

Ashen Stars: Assignments

As Laser crews are small, personnel may be required to double up, taking on more than one warpside or groundside assignment. Doubling is easier on the ground, but certain warpside assignments must be performed by different people.

First distribute the warpside assignments, plus the mixed assignment of medical officer. The role of communications officer can be doubled up with any other; the remaining warpside assignments should be spread among separate individuals. Next, distribute the groundside assignments, doubling up as needed.

Each crew package sets out minimum requirements in both Investigative and General abilities.

WARPSIDE: Communications Officer (Hailer)

You establish, receive and route communications with other ships, planetary installations, and space stations. More than a glorified space receptionist, you serve as a combination of public relations frontperson and psychological warrior. You facilitate the decision-making process of the crew and convey its intentions to the outside world. In crisis situations, you keep vital information flowing to the stratco, so that the right decisions get made at lightning speed. During space combat, you launch hack attacks on the enemy's computer system, while defending your own from penetration.

Investigative: Linguistics 1, Flattery 1, Reassurance 1, Decryption 1, Data Retrieval 1

General: Communications Intercept 6, Sense Trouble 4

WARPSIDE: Pilot

You plot courses through the spacelanes, navigating the ship through warp corridors. In orbit or near orbital conditions, you engage with the stellar traffic control system to avoid collisions with other vessels. Where the automated system has ceased to function, you keep a steady hand on the helm, ready for unpleasant surprises. In combat, you maneuver the vessel according to the instructions of your stratco. In space, as anywhere else, the best way to win a fight is to not get hit.

Investigative: Geology 1, Astronomy 1

General: Ground Craft 2, Helm Control 6, Shuttle Craft 4

WARPSIDE: Strategic Coordinator (Stratco)

During space combats, you take center chair on the bridge, where you lead the fight. You take in information from the hailer, pilot, wrench and gunner. Then you process it through your mastery of three-dimensional tactical positioning and spit out the orders that send your ship screaming into battle.

General: Athletics 4, Naval Tactics 6, Scuffling 4, Sense Trouble 4, Shooting 4

WARPSIDE: Systems Officer (Wrench)

While the others preen on the bridge, you're down in the bowels of the ship, keeping it running. Whether she's coming apart during a warp corridor breach or withering under a neutronic fusillade, you're the one holding the ship together. You manage the competing resource requests of the bridge crew, take damaged systems offline before they blow, and throw everything you've got into the emergency whatever. When the chips are down, you're the one with your head stuck under an access vent, manually repairing the transducer conduits, while sparks shower all around you.

General: Systems Design 4, Systems Repair 6

WARPSIDE: Weapons Officer (Gunner)

During a naval battle, you operate the ship's weapons console, adjusting the targeting algorithms in response to enemy movements and your own ship's maneuvering. You may select weapon types yourself, when granted leeway by your stratco, or execute assault patterns according to his instructions.

General: Battle Console 6, Scuffling 4, Sense Trouble 2, Shooting 4

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MIXED: Medical Officer (Doc) – tend not to double up Warpside, varies Groundside

Lasering is rough work. There's no greater testament to that fact than the countless wounds you've sealed, the poisonings you've reversed, and exotic cures you've engineered moments before your patient's breath ebbed away. And that's just what you've done for the other members of your crew. On a good day, you get to save a few victims and innocent bystanders in the course of a mission, too. Unluckier subjects wind up as corpses on your operating table, subject to your keen talents as a medical examiner. But above all, your greatest contribution to the team may be a hardbitten awareness of personal frailty.

Investigative: Forensic Psychology 1, Bullshit Detector 1, Virology 1

General: Medic 6, Viro Manipulation 2

GROUNDSIDE: Cultural Officer (Face)

Although all groundside roles assume an ability to deal fruitfully with the witnesses, victims, and potential adversaries you meet, your role places that duty above all others. You know people — their histories, their social organizations, and their behaviour. You're the go-to officer in first contact situations, and when communicating with extreme or unfamiliar subcultures.

Investigative: Anthropology 2, Archaeology 1, History (Combine) 1, Xenoculture 1, Downside 1, Impersonate 1, Respect 2

GROUNDSIDE: Operations Officer (Bagger)

For Lasers, law enforcement is a business as well as a vocation. The operations officer handles logistics, legalities and practicalities. You keep the mission supported with necessary clearances and equipment. Your contribution goes far beyond mere support, however. In the poverty-stricken post-war environment of the Bleed, an ancient motivation for trouble has suddenly risen from the depths of history: material greed. Your mastery of financial matters allows you to track the flow of credits and other negotiables. To put down cases, you follow the money.

Investigative: Forensic Accounting 1, Law 1, Bureaucracy 1, Negotiation 1

General: Business Affairs 4, Preparedness 4, Public Relations 4

GROUNDSIDE: Survey Officer (Mapper)

The exploration mission of the Combine has gone by the wayside with its retreat from the Bleed. That leaves a multitude of questions unanswered among its countless lightly surveyed worlds. You find answers out in the wilderness, in the biologies of undocumented organisms, the properties of unknown minerals, and the side effects of spatial anomalies.

Investigative: Botany 1, Geology 1, Zoology 1, Astronomy 1, Bio Signatures 1, Chemistry 1, Energy Signatures 1

General: Sense Trouble 4

GROUNDSIDE: Security Officer (Chopper)

You draw on the hoariest methods of police work to move cases into the win column. When a suspect needs sweating, you're there to lean in and put the fear in him. When he refuses to surrender for questioning, you've got a disruption pistol in your belt and, if all else fails, a hard pair of fists to batter his jaw. Sure, it's the 25th century and all, but sometimes the old ways are the best ways.

Investigative: Cop Talk 1, Interrogation 1, Evidence Collection 1, Kinetics 1

General: Athletics 4, Scuffling 4, Sense Trouble 4, Shooting 4, Surveillance 4

GROUNDSIDE: Technical Officer (Techo)

When the answer to a mystery revolves around a piece of tech—or can be scanned, enhanced, or analyzed with a piece of tech—you're there to bring your toolkit, your gear bag, and your ingenuity to bear. Whether you need to ID a bomber from his exploded handiwork, slip a holosnail into a target's hidey-hole, or sift the crucial snowflake from an avalanche of data, you're the tech for the job.

Investigative: Explosive Devices 1, Forensic Engineering 1, Holo Surveillance 1, Imaging 1, Industrial Design 1

General: Infiltration 4, Systems Design 2, Systems Repair 6