

Backgrounds

Backgrounds are traits that describe special advantages and how the character earned them. Backgrounds can only be purchased at character creation, then characters are given 5 points to spend, with each Background dot costing 1 point. They are also assigned a point value from 1-5 similar to Attributes and Abilities.

Allies: Those willing to help you, they can vary from a police officer to a trainer in the gym. This Background represents People who are closest to your character - not Just Pool hall Pals to help him a paycheck- but the bosom companions your character would go to for advice iF he Found Out he had cancer. Thick or thin, wrong or right, an ally is there For your character. Is it possible For an ally to betray your character? Sure it is, ask Othello or Julius Caesar. But that's unlikely to happen unless your character treats his ally badly. (IF he only goes to see the guy when he needs a body hidden, she'll realize the real basis of the relationship.) Friendship is a two-way street, and the chum who bailed your character out last week may be the chump who needs his help right now. It's important to define the relationship between the character and each ally. Are they all members OF the same Masonic group? Childhood playmates? Did some time on the same cell block? Defining the connection gives the Storyteller a much better chance to put your character's allies in the story the way you envisioned them. An ally is most often a normal person; if the situation calls For a write-up, the Storyteller follows only Phase One of character creation (see Chapter Two). An Inspired character may be an ally, but one who's less powerful than the player's character (For starting characters, give the ally only seven transformation points). The higher the rating in this Background, the more capable the ally. So as to not to overshadow the player's character, the Storyteller should Focus more on the Ally's own Backgrounds - connections and assets - rather than creating a powerhouse.

- X You may have Friends but no one truly close.
- One nonInspired ally of moderate ability.
- Two allies, or one Inspired ally.
- Three Friends, or Fewer of greater power or influence.
- Four buddies, or a lesser number who are well connected.
- Five close companions, or a lesser number of truly impressive associates.

Backing: Backing represents your character's standing in an official (or unofficial) organization. This organization could be a business, a government office, the military or a shadowy secret society. If your Storyteller agrees, you may take Backing multiple times to represent status in different organizations. (Perfect For double agents.) As with the Allies Background, your character isn't solely on the receiving end OF the gravy train here. The group looks out For your character, trusts her with its Finances and equipment, gives her leadership over its personnel and so on because it expects the character to Further its goals. (Backing From an organization your character doesn't believe in is ripe with dramatic potential, but don't be surprised if the group stops trusting her pretty quick.) As with Allies, a character who abuses the benefits of her Backing must Face the consequences, sooner or later.

- X None; you're a grunt with no pull.
- You're a minor Functionary, performing For little recognition, but you have a bit of Formal authority to throw around. Example: An army sergeant.
- You've got a stable post with a secretary, acolyte, staff sergeant or other gofer to help you keep your underlings in line. Example: A section editor at a major metropolitan newspaper.

●●● You enjoy a poorly defined middle-management post and can do whatever you want as long as you don't make waves. But if you do make waves, you can catch it from both directions. Example: Vice-president in Charge of Long-Range Planning.

●●●● You have a position OF some authority and privilege, with considerable trust From your organization. You would have to make a major mistake to get in trouble. Example: Catholic Archbishop

●●●●● You're a mover and a shaker, on a First-name basis with anyone in the organization who could take your power away. Example: 33rd- Degree Freemason.

Cipher: A passive Background rather than an active one that requires a roll. It's more of an invisible data shield between your character and all those nasty people who want to find out who or what you are. It isn't any form of physical protection, rather it is a Difficulty applied to any attempt to learn knowledge about you. Cipher isn't a deliberately acquired Background, in many ways it is harder to create than it is to acquire naturally. Those with high Cipher ratings could have been born below the poverty line and outside the system. Their isn't information on you, simply because you never were entered into the system. If you wish to maintain your Cipher rating then you must do things to insure it, like preventing people from acquiring your fingerprints, pictures of you, or your personal information. Cipher can be very useful for a Trinity Agent to have. A high Cipher rating isn't always beneficial. A credit check can't be run on you. If you have a high Cipher rating you have problems with "lost" hotel reservations, "missed" hovercar payments, and "nonexistent" bank accounts.

X Anybody can dig into your past with a minimum of effort.

● You've got a couple Of well-hidden secrets.

●● There is a certain amount of uncertainty about your past.

●●● A mystery wrapped in an enigma.

●●●● Your own mother has to look he.

●●●●● "Who was that masked man?"

Clearance: In many ways, Clearance is a direct counterpoint to Cipher. Clearance represents a character's ability to access data that may be encrypted, hidden, or classified under various levels of secrecy. This Background may stem From a legitimate right to know or it may be the result of months of searching for backdoors and stealing passwords. Clearance generally adds to the dice pool of any attempt to unearth rare or hidden data and cancels the Cipher rating of the search target on a one-for-one basis. Thus, a character with Clearance 2 searching for information on an individual with Cipher 3 makes her Engineering (Computer) roll at +1 difficulty, not +3. Note that Clearance is only good for Finding data that's on the OpNet or in an offline archive that the character would otherwise be denied access to; it won't help find information that wasn't written down, no matter how hard the character looks. Neither does Clearance help with attempts to circumvent computer fail-safes. So if the data in question is stored in a vault, applying Clearance is like pinning on a Fake ID badge; hacking is like using a set of lock picks (note that Clearance is purely the electronic equivalent of the ID badge and doesn't really help the character get into a physical vault).

X None: like most individuals, you don't have any special access to information

● Minimal: you know a few back doors. Extensive: you have the passcodes for a couple of classified archives.

●● Comprehensive: top secrecy is no bar to your queries.

●●● Extensive: you have the passcodes for a couple of classified archives.

●●●● Disturbing: you have a degree of access greater than that of many high officials whose databases you regularly plunder.

●●●●● Electronically Omniscient: if it's out there, you know the codes that will get you into it.

Contacts: Are willing to give you information, they can vary from politicians and police to bureaucrats. Contacts aren't exceptionally close friends like Allies or Followers are, nor do they want to Mentor or train you. Instead they are casual acquaintances that can be used to get information or to contact and deal with the black market. A Contact won't take many risks on your behalf, but they don't take as much maintenance as Allies or Followers do. A good Contact can get you information that you wouldn't normally have access to, or the ability to acquire goods that you normally couldn't, and they can easily be written off if compromised. Of course this works two ways, Contacts will not, normally, take special actions to keep your identity secret.

- X No useful contacts; you have to do your own legwork.
- One major contact, and a couple minor ones.
- Two major contacts, each in a different field, and three to five minor ones.
- Three major contacts spanning several social milieus, and quite a Few minor ones as well.
- Four major contacts--possibly more than one in a given area - and a large number of minor ones.
- Five major contacts, and scads OF minor ones all over the world.

Followers: Like Allies, these characters should be fully developed. However, like Contacts, Followers aren't likely to be as powerful as the character with whom they usually deal (unless one Follower is taken as a three-point or higher Background). They're aides, bodyguards, chauffeurs, boyfriends, publicity managers, secretaries, interpreters... but never independent characters capable of taking the spotlight away from the main heroes, the player characters, Also like Allies, followers need a certain amount of care and respect, lest they find someone else deserving of their loyalty. Remember that Followers don't necessarily have to be human. While true AIs aren't yet in existence in Trinity (with the possible exception those that are far outside the reach of player characters), an advanced SI is almost as good. Also, the occasional Qin diplomat might take it into its head to follow a human or group of humans for unspecified purposes. Likewise, trained animals can be good Followers if the setting is right - especially BEngiBeasts (see the Trinity Tech, Manual, page 106).

- X None; you haven't inspired any one to rally under your banner.
- Two Followers of average ability (equivalent to typical extras), or one who is exceptionally skilled.
- Five average Followers, Or a smaller number of more capable lackeys.
- 10 ordinary Followers, or Fewer who are better.
- 18 Followers, or a lesser number OF improved minions.
- 30 normal followers, or a smaller

Fame: A double edged sword, it can get you premium treatment, but what you do attracts attention.

Influence: The ability to change something in society, it can vary from political where you can get someone's power turned off to judges who can issue search warrants.

Identity: The Identity Background is quite difficult to acquire and is usually bestowed upon a trusted tie by an organization that deals in secrecy and deceit. This Background represents a full cover identity, complete with falsified records and identification documents. Note that this Background isn't always for malicious purposes. Many Norca maintain alternate identities as a matter of course, in case they have to hide out for a while. It's something of a fashion among some clairsentient factions to go on walkabout under an assumed name in order to discover higher truths about one's true self. Higher level of identity usually incorporate some amount of independent Influence or Status; these Backgrounds only function when the character is operating within the assumed Identity's expected role. An Orgoteko operative masquerading as an FSA government official couldn't use his FSA Status to convince his Orgotek superior to reassign him.

- X None you only have your real name and face.
- Transparent you have a driver's license and a holo-vid rental account under an assumed name.
- Flimsy: You've got official current records that stand up to a casual glance, along with a passport and a bank account. You have one point of Status in the organization to which your cover identity holds Allegiance.
- Sturdy Your record and documents can handle casual scrutiny, up to the level given during international travels or misdemeanor arrests. Your cover identity has two points split between Influence and Status.
- Solid: it would take a detailed records check to uncover your duplicity. You have three points to allocate between the influence and Status of your other self.
- Ironclad: even the Ron Trinity would have difficulty finding out that this Identity doesn't "really" exist. Your records are more complete than those of many actual people. The person you claim to be has a total of four dots of Influence and Status.

In Charge: Your character doesn't just have authority in an organization - she is the authority For the organization. Having a character who's Pope or a Four-star general in the US Army is probably beyond the scope of most Adventure series (though you never know). With this enhancement, it is quite plausible to be the ruler of a small nation, the ultimate mastermind behind a global conspiracy or the leader of a fledgling religious cult. Being In Charge is similar, though not quite the same, as having Followers or Influence. Your character wields significant influence if she's in direct contact with underlings, but more often, she is an impersonal Figure who rules From a distance. Her orders are carried through proper channels and trickledown to the individual priests/soldiers/employees, who may choose to ignore or alter them. (Also, it would be extremely irregular if a character In Charge of a business did not have at least Four dots in Resources.)

Influence: influence is a measure of a character's ability to get ordinary society to do her bidding. Influence can be from an official source, as in an elected official or a police officer, or it can come from unofficial sources such as the traditional "15 minutes of fame" Influence is not always universally recognized--a UN Special Inspector may find that she's quite well--respected on the upper levels of Luna but trying to throw her weight around out in the Belt may get her into more trouble than its worth. For that matter, Influence can also be a bad thing when a character is trying to keep a low profile ("Hey, wait a minute! Aren't you Wade Cox? I saw you on *Strike Team* last month! I'm Your biggest fan!"). Accordingly, players should specify just where their character's influence originates. Influence is a rather general form of authority. Players who want their characters to have specific forms of leverage, such as law enforcement powers, are directed to the **Merits and Flaws** section.

- X None; you're nobody special as far as anyone knows.
- "Oh, there's no need for you to wait in line, Madame." Your celebrity is mainly local. 0.
- You're a regional or state influence, such as a mayor or newspaper editor.
- "Can I have your autograph?" In your area of expertise, you're internationally renowned. Alternately, you have a broader influence in a smaller area.
- Everyone in the country knows your name, if not your face.
- Your opinions have broad international power.

Mentor: Someone who you can confide in and is willing to train you. They are generally best left offstage and handled by the Storyteller. A mentor can offer advice, training, the occasional bail-out or equipment loan--be he should never appear to

magically (or psionically) save the day. If he keeps helping the character then how will the youngster ever learn anything?

- X None you haven't caught anyone's attention, or you found a patron worthy of your attention.
- Your benefactor is probably a great deal like you, only more experienced and better connected.
- Your mentor has impressive backing and ability.
- The Person supporting you has exceedingly broad and deep connections and a great deal of experience when it comes to using them.
- It seems like your patron is everywhere and knows everybody.
- Whoever your mentor is she's a major player on the information scene.

Kingpin: Your character doesn't just curry Favor with powerful individuals; he is the ultimate arbiter of Favor. Your character has many capable Folks convinced (perhaps Fraudulently) that it is desperately in their best interests to provide him with any Favor, information or advantage they can. He has dozens of major contacts all around the globe (and may, with the blessing of the Storyteller, make up new ones on the spot). You never have to roll For your character to meet a minor contact, and he can consequently avail himself of their expertise in just about any Field. Yet, cooperation does not mean abject worship. It's one thing to have a contact Fawn over your character, take him to an expensive dinner and let him stay in her luxurious guest house. It's quite another to hit her up For a million dollar loan or ask her to commit murder at your character's convenience. A Kingpin gets to his lofty position by knowing his limits, so rein in your enthusiasm when your Storyteller sets them.

Legions: In addition to the Followers provided by the Background of the same name, your character also has a vast number OF other people who are willing to do what he says. This vague enhancement should be tailored to your character's circumstances. The most pertinent question is: Why are they Following your character? Is he paying them? (Better have some powerful Resources, or better yet, the Wealth Beyond Avarice enhancement.) Are they loyal to his cause? (You might want to buy some Backing.) Are they impressed by your character's personal philosophy? (Then he better well meet you're his standards; nobody likes a hypocrite.) Once you and your Storyteller understand why your character's legions are obedient, it's important to get an idea of how many there are, how loyal they are and what they're capable of doing. There is a roughly triangular relationship between these factors. If your character's legions are Fanatically loyal expert killers, he's likely to have only 50. If they're a bunch of normal people (or, perhaps, a little more gullible than the norm) who are willing to do what your character says as long as it doesn't get them in any trouble or require much effort... well, then there could be thousands of them. As with all Background enhancements, talk it out with your Storyteller until you get something you're both happy with.

Renown: Someone with five dots OF Influence is already respected on a global scale in her area of expertise. Renown is higher than that. When your character speaks about her specialty, it's almost impossible to gainsay her words. An influential person can debate with the top minds in their field: For someone with renown, there is no debate. Anyone who disagrees is probably going to wind up scratching his head and privately reconsidering his beliefs. While the effects of renown are less potent outside a specified area, they still provide immense clout. Even if your character's renown is in the area of art history, her reputation as a great mind of the 1920s is so firm that people will thoughtfully consider her opinions about military strategy, engineering, global politics, economics - or anything else she can speak on knowledgeably.

Requisition: Many pieces of standard equipment listed in the various Trinity books are labeled "restricted." This indicates that they are only available to personnel with the correct training and certification. Requisition is a measure of the character's ability to

acquire such items, whether through honest competence and authorization (“Checked out on it Hell, I wrote the operator’s manual!”) or less honest means (Hey, don’t worry, my money’s always good.”). Characters with high Requisition tend to be military or law enforcement personnel as most restricted items are held tightly by the authorities due to their potential to cause massive damage. Note that requisitioning something does not automatically grant the character the ability to use it properly, nor does it supply personnel to help operate a requisitioned item. Requisition usually lasts for a specified period of time - these items common place, and they need to be returned to the armory once the mission’s over. Note that some of the following examples refer to items published in the **Trinity Technology Manual**.

- X None: you only have access to civilian or standard-issue hardware.
- Minimal: you can get your hands on law enforcement equipment that’s little or no direct threat to other people, such as a Wazukana Lt. Bushido or DataWarp Patton computer agent or a shock ring.
- Useful; you have the ability to acquire items that violate privacy or electronics laws - surveillance equipment, an advanced implant radio or a reality--grade hologram projector. Alternately, you can access mass-produced military-grade small arms up to a coil carbine.
- Dangerous: you’re cleared to use advanced espionage/covert operations bioapps such as a wing pack or a poison glove, vehicles with armor options and nonlethal weapons and experimental (still in field testing or first--generation technology) military small arms like plasma pistols.
- Deadly if the assignment warrants it, you can acquire demolitions equipment, support weapons, or (if you have a properly-certified operator on hand to take control of it) a military vehicle or light VARG. You can also access the Psicom Net or garner space for a team on an out bound Leviathan mission (though scheduling or redirecting a Leviathan mission is beyond the capabilities of player characters).
- “Sorry, maybe next game:” you are authorized to deploy tactical fusion warheads or Code Indigo bioapps ... but you’ll have to explain yourself if you use them.

Resources: An abstract measure of money, or power that can be used to purchase goods or services. (See Resources in the How to Play the Game section.) A character with no Resources has a run down one room apartment with sporadic electricity or barely maintains his share of a larger shared dwelling. More commons they live on the street or in the wilderness.

- Average college student with a small apartment no larger than two bedrooms, and they probably don’t have reliable transportation. After expenses she has about Cr 100 per week in spending money with Cr 200- Cr 600 in cash reserves. If they sell off everything they can raise about Cr 5,000 cash.
- A character at this level of financial stability is relatively comfortable. Her expenses are a bit higher than someone with one dot in Resources but she also has a steadier flow of income and more savings in the bank. She earns about Cr 1,000 a week before expenses and has maybe Cr 250 to play with or save up after she pays her bills. She’s most likely got a large apartment or a small townhouse, a workhorse computer, a handgun if her profession so dictates, and maybe a used vehicle in decent condition. Her savings are in the Cr 2,000-Cr 6,000 range, and she could sell off everything she owns to get about Cr 50,000 if she were absolutely pressed.
- Upper middle class, this individual is doing quite well for herself. She owns either a commuter vehicle and a suburban home (a relative rarity in the overpopulated 22nd century) or a worn and weary spaceship of the “small

transport” category. Before expenses, she pulls down around Cr 5,000 a week; afterwards, she has about Cr 1,000 to spend or save. If she put everything she owns up for auction, she’d gather the modest sum of Cr 750,000. An individual with this level of Resources can support two employees, dependents, or guests at the Resources 1 level without affecting her permanent stability, but things will be tight in the short term.

●●●● An individual with this degree of wealth definitely qualifies as upper class. owns a city home and a vacation home, or one larger residence - perhaps a pressurized dome Mars, a well-off ranch in the outback or a medium-sized interplanetary freighter. They possess a luxury vehicle or two utilitarian ones and may, on her job, have access to exotic weaponry. Her usual weekly income is in the Cr 10,00 range, of which she has around Cr 3,000 to play with or re-invest after paying off expenses. Were she to sell everything, she’d pull in around Cr 1.5 million. She has the financial wherewithal to support a handful of employees at a Resources 2 level without an inconvenient level of drain. Note that Resources 4 is above the pay range of all but the most experienced order-affiliated psions; most characters with this level of Resources need a good explanation as to the source of their money. Paradoxically, freelance psions often make more than their order-employed counterparts, unlike freelancers in many other fields.

●●●●● This character is about as rich as you can get without being the head of a small metacorporation - and for that matter, if she has the appropriate Backgrounds in other places, she may be the head of a small metacorp. She has the proverbial “more money than God,” and is pulling in something on the order of Cr 200,00 a week, with a good Cr 60,000 of that remaining after the bills are taken care of. Her total value, were she to check, is in the Cr 20 million range, and she can afford to pay a couple of Resources 4 right-hand men and a staff of a dozen Resources 3 underlings and a score of Resources 2 flunkies. A character with this level of Resources needs a darn good reason for it, and must either devote a substantial portion of her time to managing her funds or have an executive assistant or investment banker as a full-time Follower or Contact. Most individuals with Resources 5 are neutrals - only the most elite psions are in positions to draw this sort of income.

Retainers: Those that serve you.

Sanctum: Just as a Gadget represents a unique machine or possession, Sanctum represents a unique location. This location could be an Antarctic “Meditation Mansion,” a private island, an underground headquarters, a secret valley - whatever. In any event, it belongs to your character, free and clear. Your character’s rating in this Background determines how exotic her sanctum is, how useful it is to her and how difficult it is for her enemies or simply the curious to discover and infiltrate it. The Sanctum score provides your character’s lair with a Cipher rating of equal level against any attempts to discover its existence and location. This Background may be taken more than once for multiple sanctums.

X No secret lair, but at least your place is clean, right?

● A place that’s either particularly pleasant or unusually secure. A series of three secret rooms under your basement, for instance.

●● Something nice and secure but not really lavish. A remote mountaintop dacha, for example.

●●● A more secure site or one with particular advantages, such as a cave whose mist provides visions of the past.

●●●● A secure, advantageous site, such as a secret silver mine in the middle of a desert oasis that can only be reached safely by air.

- Very secure, and very advantageous: An uncharted island inhabited by amazons who revere you as their goddess-queen.

Status: Position in society that reflects one's station in life. Status measures a character's standing in one particular organization. Note that this isn't necessarily actual measure of rank; an incompetent buffon who's somehow managed to attain the rank colonel may have less Status than a tactical genius lieutenant. A character with Status 3 or higher needs to have a reason for such a position and will have a large stack of responsibilities that they need to juggle lest they lose some of that Status. A character's Status isn't necessarily in the organization as her Allegiance, although this the most common situation. Further, she can have in more than one organization (such as a on detached duty with the UN). If a character tries to apply Status from one to another ("But I'm a high-ranking Orgotek executive!) I should talk to your Legion field commander immediately!"), the effect depends on the state of relations between her "parent" organization and the one she's trying to influence ("Eh, sod off, ye wanker, what d'ye know about covert ops?"). Closely allied groups, such as the CSA and the FSM, generally recognize Status at one level lower. Loosely allied groups, such as Ron and the orders, will usually carry Status over at the cost of two levels. Groups that are coolly neutral toward one another, like ISRA and the Norca, tend to recognize each other's Status as three levels lower. Obviously, organizations that are having poor relations won't recognize Status from the enemy at all, except to determine how rudely the character is treated.

Additional backgrounds can be found at the [White Wolf World of Darkness Website](#), or at [Dark Mush Wiki](#).

A driver's license is a background or merit; what's the difference? Graduating from the class that teaches it is a Knowledge (allowing you to put points in the Drive Ability). The ability to corner like a race car driver is a talent, and the simple ability to drive itself is a skill (Ability). A background is previous knowledge or a previous condition. A Merit is more like a reward; there is only a shade of a difference between the two.

As citizens of Great Britain with an international passport, as well as a birth certificate. They may choose to forgo one or more of these for one background point.