

# UNBOUND CYBERPUNK



BY GRANT HOWITT AND CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR





## OVERVIEW

You need two things for a cyberpunk game - computers and anti-authoritarianism. Anything else is window dressing. But hey, we like window-dressing, so don't skimp on the rain-slick neon streets, the corporate-sponsored murder shows, the genetic caste system, the mile-high video screens that blare advertising to folks in low orbit, the force-blade punks, the wireless mohawks, the illegally-modified hovercycles, the outdated visions of virtual reality, the art of the slightly crooked deal and the colour of the sky above the port.

Cyberpunk stories tend to take place in a city - where there's money, people, jobs, places to charge your implants and jack in your computers, etc, etc. If they don't operate out of a city, that's going to be a big facet of the narrative.

The other theme of cyberpunk is that there's always someone bigger than you - more money, more friends, more favours owed, more willing to do outrageously nasty things to get ahead. Fight your way to the top of the pile and you realise that all you're doing is getting a better view of the mountains that lay ahead of you.

Often, the best thing that the protagonists of a cyberpunk story can hope for is to find out what's going on and get out alive. Sometimes they might have to settle for one or the other.



# CORE - TOUCHSTONES

	♠	♦	♣	♥
A	Orbital	Neon	Drugs	Virus
2	Rogue ICE	Monolith	Replicants	Gun-running
3	The Wall	Fashion	Poverty	Broadcast
4	New Gods	Memetic Plague	Immigration	Post-Earth
5	Zaibatsu	Surveillance	Augmented Reality	Mind-link
6	Fame	Gender	Genetic Modification	Posthuman
7	Immortality	Smugglers	Street Gangs	Paramilitary
8	Hunger	The 0.0001%	Dead Cities	Forest
9	Arcologies	Organs	Undercover	Slums
10	Metal	Ronin	Cache	Flood
J	Martial Law	Speed	Arcades	Fuel
Q	Encryption	Corporate Spies	Virtual	Advertising
K	Money	Life-streaming	Skyscrapers	Glass



## CORE - THE CREW

The Crew does jobs. The sort of jobs that the cops don't like, and that the corporations could never officially sanction, and that leave you plummeting out of the shattered fortiglass window of a 120th-storey apartment clutching onto a severely overworked security drone, hoping that it can support your weight. Stories about the Crew focus on gathering data, recruiting help, finding materials, rooting out traitors and undertaking complex missions for your employer.

### SAMPLE CORE FOUNDATIONS:

Street samurai; Drone pilots; Ghosts in the machine; Data-thieves; Invisible ID spoofers; Augmented Reality superheroes; Undercover cops; Illegal street racers; Anarchist psychopunks; Escaped celebrity clones; Murderpop TV stars; Avant-garde artistes.

### SAMPLE CHARACTER FOUNDATIONS:

Disgraced bodyguard; Cybernetic experiment; High-risk courier; Aggressive hacker; Doxie-boi; Professional lifestreamer; Slick corporate suit; Illegal clone; Back-alley neurosurgeon; Uploaded consciousness.

### EACH MEMBER OF THE CREW ANSWERS:

*Why are you doing this job?*

*Work as a group to answer:*

*What went wrong on your last job?*

*What's the next job you've got lined up?*

*Who's bankrolling all this?*

*Who gets pissed off if you succeed?*

### RECOVERY POWER

**AMPED UP.** [Recharge: End of scene] When you make a RECOVER action, instead of normal stamina recovery, heal 15 and increase your maximum stamina by 1 until the end of the scene.



# TRAIT: FLATLINE

You died. But: you got better. They copied your mind and now you're walking around in a vat-grown body ("choose from one of seven glamorous prestige models, or browse our budget range") or you're plugged into a drone really wishing you had arms and skin again. The reason they copied your mind is because you're one of the greatest console cowboys the net had ever seen, and since your death, you've only become better.

(If you don't want to play a necromantic sliver of ROM buried in the forebrain of a vat-fresh clone, you can just use this trait to represent being an ordinary, living, totally boring, hacker.)

***Who uploaded your consciousness, and what do they want from you?***

***Where's the original source code of your mind stored?***

## COLLAPSE HACK

[Recharge: You make a RECOVER action] Drop to Stamina 0. Your STRIKE actions may be made up to 3 areas away as you project your consciousness. You may not move, but a friendly character can PUSH you with a USE action or drag you along with them as part of a challenging MOVE action. When you'd take damage from playing a RED attack card, you discard directly from your character deck instead. If you take a wound, lose an additional 5 cards.

You can leave the collapse state at the beginning of any of your turns as a free action.

**ADVANCED:** Once per round, when you would take damage, an ally in your area takes the damage instead.

***What's the worst thing that's happened to your body while you weren't in it?***

## OVERLOAD

[Limited 3] Immediate interrupt on a STRIKE or SHOOT against you or someone in your area. Make an opposed USE check; if you succeed, their attack fails.

**ADVANCED:** If you succeed at the use check, they take half the damage they would have inflicted (rounding up) as their weapon overloads.

***What's the hardest weapon to hack into?***

## LOCKDOWN

[Limited 3] As a USE action, sever a connection attached to any area that is within 2 areas of you. This connection stays severed until you open it as a free action or choose to sever a different one. If there are no other means of leaving the area, characters in the area may leave it but take a wound for doing so.

**ADVANCED:** You and your allies may use the connections you have severed, but adversaries may not.

***Who have you trapped with this power that you wish you hadn't?***

## MIND CONTROL

[Limited A] Make a contested USE action against an enemy within 2 areas. If you fail, this power is not triggered. If you succeed, you gain control of their mind.

Drop to Stamina 0. You may not move, but a friendly character can PUSH you with a USE action or drag you along with them as part of a challenging MOVE action. When you'd take damage from playing a RED attack card, you discard directly from your character deck instead. If you take a wound, lose an additional 5 cards.

On your turn, you may not make actions but instead control your target's body, choosing two actions as normal. The target may not use your powers or boosts and instead uses their own, if applicable. On each of their turns, the enemy may attempt to end the possession in the same way as they would end a BLEED, but may take no other actions.

**ADVANCED:** The first time a target would end the possession, it continues.

***What's the strangest mind you've ever occupied?***



## TRAIT: UPGRADED

You have machinery in your skin (or a sponsored piece of equipment) that gets more powerful the better you perform in battle. This could be part of a corporate military application, a deadly gameshow, or a televised ultraviolent docu-drama. What does your upgrade look like? It is big and showy, or sleek and concealed? Are you covered in exposed wires and metal, or is everything covered in synthetic NU-skin?

(If you're not playing a cyberpunk game, these abilities could also be used to represent dark magic powered by blood.)

At the start of each battle, these abilities start at low power. When you perform the actions listed below (as dictated by your role), your ability increases in power to medium. Once you fulfill the second action, your ability reaches high power, and it will stay there until the end of the battle or you are taken out of action (at which point it reverts to low power).

You can only upgrade your powers once per round. If you perform an action that fulfills both criteria, you can choose either to activate.

<b>STRIKER</b>	Stage one - Inflict a wound. Stage two - Take a non-mook adversary out of action.
<b>DEADEYE</b>	Inflict a wound. Stage two - Take a non-mook adversary out of action.
<b>BRAWLER</b>	Stage one - take any adversary out of action. Stage 2 - Inflict more than 6 damage in a single turn.
<b>WARDEN</b>	Stage one - be the target of a SHOOT or STRIKE action but take no damage. Stage two - be the target of three SHOOT or STRIKE actions in a single turn but do not take a wound.
<b>PROTECTOR</b>	Stage one - Give an ally temporary stamina. Stage two - Use your Protector abilities on two targets in the same turn.

Answer one of the following questions:

*Who's sponsoring your modifications, and why?*

*What body part did you lose which meant you had to take a corporation replacement?*



## ICARUS FLIGHT MODS

*"Be their guardian angel - with Icarus.(™)"*

Low: *Assault boosters*. Once per turn, when you MOVE, move 2 spaces.

Medium: *Hover units engaged*. All your moves are escape moves.

High: *Defence net active*. Gain +2 stamina.

**Advanced:** *Ascension array*. [Limited A] As a MOVE action, move to any area on the battlefield.

*Where's your favourite place to fly?*

## MINOTAUR COMBAT MODS

*"Momentum is a girl's best friend.(™)"*

Low: *Kinetic charge*. Do +1 damage if you make a MOVE action on the same turn.

Medium: *Concussive blast*. If you inflict more than 3 damage on a target in a single round, you may PUSH them 1 area, and follow as a free action if you are in their area.

High: *Rip and tear*. If you make two attack actions during a round and hit with both, inflict an additional 2 damage to one of your targets..

**Advanced:** *Eris config*. [Always on] When you PUSH a target, gain 1 temporary stamina.

*What's the highest number of kills you've ever racked up in a single sitting?*

## HOOKSHOT RIG

*"Reach out and touch someone.(™)"*

Low: *Grappling arm*. Treat challenging areas and connections as open.

Medium: *Mag-pull*. At any point during your turn, PULL a target within 1 area into your area.

High: *Aggressive relocation initiative*. When you inflict a wound, you may move the target to any area on the battlefield.

**Advanced:** *Spider array*. [Limited 3] When an adversary makes a MOVE action within 2 areas of you, you may cancel that MOVE action or redirect it to any connected area.

*What's the most dangerous thing you've ever done with your hookshot?*

## ALL-STAR AUGMENTATION ARRAY

*"It's the Triple-A Package!(™)"*

Low: *Grand entrance*. The first time you hit with a SHOOT or STRIKE action in a battle, deal +4 damage.

Medium: *Fantastic comeback*. If you take a wound, gain 2 temporary stamina at the end of the current turn.

High: *Knock-out punch*. If you inflict damage on a mook-level adversary, that adversary is taken out of action.

**Advanced:** *Glitter bomb*. [Limited A] Until the end of your next turn, SHOOT actions cannot be made into or through the area you occupy.

*Who's your big rival, and what's their shtick?*



# ADVERSARIES

## LEGENDARY THE ZAIBATSU

*Bigger than you:* You can't just beat up a zaibatsu by yourselves. The zaibatsu is formed of a series of linked dramatic scenes that alter the final combat based on successes or failures.

### STAGE ONE: ENTRANCE. 2 SUCCESSES BEFORE 3 FAILURES.

In this dramatic scene, the characters and their allies make an entrance into the zaibatsu's headquarters however they feel is appropriate.

The stakes are:

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| Win  | You control access to the building and establish a beachhead.   |
| Lose | You can't lock down the complex, and in the final scene the zaibatsu has access to additional reinforcements. |

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| Win  | No additional reinforcements will join the battle   |
| Lose | Whenever a character attempts to open the CEO's secure room 1 Agent (see below) enter the battlefield |

### STAGE TWO: CONTROL. 4 SUCCESSES BEFORE 3 FAILURES.

The characters attempt to take the power grid, the surveillance net, and the life support controls of the complex.

The stakes are:

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| Win  | You have power over the lifeblood of the building, and the zaibatsu's control is limited in the final scene.  |
| Lose | The zaibatsu retains control of the systems for your final battle.  |
| Win  | At the start of the battle one of the sentry guns is friendly to you. At the start of each turn, the players may pick one adversary within range of their sentry gun - it takes 2 damage. |
| Lose | An additional sentry gun is installed.  |

### STAGE THREE: SURPRISE. 5 SUCCESSES BEFORE 3 FAILURES.

An unplanned element disrupts the job - security in VTOL jetcopters, laser grids, a small robot army, a self-destruct sequence, unexpected escape routes, etc.

The stakes are:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| Win  | The characters make it through to the final scene intact.    |
| Lose | The characters discard 8 cards each before the final battle. |

### STAGE FOUR: FIGHT. BATTLE SCENE, DETAILED BELOW.

- 1 x Zaibatsu CEO
- 1 x Oni Elite Security
- 3 X Sentry Gun
- 4 X Dedicated Employees



## ZAIBATSU CEO

- S3 W1
- RANGE 0
- PROFICIENCY 3

**Damage:** *Secret hold-out plasma pistol.* R1 B6 **BOOST:** None.

**Wound:** 20 damage.

**Armoured Glass:** The CEO hides within a chamber of rocket-proof, plasma-proof, everything-proof armoured glass in the centre of the battlefield. They're impossible to harm (and may not make attacks) until this chamber is opened. A character may open this chamber with five successful USE actions made against the CEO's proficiency while they are in the area. (Multiple characters may team up on this attempt.) If the only remaining adversary in the battle is the CEO, a character may open the chamber as an uncontested USE action.

## SENTRY GUNS

- S4 W2
- RANGE 2
- PROFICIENCY 2

**Damage** *High-calibre bullets* R2 B2 **BOOST** Once per round only, make an additional attack.

## THE ONI, ELITE SECURITY

- S4 W5
- RANGE 1
- PROFICIENCY 2/10

**Damage:** *Pneumatic maul, shot-cannon fists, overclocked power armour.* R2 B3 **BOOST** *Pummel.* Target may not move until they make a RECOVER action.

**Wound:** 9 damage. Target is PUSHED 2 areas.

## DEDICATED EMPLOYEES - MOOK

- S:10 W:1 (SPECIAL)
- PROFICIENCY: NONE
- RANGE: 0

**Damage:** *Briefcases, canteen cutlery, bloody knuckles.* R:1 B:1 **BOOST:** *So MANY!* Make an additional STRIKE action.

**Wound:** Discard 5.

**Not Over:** Remember, to end a battle scene without the GM conceding, the players must eliminate every adversary - not just the CEO. At the start of each turn in which the CEO is present on the battlefield, choose one of the following effects to apply to an area:

**Gas flood:** The CEO floods an area with toxic gas. All characters in the area must make an immediate DEFEND action against the CEO's proficiency or discard half their current stamina, rounding up.

**Laser grid:** The CEO activates a grid of high-powered cutting lasers. Each character in the area must make a contested MOVE action against the CEO's proficiency or they are unable to move until the end of the CEO's next turn.

**Bulkheads:** The CEO shuts off a corridor. Close one connection and open a new one. You may not "break up" the battlefield with this move - it must be possible to access any area, no matter how circuitous the route.

**Immobile:** Sentry guns cannot move.

**Hackable:** Sentry guns can be taken out of action if a character in their area makes a successful USE action against their proficiency.

**Jump jets:** When Elite Security makes a MOVE action, all enemies in their starting and destination areas take 1 damage.

**No wounds:** You cannot inflict a wound on Dedicated Employees by any means other than exhausting its stamina - if you inflict a wound through a boost or power, treat it as the card value instead (narratively, every one or two stamina removed represents a downed foe).

**Legion:** The above stat block represents a small group of zealously loyal employees of the Zaibatsu. Dedicated Employees cannot be surrounded, and any player characters who share an area with them are treated as surrounded.



## ELITE

### VAT-GROWN ASSASSIN

- S3 W6
- RANGE 3
- PROFICIENCY: 3/10

**Damage:** Needle rifle, neoglass blade, a total lack of empathy. R1 B4

**BOOST:** *Venom gland.* Target suffers BLEED 5.

**Wound:** 15. Each time the Vat-Grown Assassin inflicts a wound on a target, increase the wound damage against that target by 5.

*Shadow play:* When the Vat-Grown Assassin takes a wound, they may immediately make an escape move to any area on the battlefield that contains a single player character.

## ELITE SECURITY

- S4 W5
- RANGE 2
- PROFICIENCY 2/10

**Damage:** Twin SMGS, power armour, null fields R2 B3 **BOOST** *Stun-cuffs.* Target may not move until the end of the Elite Security's next turn.

**Wound:** 9 damage. Target is PUSHED 2 areas.

*Jump jets:* When Elite Security makes a MOVE action, all enemies in their starting and destination areas take 1 damage.

## TROOPS

### AGENT

- S4 W3
- RANGE 3
- PROFICIENCY 2/10

**Damage:** Assault rifles, stun-rods, temporary barricades, drone webs. R2 B2 **BOOST**

**Wound:** 6 damage, and *Isolate Threat.* Choose one connection attached to the target's current area: it may not be used by any non-Agent character until the end of the target's next turn.

*Increase pressure:* When a character makes a RECOVER move within 3 areas of an Agent, it is opposed by a card drawn by the GM. If the GM's card is higher, no stamina is recovered.



## BIKER GOON

- S3 W3
- RANGE 0
- PROFICIENCY A/10

**Damage:** Baseball bats, chains, tire irons and sawn-off shotguns.  
R1 B2 **BOOST:** Drag away. 3 damage. Target is PUSHED 1, Biker Goon makes an escape move into their new area.

**Wound:** 7 damage.

Special:

*Fast:* When the Biker Goon makes a MOVE action, it moves two spaces rather than one.

*Out of control:* If a Biker Goon takes two wounds on the same turn (not the same round), it is removed from play.

## MOOKS RENT-A-COPS

- S3 W1
- RANGE 2
- PROFICIENCY 0

**Damage:** Plastic guns with internal energy reserves. R1 B2

**Boost:** Fall back! Rent-a-cop may make an immediate escape move.

**Wound:** 5 damage, and *Sniper Drone Support*. If the target is still in their current area at the start of the Rent-a-cop's next turn, they take an additional wound for 5 damage.

## STREET PUNKS

- S4 W1
- RANGE 1
- PROFICIENCY 0

**Damage:** Saturday Night Specials, baseball bats and flick-knives.

R1 B1 **BOOST:** Last mistake. Street Punk inflicts a wound but is taken out of action.

**Wound:** 6 damage, +1 damage for every other Street Punk within 1 area of the target.