

# BLIND DOGS



*"The end wasn't heralded with a mighty blast, or an apocalyptic meteor, but with a single bullet. A single death, two generations ago. No one can truly remember the name of the victim, but he was the leader of the Nation, and his death brought about what you see now. With his assassination still fresh in everyone's minds, laws were passed; soon, police and soldiers marched on the streets. This draconian rule quickly found opposition, and the fighting began. For almost two decades, the civil war raged, with factions splintering into even more divided groups, until every area seemed to have its own warlords; fighting for land and becoming more and more vicious. Political doctrines drove a fevered savagery, which led to weapons not seen for decades being turned on the populace. Clouds of deadly gas, and mankind's finest plagues, ravaged the Nation, and brought all to their knees. Even this was not the final blow to strike our Nation down, however. At a place now known only as "Capenhurst", the deadliest attack to desecrate our lands took its toll. Without the workers, the nearby nuclear reactor failed, adding its deadly energy to the toxic soup already spreading through the air. Folk worked quickly to protect themselves; taking refuge in bunkers, sealing themselves away in any building large enough to house them. This gas was seemingly held at bay by these measures, as it spread through the continent of Europe, and beyond. Death became a blessing for many, and one by one, the sanctuaries fell silent, until only a handful remained. Those that remained mourned for those lost, and feared the night. For whilst the gas meant that travel between the settlements on the surface, without protection, would kill you in minutes, it was those the gas hadn't killed, those it had given a different gift to, that were to be feared. With those of us left slowly dwindling, it seems to be humanity itself*

*has begun to cough its final dying breath. Every day, I listen to my radio, stockpiling precious batteries, to try and hear a voice from far away; a voice from somewhere the creeping death has yet to reach. Perhaps I'm but a Blind Dog, running in circles to chase a futile dream..."*

Welcome to Blind Dogs, a LARP system heavily inspired by the Metro series and the S.T.A.L.K.E.R. games, with hints from many other wild and varied sources.

This system follows on from some great games, with only one real gameplay rule; there are no rules! Don't be a dick, and react to everything as if it was real.

This does mean that we need a few out of character rules in order to bring this in character level of realism and full immersion, so here goes.

# **SAFETY FIRST**

## **DRUGS**

We are not a judgemental lot, and what you do in your own time is up to you, but here at Blind Dogs, all illegal substances are banned. Please make a Ref aware if you have to take prescription medication for an injury or illness that could affect your gameplay (some prescription medications can cause drowsiness, or some other unusual side effects, which could potentially be dangerous if we aren't made aware).

## **ALCOHOL**

You are welcome to drink, this is an event for over 18s after all, but as soon as you have begun drinking, then you can no longer use airsoft weapons, and we ask you be extremely careful with the melee weapons.

## **CURFEW**

The town area of the site, the haven of Longbridge, will be a strictly no gun zone from 10pm until 8am. This is to allow folk to drink, and if they so desire, remove eyepro. There is an in character reason for this that will be in your player packs.

## **SMOKING**

Due to the fire system at the site, you will need to leave the game area to smoke. This INCLUDES the use of high power vapes, which can also set off the alarms!

## **EYE PROTECTION**

All eyepro must be airsoft safe, this means rated to EN166F or above. If unsure, please contact a member of the Ref team so that they can assess what you have, or are looking to get, as we will not have any spare sets on site.

## **SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

Ultimately, these are non-existent game mechanics in Blind Dogs. If it's something your character can do based on their background, then they can do it. As simple as that. How they grow between games is entirely up to you. They are your piece of the world. Everything must be roleplayed to an appropriate degree! Be as part of the moment you are portraying as possible!

## **COMBAT**

Here we see the beauty of a rules light system. Combat is brutal, combat is fast. Combat is unpleasant. If your character is hit, then roleplay it; even if you're wearing armour it will still hurt, still knock you back, and jangle your nerves, and probably your organs. If you've not got armour to stop it, then roleplay the injury, the gunshot to the arm, the axe to the leg. Each is different and each will bring you a different roleplay experience. Embrace these injuries, as the medics come over to heal you, as it will create a fantastic RP experience for everyone involved to hear you screaming in agony as they dig for bullets, reset your broken arm, stitch your wounds, whatever injury you received! Some medics and surgeons may offer fake blood to heighten the experience, and you can quietly advise yes or no to this depending on your preference.

## **WEAPON SAFETY**

All melee weapons must be LARP safe, and will be checked before the event starts. Before the event we will ask all players to head over to the Ratnik camp, where they will check the weapons for us. All airsoft weapons may be capable of semi-auto as the site is semi only, throughout. Max fps is 350 on .2g and this

is a hard limit, there will be no exceptions, even for 1fps over. Full airsoft safety rules will be given in the player packs, and before the game, but one that can never be said enough is:

## **BLIND FIRE**

You must NEVER stick guns around corners, over barricades, through gaps no bigger than an A4 sheet of paper, unless you can also see round them. When shooting you should have a clear line of sight to the target, the front of your gun, and the rear of your gun, no matter whether you are shouldering, or firing from the hip.

## **ARMOUR**

In order for armour to have any effect in combat, it needs to be made from something that could convey armour effects, so tires, steel, Kevlar, even wood at a pinch. Roll mat foam in a plate carrier is just that, foam. This adds significantly to the feel of combat, appropriately weighs you down, and changes the physical dynamics of your character! If you want armour, but a speedy character, those things are relatively at odds, so it's important for armour to be true.

## **WEAPON AESTHETICS**

The world we are in has survived below ground for several decades, but it has begun to rebuild. This means that everything is worn and well used, think of the weapons in Mad Max, or Metro, they are still functional, but they have seen better days. They have taken a bit of a battering, but they still work. Steer clear of clean weaponry be it modern or medieval, it just won't fit, and will be excluded from game play.

## **SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT**

All characters, like medics, engineers, etc, need to have full phys-rep kits, and will need to fully roleplay their actions. It's not about running up and counting to ten to heal a character. We need triage, first aid, possibly surgery etc depending on a Player's injuries, and the character may still have a gammy arm, or a dodgy leg for a while after.

## **THE WORLD**

The full world background is in the files section of the group, but a few points cross over into the rules:

## **TORCHES**

Please, no high-powered LED torches, these will ruin a lot of the event for you. Keep to low powered torches, or fit filters to cut them down in brightness. Think Metro, and Stalker, where the torches have very limited power.

## **BATTERIES**

These are becoming rarer, leading to them becoming a commodity in trade, and a currency in most areas. ONLY batteries that are not real (ie. ones given or found in game) are currency! The pocketful you arrived with from Poundland are not suitable! This is due to real batteries having nasty acids and other components should they be damaged. Please ensure you have real batteries for guns, torches, and anything else powered you may have, but only use the phys-rep batteries as currency in town, and between players.

## THE WORLD OF BLIND DOGS

*“Welcome to Longbridge, the gateway to Brum. Simply put, we're the last haven before the Birmingham exclusion zone, and the only haven with access to the tunnels leading into the city's heart. With the city so heavily irradiated, Stalkers can only spend a matter of hours on the surface before the radiation and residual chemicals start to worm their way through his suit. Until we managed to get the tunnels opened, that meant a Stalker could only skim the outskirts of the metropolis, never truly managing to get into the treasure trove within.*

*Now with underground access to Newstreet, we are in the heart of the city, and can begin to scavenge into this new frontier. This does come at a price though, and the gates to these tunnels need to be kept firmly shut and well-guarded, as while there is no humanity left in the city, the Stalkers are not alone. Not that it's all safe below ground, mind. Longbridge is the gateway to the new frontier, and everyone wants a slice...”*

The following contains useful information on the setting, which you can use to create your character. Keep in mind that unlike many systems, here the in-character information is presented in an in-character fashion; complete with all the biases and unreliability that comes with. This is intentional. In the world of Blind Dogs the survivors huddle in relatively isolated settlements, with outside news mostly in the form of gossip and tales from drifters, roving mercenaries and merchant caravans. Even more than that, two groups are rarely identical even if outsiders think of them as the same, be they different groups of Tribals or two havens within PWC territory. We appreciate this can sometimes make it difficult to be certain your character fits the game world, so if you feel you need more help please don't hesitate to contact the games design team.



## FACTIONS

*"The factions. The Big Three. Battalion 34, The Federation of Havens, the People's Welfare Committee. None of 'em are in charge here, but between them, they rule just about everywhere else. So listen up.*

*They all sprang out of old world organisations, near as anyone can tell. They've got their official histories, sure, but I wouldn't trust any of 'em to tell the truth. B34 and the PWC were probably warbands after the old world collapsed, I reckon. The Feds came later, after a bunch of traders got together. B34 and the PWC have been warring as long as anyone remembers, almost certainly before we abandoned the surface. They organised quick, established their territories, then went about taking all the others. That was the way of things for an age, back'n'forth, bullets and hate, inch of territory by inch of bloody territory.*

*Meanwhile, the Feds were avoiding fights and building their strength. They got their fingers everywhere, even managed to establish something approaching an economy that worked with the other two. Then, while the others were recovering from a bloody couple of months, they made their move. Hired guns, shitloads of them. Pushed both the others right back out of the havens they had their real strength in.*

*So then all of a sudden, there's three big fuckers running things. That made life harder for B34 and the PWC but, bless 'em, they still kept trying to shoot one another. And they both tried their luck with the Feds, but they still had all their mercs contracted. Things... well, in time things started slowing down.*

*Eventually the Feds brought everyone to the table. Lines got drawn on maps. Hands got shaken, and then washed. And now we've got peace. Hah.*

*There's still the odd border skirmish; rogue elements, that's what they usually call it. And espionage is big business now, if that's your game. But everyone can feel it. Ain't no fucking peace; it's just the quiet before it all breaks out again, a chance for everyone to get consolidated. And when it does fuck up, it's the little independent havens like us that'll pay the price."*

The factions, as they're known, are the three big groups running much of the world of Blind Dogs. Players CANNOT begin as members, though there's a significant chance that they grew up in a settlement within one of their territories. Characters will have left these territories for good reason, so if you intend to have any particular sympathies towards them please speak to us first.

## **THE PEOPLES WELFARE COMMITTEE**

*"The People's fucking Welfare Committee. Ain't that a name just makes you want to roll your eyes back into your skull?"*

*I was born in PWC territory, so I know 'em well. You wanna know the sad thing? Lots of 'em is decent folk. Idealists sure, and wilfully blind in a lot of cases, but their heart's in the right place. The world ended. Time to pull together, build a better life for everyone. Right?"*

*All well and good. 'Cept, there's ideals and there's reality. And the reality? All folk are equal's a fun*

slogan, but there's always some more equal than others. And there's always stories in a PWC haven - someone spoke out, suddenly they go missing. I knew this one guy, got drunk and started shouting about how his family were going hungry but the local mayor was fat as fuck. Got real loud about it. A few days later he shows back up in the bar, all upset. Said his family had left him, they'd moved on. Only suddenly he was real fucking pro PWC, and you could smell the fear coming off him like he'd pissed himself.

That was when I left.

It's not a secret they're as corrupt as anyone else. You talk to one of their ambassadors, they'll tell you that they're fighting it. They all tell you that. Most of 'em are lying through their teeth.

The really worrying thing though, if you want my humble opinion? Some of 'em ain't lying. See, the PWC has always been prone to infighting. Too many opinions on what utopia should look like. And without the war on, suddenly a lot of them are looking inwards. Some of them decent folk, they want to sort their shit out.

They're fractioning, I reckon. You know where to look, you can see it. But they were barely a match for B34 in the first place, so if they start turning on one another..."

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"Now, I see you eyeing up the People's Welfare Committee and their honeyed words, lapping up their tales of solidarity, and their fight against the class structure of other havens, and noble it sounds.

Well, unless you mention the 'Butcher of Bromsgrove', then these commies seem to go very quiet.

*You see, I met a lass from Bromsgrove, so I know how it became empty; a few of us Stalkers found her with a damaged respirator, and next to no supplies.*

*She told us that she was from the PWC haven of Bromsgrove, and that it was now a tomb. Apparently they had run low on food and other supplies so refused to hand it all over to the PWC central command for what they like to call 'heroic redistribution of wealth'. There were many threats by the 'party', but like a lot of folk, they resisted, said they couldn't survive the winter if they gave away what little they had.*

*That was a bad idea, frankly; the PWC turned up with their Redstars, their brainwashed soldiers, and demanded the supplies. When they still refused, things got nasty. The refugee we found told of how the shock troops stormed through the haven, the poorly armed militia proved little resistance, and soon everyone in the town was rounded up. Four folk were sent from the haven, one on each compass point as a warning to the other havens; we found the refugee heading east from Bromsgrove, but all she could say, through tears, that every other member of the haven was taken to the PWC haven of Hewell for re-education.*

*Well, me and Brimstone have never had much love for the Red bastards, so we double timed it to Bromsgrove, but it was too late, we found the haven a tomb, completely empty, no supplies, no bodies, nothing, not even a trace of its former inhabitants was left. Now no one steps foot in there, it's a shrine to their bravery another tomb in the wastes.*

*So don't tell me how the PWC are so fantastic. That ambassador in his tweed, all smiles and love, the blood of an entire haven is on that man's hands."*

## BATTALION34

*"Battalion34. Yeah, fuck Battalion34 in particular. The other two are shit, but these guys? Ugh.*

*They're fascists. Do I really need to say anymore? They dropped the racist shit years ago; ain't like there's enough of us left to be fussy about it. Now, racial purity means gutting any mutant that's unlucky enough to come across them. Mutants don't have much luck anywhere, but these guys just want to flat out murder 'em all. No exceptions.*

*The other two factions like to pretend to be nice. These guys don't give a shit; their party line is all about doing what's necessary, not what's nice. And what's necessary is, to nobody's particular fucking surprise, them ruling over everyone else with an iron fist.*

*They come in two types; thug and smug. The thugs are what everyone thinks of, jackboots and black armour and fucking skulls on everything. They ain't bright, they don't care, and they'll shoot you as soon as look at you if you piss them off. Don't mistake them being thick as pigshit for being incompetent either, these guys love their work.*

*The smugs are the guys running the show. They're all smiles and sunshine, though they'll cheerfully threaten the shit out of people while they're at it. Since the ceasefire you'll see a lot more of their diplomats about; they call them 'Praetorians', because of course they fucking do. Like I said, they'll smile plenty and play nice; just remember that's the same smile they'll wear while they skin you alive to send a message.*

*If I had my way, we'd run 'em out of town. But the ceasefire's delicate enough, and one side losing the*

*advantage here'd make 'em desperate. I hate these pricks smiling; but I'd be terrified of 'em desperate."*

## **THE FEDERATION OF HAVENS**

*"The Feds? Sorry, the 'Federation of Havens'. Everyone needs their stupid fucking name. Yeah, they're a bit different to the other two. What, you think that makes them better? They're just different. Different kind of shit.*

*Alright, history lesson. So the Feds came about later than everyone else. A bunch of traders got themselves together, started organising. They did all sorts of shady shit, mostly to fuck up their competitors. It's no secret. And they got bigger, and they got more widespread, and they got greedier.*

*Eventually they got their masterstroke. Standardised currency. See, they figured the only thing more valuable down here than bullets is light. With fires up and banned everywhere, light needs power. And guess who was sat on giant stockpiles of batteries, and the means to recharge them?*

*It caught on, even with the PWC and B34. After that, they were powerful as all fuck.*

*You know the rest. They hired their mercs, 'liberated' a bunch of havens. Brokered the peace treaty. And now they're a power all by themselves. Generally, they don't take over a haven with bullets, though they could. They've got enough mercs - operators, they call 'em - on permanent contract that they've probably got a bigger army than anyone. But no, they do it all quiet like. They charge*

*their tariffs, recruit all your traders, and before you know it they own everything you thought was yours. Sure, you've still got your own leaders, but they can't shit without needing a receipt.*

*Luckily, they're having to be cautious right now. See, B34 and the PWC ain't gonna be caught with their pants down again. If the Feds make too many obvious advantages, they'll both go gunning for them. Sure, the Feds could probably, maybe outgun either of them alone. Both at once they ain't got a snowball's chance in hell.*

*So keep your eyes open when you're dealing with 'em. And if you want my advice, buy fucking local."*

## **ARCHETYPES**

Unlike the three factions, archetypes are designed with players in mind. Even so, they're not an exhaustive list of potential concepts - it's entirely fine to think of something that doesn't fit any of these particular niches.

Think of them as examples of the kind of people one might find in the Blind Dogs setting, rather than anything more restrictive like a character class.

## **STALKERS**

*"Wait, what's a Stalker? You're shitting me, right? Jesus kid.*

*Right, Stalkers. Well, first things first. They ain't an organisation. Sure, some of 'em band together, but they're just people. Mad fucking people. See, Stalkers is the ones that go up onto the surface world. Hands down, that's where all the best salvage is; truth is, I ain't sure we'd even function without it.*

*But that means braving the ol' toxic soup, and braving whatever monstrosities are still up there. Stalkers might be batshit crazy, but they're smart and they're tough too. Otherwise they're dead. Ones who ain't dead tend to be richer than the rest of us too. People tend to treat 'em like folk heroes, and cynical bastard though I may be, I don't blame 'em. Like I said, we basically rely on them; so if they're risking their neck I say they earned it.*

*Most of the bigger factions have their own Stalkers on the books, though even then they tend to be a bit more independent-minded. You even get some running with gangs, and even the tribals have their own people doing it. But generally, most of 'em is fierce independent. And nobody tries too hard to recruit the ones who don't wanna be recruited - they talk to one another, and don't nobody wants to be on their blacklist for trade.*

*Don't get me wrong, though. They ain't no big, happy family. They're all in competition, end of the day, and most of 'em are happy to admit that the biggest danger up there ain't the gas or the things - it's other Stalkers."*

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*"So I heard tell that you want to become a Stalker? Well, let's start off straight; chances are good that you'll be dead by next year if you do.*

*Very few of us see more than a handful of birthdays, but once you've been out topside, it's like a drug. I've just gotta keep exploring, I swear every day, it's a new world. But it also wants to kill you, so pack properly if you want to stay alive.*

*Your best defence, the one thing that'll save your life more than anything else, isn't the best gun or a camel-*



*tonne of ammo; it's a simple watch. Filters will get clogged, and air tanks will run out, then it's your lungs versus the toxic soup, and that's a fight you're never gonna win. So always know how long you've been topside, and how far away the nearest friendly Haven is.*

*As for weapons, yeah, you'd better go armed; some things that have survived out there are definitely not as nature intended, so pack a reliable rifle, and a couple of spare mags. Don't go crazy; you're better running than gunning if you can, and extra weight is less loot you can bag.*

*Same with armour, I've seen heavy armour kill more Stalkers than save. It slows them down, and wears them out. Grab a flak vest and leave it there.*

*Let's face it. On paper it's simple, walk around in poison gas, till you find some loot worth bringing home, try not to get shot, definitely try not to get eaten, and that's all there is to it. Oh, and if you find a new town like the one we've recently started to clear out, my name's Paveway. I'll help you explore it for a cut, let's face it, it's never a good plan to go topside on your own.*

*See you soon, and Stay Safe."*

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*"So, let me tell you another secret about being a stalker. It helps if you're chatting from the same book as any folk you meet, so before you head out into the big bad world, here's a few terms that you'll find universally recognised.*

*Firstly, as soon as you leave a haven, you're in the 'big bad' it ain't a clever term, but we always call it the big bad, never outside. It's bad luck to be outside.*

*You find an abandoned haven, well that's a 'tomb', and always make sure to part ways with a stalker by saying 'stay safe' never say goodbye, that's wishing the cold hand of death upon a stalker.*

*Obviously you know a haven is any place you can survive without a mask, and usually they're like a torn, but any group of havens that work together is called a 'faction' like the People's Welfare Committee or Battalion34, now these places have their own rules, so make sure you follow them so you don't end up kissing the reaper."*

Stalkers are characters who specialise in scavenging from the world above. Keep in mind that costume is particularly important for them - gas masks are a common enough sight in the tunnels, but for a stalker they're absolutely essential. Most ensure they've clothing that'll cover them head to toe; hoods are common, but the most paranoid (and wealthy) might go as far as a patched up HAZMAT suit.

## **STYGIANS**

*"Stygians. Alright, Stygians. Yeah, for once I don't blame you for being confused. I barely know where to start with this lot.*

*Well, first thing's first. Technically a Stygian is anyone from Stygia. It's easily the biggest of the independent havens, was founded under some university or library or both. So it's full of readers and smarters. Way the story goes, some academic type got all philosophical about how this is clearly the afterlife, underground realm of the dead and all that. People being people, eventually a lot of 'em started taking that serious.*

*So while Stygians is anyone from Stygia... normally when people's talking about them they mean their pilgrims.*

*They're weird. They ain't bad, in fact they're damn helpful. Loads of 'em have med training, for one. But mostly... well, they take care of the dead. I mean, think about it. Burial options are pretty limited down here, right? Big pyres ain't good for the air, and there ain't nowhere to bury them. But you can't have corpses lying around everywhere. The Stygian's gather 'em up, maybe hold a little service. They prep 'em so they don't get too squishy, then they take 'em up-world and give 'em a send-off. They're big on finding out what the dead would have wanted, where they can.*

*So it's sorta taboo to mess with them. Ain't nobody else wants that job. But like I said, they're weird. They're sorta... happy, I guess? Cheerful. They paint their clothes and armour bright colours, and cover them in trinkets. Life and death trinkets - bones, kids toys, little plastic skulls, whatever. And they think we're all already dead, so basically nothing freaks 'em out.*

*So play nice. We need 'em. But don't expect talking to 'em to be easy."*

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*"You wish to know of my home, Stygia. Very well, sit. Drink. What do you know? Well, you're right. Mostly people know of the pilgrims, roaming priests who tend to the dead. That makes them stalkers by any measure, I feel - their duties take them out of the Underworld more often than any scavenger.*

*The Underworld, yes. This is what a Stygian believes. We are all of us dead, having died in the catastrophe that*

*ended the world. Those who remain crawling in the dark places are the sinners and their descendants, dead dogs too blind to see it. Some believe that our purpose is to free ourselves of this curse, to rise into hell above and remake it a heaven. Others that we must embrace our curse.*

*Is it a religion? Yes, and no. For many it is. For others a philosophy which defines our condition. We do not concern ourselves overmuch with the specificities, for faith is ultimately personal. Others seem to rarely understand this. If the concept is too much for you, then understand this; we believe that our shared philosophy binds us as community, and gives us the strength to transcend what we are now.*

*For we are a community. Stygia is a huge, sprawling place, born beneath the Spires of Knowledge and spreading out through the tunnels. We are ruled by our priesthood, though they exercise a light hand. They possess much knowledge from the old world, knowledge of engineering and architecture, art and history and warfare. They have higher concerns than the minutiae of day to day life.*

*Of course, this means there can be crime, and those who take advantage. For this there are the paladins, those who the priests arm to protect Stygia from its enemies within and without. Did you think that the scions of academia would be meek, without protection? Stygia is rich, with traders from all over the Underworld making their way there. Worse, it appears distracted, open to attack.*

*Each of the three factions has attempted to take Stygia, and each has failed. Do not underestimate my people, friend. We tend the dead, but we can make them too."*

Stygians are an altogether stranger group, departing from the more militarised imagery of Metro 2033 and the S.T.A.L.K.E.R series. Costuming for Stygians can be a little trickier than most - they often wear strange masks, and are particularly identifiable by the bright colours they love. Keep in mind that within Blind Dogs "bright" is still a relative term - everything should be weathered, often more so with Stygians. The effect would be a little jarring otherwise. But they're an intentionally odd option for people looking to do something a little different - feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss kit plans.

## MERCS AND MILITIA

*"Why all the military gear? Well, that's a story. The way I heard it, when folks moved below ground they found it bigger than expected. Sewers, tube stations, all these things they expected, but what surprised them was all the bunkers and store house. I guess with all the wars on the government had been doing a little prepping.*

*Needless to say, we soon looted everything we could get our mits on. Most folks wind up with a bit of surplus, but the ones in loads of it? Probably militia. Havens appoint their own militia, and give them the best stuff they can afford. Makes sense usually, these are the folks defending your home. Almost everyone tends to do a stint with them, barring your docs and whatnot, but there's always a few spend their whole lives playing soldier. It's either a real cushy job, or a real hellish one. But do your stint, if you get asked - it's a dangerous world, and the militia'll teach you how to defend yourselves.*

*'Course, it ain't just militia. Most merc crews are decked head to foot in the best military gear they can get too. Some customise it - steel plates and whatnot - but they're all equipped well. Watch yourselves with mercs. The best*

*of 'em are saints. Everyone needs to eat, needs a place to sleep, can't fault someone for selling their skills. But the worst of 'em... you hear stories. Ain't much better'n raiders."*

The iconic image of Metro and Stalker, these are the soldiers of the Blind Dogs world. Mercs are particularly well suited for groups, though solo guns for hire also exist - bounty hunters are the classic example. Militia are soldiers who defend the local haven. It's fine to have a background as militia in a previous haven, and it'll be possible to sign up as a current one at the event.

Keep in mind that while the Blind Dogs setting borrows heavily from the visuals of Metro and Stalker, we're not milsim. Even the most decked-out would be soldiers have scavenged their kit, or traded it from someone else who scavenged it. Keep the camouflage to an absolute minimum, combine military clothing with civilian gear, mix and match your load outs.

## **GANGS AND RAIDERS**

*"Gangs are strange. There's always folk unable or unwilling to settle down under the rules of a haven, or the ones who get driven to crime by plain old poverty. Most of 'em still live around, runnin' whatever scheme or scam they do. I don't mean them. The gangs though, they're the folks who live together out in the tunnels.*

*Most of 'em have a whatsit. A theme. Met some once looked like old world bikers, even though there weren't a one of 'em had so much as a skateboard. Others all use the same colours, or whatever. It's identity, is the thing. And believe me, most gangs? They're tight like a family.*

*Mostly they fight one another. Territory and shit. Which in a way makes 'em handy, they're like a buffer against*

*everything else out there. They roll into town every now and again, and most of 'em like to look big and tough. But so long as you put on a big show of force, get the militia nice and visible, they don't get too out of hand.*

*Course, sometimes you get some that get a little too successful, a little too cocky. There's whole havens out there under the thumb of one gang or another, usually under their 'protection'. Things can get bad then.*

*But sure, they're a problem - but they ain't the real problem. See, sometimes a gang goes real fucking batshit. Maybe they're camped out where the gas sneaks in, I don't know. But far too many of 'em start mounting people's heads on spikes, eating the rest and just straight up riding roughshod over the rest of us. Raiders we call 'em.*

*Keep your wits about you with gangs, you'll need 'em. But if you see a raider - just fucking shoot it and do us all a favour."*

It's fine to play a ganger or ex-ganger as a character, and gangs make for great group concepts. However, keep in mind that troublemakers tend to get dealt with harshly - you'll want to figure out a reason your outlaw character is happy to work with the other players, even if they're grouchy about it. Raiders, however, are only included as being thematically similar - they're not designed as a player option.

## **TRIBALS**

*"Tribals huh? What's to say? Pack of savages mostly. Back when everything went to shit there were a bunch of people decided stuff like society and modern living were to blame. They fucked off into the darkest, nastiest tunnels*

*as far away from everyone else as they could, and that was that. At least, that was that until the rest of us started expanding again, and we ran right into them.*

*There's a whole bunch of different tribes, all believing different weird shit. Some think the tunnels have spirits they have to live in tune with, some try to live like the animals you find out there - wild dogs and rats and spiders and shit. We used to get the rat tribe around these parts, till we drove 'em off. Scary bastards - wore the pelts and bones of rats bigger than most dogs. There are others, though.*

*Relations ain't what you'd call simple. Space is space, resources is resources, and it's all at a premium. That's the usual reason we wind up scrapping. That said most of them tend towards the nomadic, so it ain't always a problem. When we live close and ain't fighting, we trade as often as not. Sometimes one of 'em even ends up moving in - there's a kid in town sells moulds from out in the tunnels. Best stuff you can get for infection short of old world meds.*

*Don't go thinking it's all us, mind. Sometimes the crazy bastards just go nuts for whatever reason. Sometimes some warlord crops up, unites a couple of tribes and decides the world'd be better if us awful civilised folk were just murdered. And gods fucking help us when they do."*

If you've searched post-apocalyptic costumes online, then you'll have seen plenty of inspiration for warpaint wearing nutters – other modern savage characters are likewise obvious inspirations. If you're looking to play one then you'll want to ask yourself some questions – namely, why is your character not with their tribe?



Costumes should be fairly obvious, but avoid feathers and the pelts of things that obviously wouldn't be found underground. A few of these things is fine - some tribes have their own stalker-equivalents that brave the surface world - but try to keep things as setting-appropriate as possible.

## CIVVIES

*"Look kid, it ain't all gun-toting desperadoes and cannibal raiders and mutants and shit. That's plenty exciting and all, but who the fuck could run a haven with just people who shoot stuff for a living?"*

*Nah. A good haven needs more than that. We've got techs, fixing up everything from the pipes to the lights. Docs, doing the same with people. Farmers, mostly growing herbs for healin' and food for eatin', but you get the odd pig pen and chicken coup. There's ratcatchers, keeping the numbers down and providing more meat. Lamplighters, now there's a job. Crazy bastards go out into the tunnels, make sure all the lights is still working. Obviously they can't get everything, but they make light down here a hell of a lot better.*

*Traders too. Mostly independent, at least around here, but the feds almost always have a few people about. Cooks, cleaners... look, you get the idea. And on top of it all is whatever system folk've got in place, keeping it all ticking over. Varies haven to haven, but there's usually a mayor and a sheriff, whatever names they go by. Big enough place, that'll have a whole council.*

*So remember that kid. Folks might tell stories about the trigger happy, but it's these folk who're the real heroes.*

*Well. The cleaners and shit. Maybe not the politicians."*

Civilians are entirely appropriate for player characters. They're an excellent choice for people who don't want to focus much on the fighting - but they're by no means non-combatants if you don't want them to be. Most everyone in Blind Dogs is armed and fairly well trained, even if they spend most of their time catching rats or mending pipes.

Kit's going to vary a lot here, so feel free to get creative. Adding in a bit of military kit - scraps of webbing and holsters, that sort of thing - is going to help fit the look, but isn't a requirement. Just keep in mind that if you go too mad with it everyone'll think you're some kind of merc...