

Psionics in 2300 AD

The following psionics rules may be used with 2300 AD, having been adapted from *Traveller* rules and articles.

At the end of the twentieth century, the Earth experienced a low scale nuclear exchange between the Soviet Union and NATO. The immediate results of these nuclear detonations were devastating, and even today these regions suffer from a rate of birth defects and infantile cancers many times higher than anywhere else on the globe. However, these regions have also seen the greatest changes in humanity as a developing race. One manifestation of these mutations has been that of psionics, or the ability of an individual to affect his environment by mental thought.

Psionics have only been formally recognized by the University of Ottawa since 2293 when the school's theoretical sciences division started a program to investigate the phenomena. Many governments, however, have been developing the use of psionic individuals in espionage and diplomacy since before the Tantalum War. Most conservative institutions do not recognize the psionic phenomena, dismissing it as a collection of tricks. Nevertheless, these abilities have begun to appear.

The legal status of individuals who have psionic abilities varies from country to country. France, for example, requires all psionic individuals to be registered with the Imperial and local governments. France also greatly restricts the freedom of psionic citizens due to public fear and distrust. Manchuria and most of the Far East test all citizens who appear to possess psionic talents, and these governments either force psionic individuals to work for the government or lobotomize the individuals in order to "protect the public good." The United States takes quite the opposite stand. In the Supreme Court ruling on the case of *Arthur Neguyo v. State of Mississippi* (2265), the United States established a policy of nonregistration. This policy prevents a great deal of psi-prejudice against closet psionics. However, most states have ruled that any crime committed with psionics or the aid thereof is considered a capital offense. Such reactions to psionic individuals are mainly due to the actions of the Provolution, which for over a century has employed psionic individuals to disrupt society in the Core and on the Frontier.

In game terms, there is a 1% chance that any PC will have psionics (for most of the population, this percentage is extremely generous and unrealistically high). This means that the character has a latent talent for psionics and in order to use it must develop the talent through training. A few individuals are savants and need no training to develop their talents; PCs will never be savants. Development generally takes the form of formal training at the hands of other psionic individuals. This training may be government sponsored, academic, or cultish in nature. In all cases, the training must manifest itself as a career in Academics.

A government program or cult will force the individual to treat the talent as his primary skill. An individual attending an academic setting is free to choose his skills normally, with the psionic skill treated as a related skill. If the individual leaves training and switches to a different career, the individual treats the psionic talent as a related skill (if primary during training) or unrelated (if related during training).

Every individual possessing psionic abilities has limitations on their abilities. This manifests itself in the game as Psi points. The maximum number of Psi points an individual can have is given by the following formula:

$$\text{Max Psi Points} = 2d6 + \text{Education Modifier} - (\text{age at beginning of training}/5)$$

Remember to round all fractions down. The Education Modifier can be found on page 12 of the *Adventurer's Guide*.

When testing for psionic talent, the player may choose from the list below and roll 2d6. If the 2d6 roll is greater than or equal to the number listed for the talent then the talent may be gained. If the roll fails to meet or exceed the target number, then that skill may not be had and a second talent may be attempted. For each talent tried beyond the first there is a +2 penalty to the target (i.e., a target of 7+ becomes 9+ for a second attempt and 11+ for a third). It is possible for an individual to be psionic and lack any talent. This is unexplained at the present time. Untalented individuals may, however, use Psi points to protect themselves from the talents of others by forming a Shield (see below) and expending these points at a rate of 1 Psi point per hour that the Shield is maintained.

Talent	Target Number
Telepathy	6+
Clairvoyance	7+
Telekinesis	7+

Awareness	8+
Pyrotechnics	9+
Memory	9+
Technopathy	10+
Enhancement	11+
Hallucination	11+

Psionic activity cost increases with range. Add the following to psionic talent costs for range:

Range	Cost Modifier
Touch	1
0-2 meters	2
3-5 meters	3
6-15 meters	4
16-50 meters	5
50-100 meters	6

TELEPATHY

Telepathy is the ability to contact other minds directly. In rudimentary forms, it allows the communication of feelings and emotion; in advanced forms it allows the transfer of information.

There are several types of telepathy tasks. Most telepathy tasks are uncertain. If a mishap occurs on a telepathy task, modify the Psi point cost of the task as follows:

Superficial: +1 Psi point
 Minor: +2 Psi points
 Major: +3 Psi points
 Destroyed: +4 Psi points

In any event, the task failed to produce any results even though it still cost Psi points to perform.

Shield: Any character possessing telepathic capabilities learns how to create a mental shield which protects the mind against unwanted telepathic interference. Such a shield is automatically in force at all times and requires no expenditure of Psi points. Artificial psionic shields are in the early developmental stages; they are clumsy helmet-like devices which function much in the same manner.

Life Detection: The most elementary form of telepathy is the ability to detect the presence of other minds.

Task: To perform Life Detection (Uncertain): Routine. Telepathy. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 1+range. Life Detection enables a character to sense the presence of other minds, the number of minds present, the general types of minds (animal, human, etc.), and their approximate location. Shielded minds are undetectable. If an individual whom the telepath knows is "life detected," he or she will be recognized. If only some truth is gained as a result of the task rolls, the character misidentifies some of the detected life forms.

Telempathy: The communication of emotions and basic feelings is accomplished by telempathy.

Task: To perform Telempathy (Uncertain): Routine. Telepathy. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 1+range. This ability serves well in the handling of animals and beasts of burden, but may also be applied as a psychological weapon against humans. Sending emotions such as love, hate, fear and so on may influence other beings. Telempathy also allows the emotions and feelings of others to be read by the character. If only some truth is gained, the character misreads the other individual's emotions.

Read Surface Thoughts: The most commonly known feature of telepathy is the ability to read the thoughts of other individuals.

Task: To Read Surface Thoughts (Uncertain): Difficult. Telepathy. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 2+range. Only active current thoughts are read, with the subject (if not the telepath) unaware of the activity. Individuals with telepathic ability cannot be read due to the

presence of their natural shields. If only some truth is gained, the surface thoughts that are read contain little information of value.

Send Thoughts: Complementary to the ability to read surface thoughts is the ability to send thoughts to others.

Task: To Send Thoughts (Uncertain): Difficult. Telepathy. 12 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 2+range. Any unshielded person can receive such thoughts. Telepathic individuals may or may not choose to receive such transmissions if they become bothersome or threatening. If only some truth is gained, the transmitted thought is misinterpreted.

Probe: The application of great psionic strength will enable a telepath to delve deep into the mind of a subject and then to read his innermost thoughts.

Task: To perform a mind Probe (Hazardous, Competition): Difficult. Telepathy and Determination minus opponent's Telepathy and Determination. 60 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 8+range. An individual undergoing a mind probe is aware that his mind is being invaded, and he is very uneasy. Questioning can be used during a mind probe to force the subject to divulge specific information. The probing individual can easily determine deliberate untruths told (thought) by the subject. Probe cannot be used against a shielded mind.

If a mishap occurs on this task, damage is taken by the mind of the character undergoing the probe. The character loses consciousness, but if the mishap is Superficial or Minor, the character will regain consciousness in 1d6 hours, none the worse for wear. If the mishap is Major, the character slips into a coma and can be brought out only with medical help. If the mishap is Destroyed, the character dies.

Assault: Violence may be dealt by a telepath.

Task: To perform a mind assault (Competition): Formidable. Telepathy and Determination minus opponent's Telepathy and Determination. Instant. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 10+range. If the attack is successful, the result is automatic unconsciousness for the defender. Roll 3d6 on the mishap table for the level of damage to the assaulted individual.

CLAIRVOYANCE

Clairvoyance is the general talent which allows a person to sense events at some location displaced from the viewer.

Clairvoyant abilities allow eavesdropping as well as spying and detection-free exploration of situations. While telepathic life detection will determine the presence of living minds in a closed room

SPECIAL TALENTS

Compression: The character can create telekinetic force on the external surface of an object, crushing it. The following tasks are used with these Psi cost modifiers to all: +1 if the object is semirigid (like plastic), +2 if the object is hard (wood, metal), +4 if the object is very hard (armor, structural metals).

Task: To compress an object with a volume less than 1 liter: Simple. Compression. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 1+range+substance modifier.

Task: To compress an object with a volume less than 10 liters: Routine. Compression. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 2+range+substance modifier.

Task: To compress an object with a volume less than 100 liters: Difficult. Compression. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 4+range+substance modifier.

Task: To compress an object with a volume less than 1000 liters: Formidable. Compression. 6 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 8+range+substance modifier.

Cryokinesis: The character can cause the molecules of an object to slow, thereby causing the temperature of the object to decrease.

Task: To lower the temperature of an object: Routine. Cryokinesis. 10 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is range+1 point per 50 degree drop.

Disruption: The character can disrupt inanimate objects, causing them to explode. Treat the explosion as a normal explosive with EP=4 if the item exploded is hard, such as metal. If it is soft, like living tissue, it just makes a really big mess.

Task: To disrupt an object with a volume less than 1 liter: Simple. Disruption. 3 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 1+range.

Task: To disrupt an object with a volume less than 10 liters: Routine. Disruption. 3 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 3+range.

Task: To disrupt an object with a volume less than 100 liters: Difficult. Disruption. 3 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 5+range.

Task: To disrupt an object with a volume less than 1000 liters: Formidable. Disruption. 3 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 8+range.

Hallucination: The character can induce hallucinations in others. The hallucination seems perfectly real in the minds of those affected, as long as the psionic character concentrates. If the illusion is of something extremely unusual, contradictory, or unlikely, or if the subject is psionic, the referee may make a secret task roll for the subject.

Task: To induce an illusion in a member of one's own species: Difficult. Hallucination. 20 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 1+range.

Task: To induce an illusion in a member of an alien race: Formidable. Hallucination. 60 seconds. *Referee:* The Psi strength cost is 4+range.

Task: To disbelieve an illusion (competition): Routine. Defender's Psionic Strength and Intelligence modifiers minus attacker's Psionic Strength and Determination modifiers. Instant. *Referee:* This task is undertaken by people affected by illusions which are extremely contradictory or unlikely.

Link: The character can link several other psionic persons together with himself in order to increase his psionic ability or that of one of the others. The character can link up to as many psionics as he has Psi strength points. To establish a link, all members must be in physical contact. When a link is established, all of the Psi points of the link group are totaled, then channeled into one of the members. For every 10 Psi points in the total, an extra point is added for each member who has the Link talent (rounded down). For example, if five psionics with Psi ratings of 4, 7, 3, 8 and 6 (total 28) establish a link, and three of them have Link, the total would be 34 (28+6). The points are then used by the receiving character as usual, as long as the group remains in contact and concentrates. If contact is broken, the Psi points are lost. When the link is terminated, all members have zero Psi points.

Task: To link with 4 or fewer psionic individuals: Routine. Link. 15 seconds. *Referee:* For each additional member of the linking group who has Link, apply a +1 DM to the roll.

Task: To link with 5 or more psionic individuals: Difficult. Link. 20 seconds. *Referee:* For each additional member of the linking group who has Link, apply a +1 DM to the roll.

Memory: This talent enables a character to retain all information he is exposed to permanently, perfectly and without error.

Task: To link with 4 or fewer psionic individuals: Routine. Link. 15 seconds. *Referee:* For each additional member of the linking group who has Link, apply a +1 DM to the roll.