

5 Parsecs Scenario Template

Introduction:

This template is meant to give a common baseline for 5 Parsecs user scenarios to be created and distributed. Once the template has been ironed out a little bit, it will hopefully help create a common format for scenarios to be shared and made publicly available.

All feedback, suggestions and corrections can be submitted to nordicweaselgames@icloud.com

What is a scenario?

For the purpose of this template, we distinguish between missions and scenarios. A mission is a single objective used in a normal game of 5 Parsecs, similar to the ones included in the main rulebook.

A scenario is a full set of instructions including how to set up, any special conditions that apply and how the enemies are determined. A scenario may rely on the core rules for some of these but it is assumed it deviates more substantially than simply using the standard setup for everything.

This template is for the creation of scenarios.

Caveats and conditions:

You are free to create whatever you would like for personal use, sharing on your blog and so forth. This includes any scenarios you are creating based on another science fiction franchise or setting.

Any scenarios intended to be distributed either on the NWG discord or through any sanctioned web compilation of fan scenarios should follow these guidelines:

- The scenario should either be nominally set in the Unified Space setting or generic enough to be usable in any space opera setting.
- Avoid characters or items used “as is” from other science fiction franchises. Characters can of course be reskinned to fit.
- Scenarios should be in fundamentally good taste and not gross or edgy.
- You can invent new alien monsters and threats, but should avoid creating new intelligent species.
- While strict adherence to canon is not an expectation, scenarios should strive to fit in with the general tone and feel of “Unified Space”.

Again, if you are creating a scenario you are free to put it on your blog or wherever you like. The above conditions are a baseline for making sure scenarios can be shared in a semi-official fashion, for example a sanctioned scenario collection for download freely.

Scenario title

Of course your scenario needs a title. If it is part of a series of connected scenarios, it should have a title for the series, a number indicating its place in the sequence and a title for the individual scenario itself.

Estimated difficulty level

Include a few notes on the expected difficulty of the scenario. Is this intended for a starting crew, a crew with some experience under their belts or a seriously veteran crew?

Narrative

This section should provide a brief narrative explaining the background to the scenario. Scenario narratives need to be fairly open-ended so a wide variety of crews could be inserted into the situation. Narration can really help bring a scenario to life but make sure it is proportional. 8 pages of background for a scenario that is just a new mission objective is too much.

Conditions

If the scenario has specific conditions that must be met before it can be played, these are listed here. This can include mini-games needed to find a location or circumstances that must be met first. When possible, try to make any conditions something that the player can do or something that occurs regularly. Be careful with these: A scenario that cannot be played because the conditions are too unlikely is not helpful.

If there is a cost to starting the scenario (such as an item that must be purchased), then the potential rewards of the scenario should be increased slightly.

Example:

A condition that a scenario takes place after fighting a Rival is fine, as this is a regular occurrence in the game.

A condition that a scenario takes place after fighting a specific type of enemy on the enemy tables is a problem, because a player could go an entire campaign without meeting that enemy type.

Setting up

This section covers the following:

How to set up the gaming table.

If the table should be set up in a certain way or include certain features, this must be discussed here. Scenarios that involve moving to a specific location may benefit from recommending a particular table size. Try to avoid exceeding a 3x3 foot table space.

A map is not required but is often helpful but avoid being too specific with terrain requirements.

How to set up the enemy forces.

The scenario should explain how the enemies are deployed, including any forces that set up using tokens, arrive from off table or use any other factors.

How to set up the player forces.

This explains how the player sets up their own crew. They may set up normally or move on to the table. If there are specific entry and exit points they must be noted.

Compatibility

This section should state whether rolls to Seize the Initiative, Notable Sights and Deployment Conditions from the rulebook are made.

Ideally, a scenario should also note if particular official expansion options are not suitable or are recommended. It is fine to state that the scenario is only intended for, or tested with, the core rulebook.

The objective

This section explains what the crew must do in order to win the scenario. The conditions to achieve an objective must be clearly defined. If the objective can be failed in ways other than the crew being defeated or retreating off the table, this needs to be made clear as well.

Enemy forces

This section explains how the enemy is selected. This can be done through a normal roll, may include modifiers or may be a specific squad of enemy forces. A scenario can also feature brand new and unique enemies to fight.

New enemies need to include their full profile, notes of what weapons they use and an AI mode.

If the enemy AI need to be adjusted for the scenario, any notes should be added here.

Special rules

A scenario should have at least one special rule. This is any modification to how the game normally works such as special terrain rules, environmental effects or things that can happen during the scenario. Try to limit the amount of special rules that are going on to avoid the game becoming too confusing. 1-3 is a good amount to create an interesting encounter.

Hindrances

If the scenario includes special restrictions on character capabilities, they should be noted here. This includes limitations to visibility or movement, any equipment that cannot be used and so forth. Pay attention to items that would allow a scenario to be completely short-circuited (such as special movement abilities). At the same time, restrictions of this type are often frustrating and they should be used sparingly. Any environmental effects will need to note whether they affect both sides or only the crew.

Ending the scenario

This section details how the scenario is brought to a close: Does the scenario end once the objectives are reached, does the player have to retreat off the table or is there a time limit?

If a time limit is used, ensure that achieving the objectives is realistic within the time frame given.

Rewards

Any scenario can use the standard rulebook rewards, but a particularly challenging scenario will often benefit from a small additional reward. Any deviation from the rulebook system, as well as any additional rewards should be noted here along with any conditions on receiving them.

Rewards should be balanced by the difficulty of the scenario and it should be clear what the player receives for Holding the Field vs winning the scenario.

If there are modifications to other post-game procedures (such as invasions or injuries) they should be listed here.

Modifications

This final section should include options to make the scenario more or less difficulty. At least two modifiers (one for an easier game and one for a harder game) should be provided.