

technoir

PLAYER'S GUIDE



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

Visit TechnoirRPG.com for more information and downloads.

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GENERATION

1. Select three training programs

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

2. Determine verb ratings

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

3. Select adjectives

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

4. Select three connections

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

5. Assign relationship adjectives

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

6. Purchase objects using kreds

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

7. Finish the protagonist

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

TRAINING PROGRAMS

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

VERBS

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

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



COAX

Used to influence people through words and body language.

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



DETECT

Used to notice details and track people.

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



FIGHT

Used to attack bare handed and with melee weapons.

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



HACK

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

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



MOVE

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

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



OPERATE

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

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



PROWL

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

☒+ Hidden

Distracted ☒-

☒+ Disguised

Oblivious ☒-

Blind ☒-



SHOOT

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

☒+ Covered

Shocked ☒-

Bloody ☒-

Maimed ☒-



TREAT

Used to mend physical and psychological wounds.

☒+ Stimulated

Nauseated ☒-

☒+ Strong

Poisoned ☒-

☒+ Healthy

Diseased ☒-

ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are traits that make you stand out.

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

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

Relationship Adjectives

affectionate	lustful	respectful
dependent	obsessive	sympathetic
loyal	protective	trusting

CONNECTIONS

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

INFO

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

FAVORS

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

Chop

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

Date

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

Deal

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

Fence

Buy a bulk load of stolen merchandise for 5 Kreds.

Fix

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

Ride

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

Shark

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

Splice

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

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



OBJECTS

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

GUNS

ARX-21

An assault rifle.

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

Base Cost: 5

Barker

A heavy pistol.

Tags: loud, powerful

Base Cost: 2

Duster

A shotgun.

Tags: loud, scattershot

Base Cost: 2

Jaguar

A submachine-gun.

Tags: burst fire

Base Cost: 1

Stinger

A light, concealable pistol.

Tags: small

Base Cost: 1

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

WEAPONS

Baton

A non-lethal weapon often carried by security personnel.

Tags: blunt

Base Cost: 1

Katana

A Japanese sword. Popular among ronin wannabes.

Tags: deadly, sharp

Base Cost: 2

Knife

A small blade that can be easily concealed.

Tags: sharp, small

Base Cost: 2

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

ARMOR

Jumpsuit

Padded overalls, covered in pockets.

Tags: impact armor

Base Cost: 1

Kevlar Vest

Standard issue armor for security personnel.

Tags: ballistic armor

Base Cost: 1

Riot Shield

Clear plastic, portable barrier.

Tags: protective

Base Cost: 1

Armor Upgrades: condition monitor, derma-linked, linked



CYBERNETICS

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

Cyberarm

An artificial arm replacement.

Tags: nerve-linked

Base Cost: 1

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

Cyberear

Electronic inner-ear replacement.

Tags: nerve-linked, mic, sound

Base Cost: 3

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

Cybereye

Electronic eye replacement.

Tags: cam, display, nerve-linked

Base Cost: 3

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

Cyberhand

An artificial hand replacement.

Tags: nerve-linked

Base Cost: 1

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

Cyberleg

An artificial leg replacement.

Tags: nerve-linked

Base Cost: 1

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

Headjack

A cranially implanted computing interface.

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

Base Cost: 4

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

Reflex Stimulators

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

Tags: nerve-linked, quick, reflexive

Base Cost: 3

Upgrades: gesture input



EXTERNAL COMPUTING

Router Patch

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

Tags: derma-linked, linked

Base Cost: 2

Upgrades: encryption, firewall

Specks

Augmented reality Interface glasses, earbuds, and motion trackers.

Tags: display, gesture input, linked, sound

Base Cost: 4

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

GEAR

Medkit

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

Tags: bandages, linked, stims

Base Cost: 3

Descent Line

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

Tags: harness, linked, retractable cable

Base Cost: 3

Stealthsuit

A black bodysuit with coolant to fool thermal sensors.

Tags: linked, thermal dampeners

Base Cost: 2

Upgrades: condition monitor, derma-linked

VEHICLES

aCar

Fully automated street vehicle.

Tags: automatic, linked, passengers, spheels

Base Cost: 14

Goblin

A high-performance muscle car.

Tags: linked, passengers, spheels, turbo

Base Cost: 14

Hauler

Armored truck.

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

Base Cost: 16

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

SkyRabbit

A high-speed dual-rotor-fan helicopter.

Tags: cam, linked, rotor-fans, thrusters

Base Cost: 14

Upgrades: burst fire, gun, long-range

Switchblade

An agile, uni-speel motorcycle.

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

Base Cost: 14

DRONES

Buzzer

Rotor-powered drone.

Tags: cam, linked, mic, rotorfan

Base Cost: 4

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

Griller

A mini-tank.

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

Base Cost: 6

Upgrades: burst fire, gun, long-range

Spyder

Robotic arthropod.

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

Base Cost: 5

Upgrades: syringe

TAGS

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

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

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

matched pair: the object comes with an mirrored twin

mic: a sensitive omni-directional microphone

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

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

olfactory splice: electronic connection to the nerves that handle smell

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

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

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

powerful: a gun that fires high-caliber rounds

protective: a barrier to shield the user from attacks

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

reach: a melee weapon that is longer than most

reflexive: stimulates the user to react rapidly to stimuli

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

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

robot arm: an articulate limb controlled remotely

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

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

scope: an aiming mechanism with zoom lenses

sharp: designed to cut or pierce a target

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

small: reduced in size, generally concealable

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

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

sound: three-dimensional, immersive audio playback

spheels: spherical wheels that allow 360-degree maneuverability

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

stims: a dosage of steroids to jumpstart the adrenaline system

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

strong: limb articulation that can apply great force

synthskin: artificial dermal layer that imitates human skin

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

thermal dampeners: coolant used to fool thermal sensors

thermal-imaging: heat sensors displayed as a visual overlay

thrown: a weapon that is hurled at a target

thrusters: jets that provide increased speed in the air

treads: traction system to provide mobility over rough terrain

touch feedback: gives a tactile response to Interface interaction

tough: can endure large amounts of wear and impact

toxin-filter: scrubs harmful chemicals from airways or bloodstream

turbo: engine enhancement that provides increased speed over smooth streets

CONTENTION

1. Recharge Push dice

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

2. Assemble the dice

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

3. Describe the action

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

4. Roll the dice

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

5. Determine Reaction

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

6. Resolve the roll

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

7. Apply the adjective

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

8. Discharge Push dice

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

9. Respect the adjective

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

LETHAL CONSEQUENCES

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

RESTORATION

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

Fleeting Adjectives are immediately removed

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

Sticky Adjectives require mending

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

Locked Adjectives require replacement surgery

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

Roll the dice

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

Resolve the roll

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

RECOVERY TIME

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

EXPOSITION

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

TECHNOLOGY

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

ENVIRONMENT

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

SOCIETY

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

Criminals like you.

