translator text section. If you don't, the in-game text will read funny when your faction leader is being described or is speaking.*

## NATURE LOONY

This line is simply an insulting description of your faction leader. In this case, Deirdre is referred to as "Nature Loony."



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The section following the insult begins the translator text. If you study the faction.txt template, you will notice a section that begins with "##SAMPLE SENTENCES FOR TRANSLATORS." Look closely at the phrases in this section, and you will notice similar phrases in the faction's active rules area. For example, in the sample sentences section, you will notice the following line:

```
## [Together we shall both] preserve Planet's native  
life [and ...]
```

Ignore the pound signs; these are simply indicating that this portion is part of the template. Notice the phrasing inside the brackets. This is text that is inside the game. The words outside the brackets are those you can alter for your faction. If you look below, you'll find a matching phrase inside the active portion of the faction template:

```
preserve Planet's native life
```

Now, if you wanted to make your faction a powerful war machine, you could change this line to "conquer our weak enemies." If you plug your new phrase back into the sample sentence, you'll find that the in-game text now reads "Together we shall both conquer our weak enemies and...."

**NOTE**

The in-game text is a vital part of making your faction complete. Take care when choosing phrases and words for your faction. You don't want the in-game text turning into a bunch of gibberish!



## BASE NAMES AND BLURBS

The next element of modifying your faction is to give the colony special default base names. Scroll down to the section titled #BASES; here you will find a list of default base names that the faction will choose from throughout the game. Below the land bases, you'll find the water bases, which can also be altered.

Underneath the section on bases, you can alter your faction's default blurb or quote. Here, just change the text in the file, and it will appear in the game.

### W A R N I N G

*You must be careful to keep the formatting consistent with the template. For instance, little details such as spacing and symbols, particularly the symbols at the left margin, are vital to keeping the text formatted correctly when it appears in the game.*

Below the quote, you'll find a section beginning with #DATALINKS1. Under this heading are four categories; you shouldn't change the category names, only the text inside the brackets. The text you place here will appear in the Datalinks section of Alpha Centauri describing your faction.

The next section, headed #DATALINKS2, lists your faction's characteristics as they will appear in the Datalinks section of the game. For consistency's sake, these should match the characteristics you've given your faction in the second line of the file. Here, you will indicate any positive or negative modifiers to social effects or any special abilities or rules given to your faction. Place any descriptive text inside the brackets.

Finally, below the Datalinks sections, you'll see a few more quotes. These quotes affect the in-game text when your faction proposes or agrees to a truce or a treaty. Again, keep the formatting consistent



and only change the words. There are a few strings that shouldn't be changed; these begin with a dollar sign (\$).

## IMPLEMENTING YOUR FACTION

After you've created your faction, save the file, giving it the same name as faction. For the faction to work inside the game, you must make a minor change to `alpha.txt`, the text file that includes all Alpha Centauri's rules. Find the section of `alpha.txt` that begins with `#FACTIONS`. Inside the section, you'll see two columns of faction names separated by commas:

```
#FACTIONS  
GAIAN, GAIAN  
HIVE, HIVE  
UNIV, UNIV  
MORGAN, MORGAN  
SPARTANS, SPARTANS  
BELIEVE, BELIEVE  
PEACE, PEACE
```

The word on the left is the faction filename that Alpha Centauri is expecting. The second word is the search string. These should be identical. After creating your custom faction, you must remove one of the predesigned factions and replace it with your own (it doesn't matter which one you replace). For instance, if your faction is The Roman Empire and you name the file "romans.txt," your list would look something like this:



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#FACTIONS

ROMANS, ROMANS

HIVE, HIVE

UNIV, UNIV

MORGAN, MORGAN

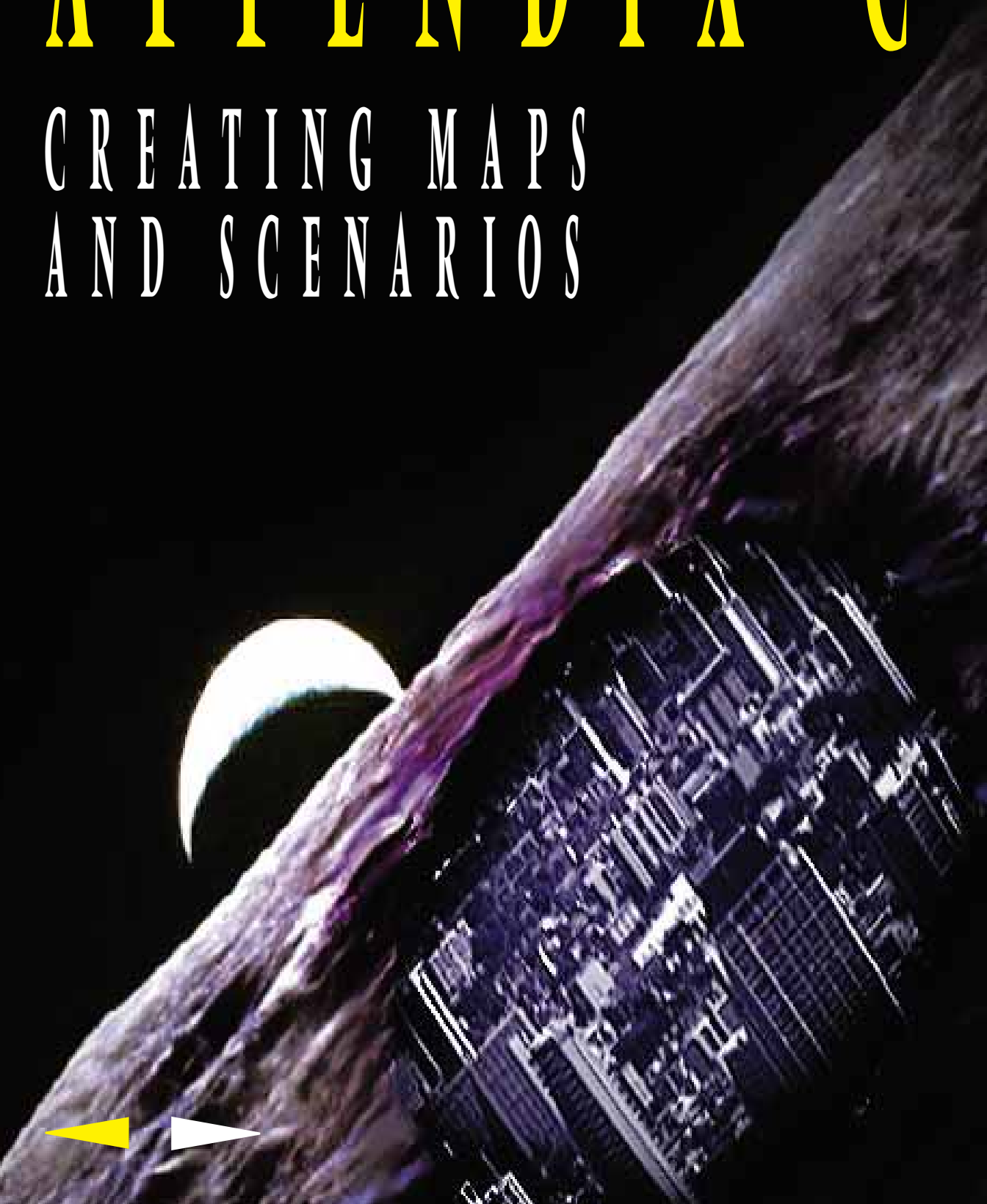
SPARTANS, SPARTANS

BELIEVE, BELIEVE

PEACE, PEACE

# APPENDIX C

## CREATING MAPS AND SCENARIOS







**A**fter you've tinkered with the general rules and created custom factions, it's time to put your ideas to work by creating brand new maps or scenarios. Alpha Centauri, along with being one of the most customizable games of all time, ships with a full-featured map and scenario editor.

In this appendix, you'll find tips and tricks for building maps and scenarios that every Alpha Centauri player can enjoy. We'll start by discussing the basics of creating multiplayer maps using the map editor. Then, we'll look at creating custom scenarios—maps that are fleshed out with backstory and specific objectives. Before we're through, you'll learn how to modify in-game text and swap in your own sound effects. Some of this involves tweaking Alpha Centauri's files, much as you edited `alpha.txt` and `faction.txt` in Appendices A and B. If you haven't already read those appendices, do so before you tackle this material.

## BUILDING MULTIPLAYER WORLDS

You can use the tools provided with Alpha Centauri to create not only single-player missions but also maps for your multiplayer contests. Players from all over the world exchange their custom-made landscapes on the dozens of Alpha Centauri fan web sites. This section will provide some essential rules for effective multiplayer map design. Keep these tips in mind to get the most out of your designs and achieve the goal of any good multiplayer map: creating a fun and exciting game!



## SIZE DOES MATTER

Don't dive into Alpha Centauri's map editor without first devising a blueprint. The first decision you make when you load the editor could be one of the most important: What size do you want to make the planet? Maps come in all sizes and gameplay can differ greatly depending on whether you create a huge map or a tiny one. Maybe you want to feature an end-of-game where superpowers will collide or compete for technological advances. Or perhaps you want a game that features early and frequent conflict, where each player must remain on his toes as he moves up the technology tree.

### NOTE

**Bigger isn't always better! Some of the best games will take place on the smallest map size.**

Everything that you decide about your map, from starting points to resource location, will depend on the size of the planet. After you've decided on a size, keep that size in mind when terraforming land, inserting hills, and placing resources. If you have a large planet, you'll want to keep things spread out, making sure not to bunch resources in one particular spot. Then again, on a small planet, each batch of resources could be extremely vital to the growth of a particular player, and the map should be designed accordingly.

## NARROWING YOUR FOCUS

Once you have chosen the size of the planet, your next big decision will be what type of game you wish to encourage. Are you gearing the map



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more toward economy or more toward warfare? If you decide to focus the map on a particular aspect of Alpha Centauri, remember that when providing resources, units, and other essential commodities.

Giving each player certain units from the outset could be one way to steer the game in a particular direction. For instance, if you are hoping for a game filled with warfare, you could provide each player with some basic combat units at the start of the game. Or, if you are looking for a game filled with discovery and research, you could scatter bonus technologies around the land.

## NOTE

**Be careful when providing units for your players. Keep things balanced at the beginning; you don't want one player to gain a quick advantage because he has superior starting units.**

Though you don't absolutely need to have a theme for your map, you should try to keep the game within a certain focus to make it unique and intriguing for the players. Giving them free reign in wide-open spaces might make your game no different than just playing a random map. Try constructing a storyline for your map or initiating some alliances right from the beginning.

## DISTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Without nutrients, minerals, or energy, a game of Alpha Centauri won't last very long. Each player needs an equal area of resources upon which to build his empire. Don't stick one player with abundant forest or rocky tiles while giving another player nothing but fungus squares.

The initial bases are only the beginning. You must provide ample resources around the map so each player can expand and construct new bases. You don't necessarily need to place these resources in a



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symmetrical pattern, but you should try to give each player an equal shot at securing the most resource-heavy areas. The same goes for special bonus resource tiles; place these carefully and try not to give one player or a certain area an advantage.

**NOTE**

Place a few special “treasure” spots around your map. If players suspect that there might be good construction areas scattered around, they’ll be encouraged to explore. When players explore, they meet others, and the meat of the game—diplomacy and conflict—will ensue.

## LOGICAL LANDSCAPES

Remember, you’re designing a new planet with each map. While an all-land map might have its interesting moments, most players will desire to venture out into a sea and construct sea bases and vessels. If you do create an all-sea or all-land map, warn the players beforehand. A player who begins researching technologies to obtain a sea advantage, only to learn there is no sea, might be very annoyed.

Take your time planning elevations and waterways. Elevation becomes important when players begin constructing solar collectors; provide each player with an elevation near his starting position to give him the option of constructing these energy-producing structures. Waterways are important, too. Give your planet character by mixing up the landscape, but keep the terrain logical and realistic.

## CONSERVATIVE BONUSES

Supply pods add a random element to most Alpha Centauri games. Almost anything can be found in a supply pod, from extra energy



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reserves and bonus technologies to alien artifacts and mind worms. Since they can quickly turn the tide in any game, be extremely careful where you place supply pods. Placing too many in one area can give one player a huge advantage as the game progresses.

**NOTE**

**Place a few supply pods around or near the players' starting positions to encourage exploration.**

Monoliths are quite similar. As you know, a monolith square will upgrade and heal units as well as providing nutrients, minerals, and energy to any nearby base. These are extremely powerful bonuses and you should take great care when placing Monoliths on your map. Make them rewards for exploration or aggressive play instead of just throwing them around haphazardly.

## ASSIGNING STARTING POSITIONS

A player's starting position could mean the difference between an engaging middle game or an early defeat. As mentioned previously, be careful when placing and providing resources and be equally careful when placing your players' starting positions. You don't want to overly restrict player movement by shoving starting positions against rivers, lakes, or huge fungus patches. However, giving each player too much room to expand could be equally destructive. The chief objective is to stand each player on equal footing, providing similar movement, resources, and bonuses.



Along with balanced starting positions, try to give each player several territory expansion options. Make sure there are a variety of alleys in or out of a player's area, so you don't create a single choke point that can be easily defended or attacked. To keep a map interesting from game to game, there should be numerous directions in which a player can expand and construct new bases.

## INTEGRATING CUSTOM RULES AND FACTIONS

Custom rules and factions can add a whole new dimension to your multiplayer map. As noted in Appendix A, you can make your map load and play with your customized files by placing it in a directory with a modified version of the rules file (alpha.txt) and a custom faction or two.

### NOTE

**Complement your custom factions with your map design. For instance, if you want to play with a custom faction based on the Roman Empire, design your map to look like the landscape of ancient Rome.**

Be careful when adding custom rules, however. Even minor changes to the rules can create drastically different games and situations. Keep your custom rules and factions in mind when designing the map. The sign of a professional map is that everything works together to create an exciting and interesting gaming experience.



## TEST! TEST! TEST!

Just as designers test their games for months before the release date, you should take the time to test your map—then test it some more. Make sure that the starting points are unrestricted, that each player has an equivalent amount of resources, that your customized rules or factions don't unbalance the game, and, most of all, that the multiplayer map is fun!

## DESIGNING SCENARIOS

Another avenue for your creative genius might be creating single- or multiplayer scenarios. A scenario usually means a world or map that features a backstory with specific objectives. Typically, elements such as resources, units, and map layout all reflect the scenario. For instance, if your scenario revolves around a small faction building its power to battle an established, overbearing empire, you should adjust the building blocks accordingly. The small faction will need plenty of resources, so it can quickly build units to defend itself. Further, the smaller faction will need room to expand to compete with the larger foe.

This section will cover the basics of designing an objective-specific scenario. You'll see how to create the map, assign objectives, and even change in-game text and sound files to give your scenario a unique feel.

## MAKING THE MAP

Creating the map for a single-player scenario is very similar to creating a multiplayer map. Study the section earlier in this appendix on creating a balanced and enjoyable multiplayer world. Keep in mind the





importance of placing resources and providing options. The landscape is the foundation on which your entire scenario rests. Each element of the map, from the planet size to the amount of water, should complement your scenario, particularly any customized rules, factions, or text you plan to use.

## NOTE

**An entertaining scenario might revolve around a real-world location. Try to build a map based on a real area, like a country or a state, and adjust your rules, factions, and sounds accordingly.**

Balance is one of the key issues in designing your scenario map. Careful placement of resources and bonuses, such as monoliths and supply pods could mean the difference between a challenging scenario and one that's too easy or too difficult.

## ASSIGNING OBJECTIVES

Assigning objectives to your scenario can be very important in determining your map layout, including where to place preconstructed bases, farms, mines, roads, and so on. Is the objective to wipe out all other factions or to be the first to build a technology advance or secret project?

## NOTE

**Be sure to assign realistic objectives. Having to construct a certain technology or project by a certain year can be difficult, especially if that year comes rather quickly. Further, pitting an undermanned player against several powerful factions could prove to be more frustrating than fun.**



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A text file named `scenario.txt`, can be placed inside the directory where your scenario or map file is located. This file contains introduction and story text for your scenario as well as in-game text for the objectives and win or lose messages. There are several variables or strings placed in the scenario text file; be sure to remain consistent and use the files that are associated with the tutorial scenarios as templates for your own. Each variable is explained in a portion of the file. Let's look at that portion.

```
##optional for both #INTRO and #OBJECTIVES## $TITLE1
$NAME2 of the $FACTION3 => Player's faction## $DATE4
= current date, includes "M.Y."## $NUM0 = objectives
needed for victory## $NUM1 = objectives needed for
instant victory
## $NUM2 = objectives in player's possession at
beginning
## $NUM3 = ending year of scenario
```

This section details what each variable stands for. For instance, `$DATE4` is the current date of the scenario, and `$NUM2` would be the number of objectives in the player's possession at the beginning of the scenario. You can use this table to plug values into various portions of `scenario.txt`.

```
#INTRO#xs 320#caption SCENARIO^^^^Commencing
Scenario^^^^$TITLE1 $NAME2 of the $FACTION3
^^
^^$DATE4
^^
```

In the section marked `#INTRO`, you can alter the text underneath the phrase "Commencing Scenario." By using the preceding reference table, you can insert your own in-game text into the scenario. For example, if your title was "Chancellor," your name "Ed," your faction



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name "The Hemmings," and the starting date was 2110, you could change the text to resemble the following:

```
#INTRO#xs 320#caption SCENARIO^^^^Commencing  
Scenario^^^^Chancellor Ed of the The Hemmings^^^^2110  
^^
```

## W A R N I N G

*The most important thing to remember when editing the text in the scenario.txt file is to keep the format identical to the template. Change only the variables listed in the reference area; leave the other symbols and punctuation as you see them. Don't erase the original scenario.txt file. Work with a back-up so you always have a fresh original to fall back on.*

## ALTERING TEXT QUOTES

Inside the root Alpha Centauri directory is a file named blurbs.txt. This text file contains all the text for the story background and the character quotations that are shown during the opening and acquisition of new technology advances. You can edit the file with any word processor or text editor. Save the edited version in the directory where you place your scenario and it will be loaded each time the scenario is run.

Let's look at an example quote and how to alter it:

```
##Biogenetics#TECH0We hold life to be sacred, but we  
also know the foundation of lifeconsists in a stream  
of codes not so different from the successive  
frames of a watchvid. Why then cannot we cut one
```



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code short here, and  
start another there? Is life so fragile that it can  
withstand no  
tampering? Does the sacred brook no improvement?

^

^           – Chairman Sheng-ji Yang,

^           "Dynamics of Mind"

The headings, here "##Biogenetics" and "#TECHO," shouldn't be changed. This tells the Alpha Centauri program where to place the quote. The text following the heading, however, can be completely different. Try to stay within the word count, though—don't write a novel for each quotation. Below the text is the name of the person who said it. Keep the formatting here identical, leaving the carets (^) right where they are. Test your changes to make sure the quote formats correctly inside your custom game.

## CUSTOMIZING SOUND FILES

Alpha Centauri's sound files are stored as .WAV and .MP3 files. Fortunately, these are two of the easiest file formats to change. To adjust the sound files, you must do a full installation of the game, which will copy over all the necessary sound files to your hard drive. Because there may come a time when you want to revert back to the initial state, you should also back up any files you change.

### W A R N I N G

*This section is mainly for advanced users. Be extremely careful when replacing sound files. Back up all the files, so you can restore them at any time. Reinstalling Alpha Centauri will overwrite any changes you've made to the sound effect or voice files.*



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The sound effect files reside in the FX directory and are stored as .WAV files. There are a number of Windows 95/98 programs that can create and record .WAV files, including the simple program Sound Recorder. You should investigate the files to determine which sound effect is represented by which file. Then, just record your own and replace the file.

**NOTE**

**Don't change sound files just for the sake of changing them. In creating a well-rounded scenario, you should make all the new sound effects complement the scenario's storyline and objectives.**

Inside the VOICES directory, you'll find recordings of the various quotes played throughout the game. By purchasing or downloading a shareware .MP3 encoder, you can create your own voices to be played throughout the game. As with the sound effects, you can just replace the existing files with your own creations.



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