This is a setting creation exercise meant to create a setting useful for a space travel RPG.

Setting Basics

Earth

Earth exists in the setting, but it is burnt out, having been “used up” ages ago. Few planets have the sorts of resources that Earth once had.

Non-human Sapients

There are remains of non-human sapients, but no living examples have been found. Most never made it off their homeworlds, with the exception of one group, the one that built the gates (see below). But no homeworld has ever been found for these beings.

Uplifts

There are several species of Terran fauna that humans have uplifted to full sapience.

Tech

Travel

FTL

There are multiple types of FTL drives, each serving various purposes.

Point-to-Point

There are two main methods of instantaneous transit over large distances.

Worm Hole Drives

Normal FTL drives can be modified to ensure survival of transit of wormholes. This is an expensive addition, and few craft have such an addition. More often smaller craft have to be carried by ferries specifically designed for such transit. But there are exceptions, typically military ships.

Worm holes are fairly common; most inhabited systems have one, if only because systems without

them tend to be relatively inaccessible.

Gates

Gates have been found created by the beings referred to as the Builders for having built them. Humans have not been able to replicate this technology (they have only just begun to understand how to activate these gates). Any craft (even those without any other FTL drives) can transit such a gate.

Intra-System

Even small craft may have FTL drives, but any FTL drives that are not Point-to-point are only up to a few multiples of C, rendering them highly inconvenient for transit between systems, or even to very distant companions. Most use of such FTL is for going from place to place inside of systems where there are no gates built.

These drives vary in some specifics, but all have the following in common:

Hyperspace Bubble

All such drives create a hyperspace bubble around the craft. This bubble places it out of contact with all normal matter, but energy can pass in and out of the bubble. Generally the larger the bubble, the more space-time distortion it causes, and the more energy it takes to fight that distortion. So smaller craft with smaller bubbles are faster than those with larger bubbles.

Energy Shields

As a side-effect of the hyperspace bubble, a shield can be created that blocks a substantial amount of energy from entering the hyperspace bubble (in addition to the hyperspace bubble itself preventing interaction with all matter). The most common use of such shields are simply as protection from space radiation, but the military application allows ships to defend themselves against energy weapons, nuclear detonations, etc.

A craft with no active hyperspace bubble cannot be shielded in this way.

Psionics

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