

MENACE

BEGINNER'S GUIDE

Welcome to the TCRN Impetus, Commander! As your second-in-command, my job is to inform you on the inner workings of your troops and the mission you're about to engage in, from squad customization to pre-Operation actions, and of course, leading your Squaddies into battle!

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Gameplay Overview

MENACE sees you as the commander of the strike cruiser TCRN Impetus, stranded in the Wayback system - a backwater group of planets. Within this system, multiple factions are vying for control, from pirates and their unhinged combat tactics, to corporations and organizations seeking an edge over their rivals, to a new menacing threat lurking in the dark corners of the system.

Featuring a strategic layer that lets you choose which factions to work with, MENACE sends you from planet to planet to take on procedurally generated Operations that pit you against four planetside factions: Aliens, Pirates, the Rogue Army, and an unknown threat. Each Operation consists of multiple missions connected through branching paths with different objectives, challenges, and rewards for you to pick and choose from. You'll need to prepare by hiring new squad leaders, accessing the Black Market for upgraded weapons and armor, and upgrading the Impetus to assist you from orbit.

Once on the battlefield, you'll engage the enemy in turn-based tactical combat, complete the objectives, and try to keep your squad alive to secure Operational success and the well-earned loot that comes with it before moving on to the next mission. The battles in MENACE are challenging, and you're likely to lose many squad members – but with all the information in this guide at your disposal, we'll be able to keep that count to a minimum!

See you planetside, Commander!

BRIDGE // SYSTEM MAP



THE BRIDGE

The Bridge is where all of your non-combat management will take place, providing you with several options that will help prepare you for future Operations and the missions therein. We will address all of them in this section of the guide.

Before we do, however, let's address the four icons under the Impetus at the top left corner, as they will be relevant as we progress through different elements.

- 1. Promotion Points** - Accumulated by successfully accomplishing both primary and secondary mission objectives, these are used to promote your Squad Leaders, providing additional perks to their squad.
- 2. Authority** - Your ability to keep order and discipline on the Impetus. The higher your Authority, the more Discipline your Squads have, providing faster suppression recovery. Authority is also used to hire new Squad Leaders and for certain events that may arise during your campaign..
- 3. O.C.I. Components** - Use these components to upgrade the Impetus.
- 4. Squaddies** - The total number of Squaddies, or squad members, at your disposal for missions.



System Map & Operation Selection

The System Map provides a comprehensive view of the Wayback System and any available Operations. Selecting an Operation will provide you with information on planetary features, the enemy you'll be fighting against, and the resulting change to trust with the faction that you are doing the Operation through.

The above Operation, for example, will take place on a Temperate biome planet, where you will be fighting against native alien fauna. A success in this Operation will increase your standing with The Backbone by +18.



Faction Standing

As you continue to improve your standing with certain factions, you will unlock new O.C.I. upgrades for the Impetus, which we will address next. Faction standings are located in the bottom-left corner of the Strategic Overview screen, and selecting any faction displays a brief summary of the faction and any currently selected components.



O.C.I. - OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

At the start of the game, the Impetus is heavily damaged, with nearly every O.C.I. destroyed. There are three categories on the Impetus to slot these upgrades - Electronics, Armament, and Hull.

- 1. Electronics** - These provide Intelligence for mission prep, detailing the starting locations of units and their unit type. The higher your Intelligence level, the more detailed information you receive.
- 2. Armament** - Providing you with firepower from orbit, Armaments allow you to use rockets, strafing runs, and even ion beams on the battlefield to decimate your enemies.
- 3. Hull** - The broadest of the three categories, Hull components can range from Medical Bays that heal Squaddies, to vehicle repair bays, and other upgrades that can bring in additional manpower for your squads after a battle.

Upgrading your O.C.I. areas requires actual Components, which are earned after you complete an Operation. Unique O.C.I. upgrades from the various local factions may cost more than the standard TCRN versions, however, they can provide much more powerful effects in return.

ARMORY // SQUADS



SQUAD CUSTOMIZATION & STATS

Your crew on the Impetus is comprised of different squads of soldiers, each led by a Squad Leader. These Squad Leaders have their own personalities, backstories, and unique perk trees, allowing for a varied set of soldiers to deploy onto the battlefield. While some Squad Leaders are in charge of infantry squads, others are pilots who arrive on the battlefield in a variety of vehicles.

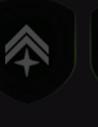
Each squad has a range of customization options to make them even more unique, based on the equipment you have at hand.



Squad Leader - Battlefield Modifiers

Your Squad Leaders each have a set of Battlefield Modifiers that will affect the entire squad while on missions. Armor upgrades, accessories, and Squad Leader perks will be the primary ways to increase these four modifiers.

- 1. Armor** - modified by equippable armor for an Infantry Squad, or the base armor of a vehicle for your Pilot Squad Leader. Armor is equipped by every Squaddie.
- 2. Detection** - The ability to detect units within an SL's Vision. Detection may be reduced by weather effects like a Sandstorm or Snowstorm.
- 3. Concealment** - How difficult it is for the enemy to detect your own Squad. There is an "eye-closed" icon next to a squad that is fully concealed.
- 4. Vision** - How far your SL can see through the Fog of War. Much like Detection, Vision may be reduced by weather effects on a mission.

STATS		ATTRIBUTES	
1	Action Points 103		
2	Accuracy 78		
3	Discipline 64		
4	Damage Reduction 14%		
5	Hitpoints 11		
6	Critical Chance 8%		
7	Defense 7%		
8	Promotion Tax 10	Growth Potential 5	11
9	Supply Cost 20		
10			
			
			
			
			

 GET MOTHERFUCKED Can use most Special Weapons without having to deploy them.	 ATHLETIC -2 AP Move cost / -50% Deploy costs.	 SOLID GROUPING +5 ACC for each consecutive attack vs. the SAME target.
 NEW TRICKS +2 Growth Potential.	 SCOUT +2 View Range and +1 Detection.	 BUFF +3 HP per squadmate.
 Z-ZAG 5W DEF for each tile moved this turn. Reset next turn.	 BAGS & BELTS Expend Accessory Slots by +1.	 DEMOLITIONS EXPERT +50% DMG against structures and buildings.
 QUICK HANDS -10 AP Cost to use Accessories.	 LINEBREAKER Tech crashes into and stuns enemy Infantry.	
 POINTFIRE +10% ACC when not Deployed or Pinned Down.	 FRAGMENTATION +25% Enemy Elements hit by AOE Weapons.	 DETERMINED -35% to incoming Suppression.
 LONG BOMBS +2 Throwing Range to ALL grenades.		
 FULL SONG -5 AP Special Weapon cost for consecutive usage.	 DIE HARD -60% to incoming DMG for squad leader.	

BUFF



Two-a-days. Bear crawls. Suicides and shuttles. Momentary urges to die hardens one against death itself.

- * +3 HP per squadmate.
- * Removes "encumbered" effect from heavy armor and weapons.

#####

Squad Leader - Stats & Attributes

Your Squad Leaders have a range of Attributes and Stats that determine their roles and effectiveness on the battlefield. A Squad Leader's Attributes rating directly translates to their Stats, making Attributes a crucial element to understand. We will focus on the resulting Stats below.

1. Agility -> Action Points - This is the general agility, quickness, and dexterity of a character, determining how fast and efficiently they can act on the battlefield. The maximum agility of 100 translates into 120 action points.

2. Weapon Skill -> Accuracy - Weapon skill is the level of proficiency with any kind of weapon and how effectively it can be used against an enemy. Weapon Skill gives the characters accuracy. This attribute provides the corresponding stat 1:1, so 70 Weapon Skill equals 70 Accuracy.

3. Valor -> Discipline - Valor is a character's overall determination and audacity, and their ability to withstand any type of physical or mental challenge. It translates 1:1 to the Discipline stat.

4. Toughness -> Damage Reduction - The Toughness attribute translates into damage reduction applied to any damage received. Most characters start with a toughness of 50, which means they have no damage reduction. The maximum toughness of 100 translates to 50% damage reduction. However, certain characters that are more fragile than others might start with a value below 50, meaning they take extra damage from attacks.

5. Vitality -> Hitpoints per Element - Vitality determines the hitpoints of each element in a squad. The standard here is 50, which gives 10 hitpoints, while the maximum is 100, which offers 20 hitpoints per element. As with toughness, there are also characters with lower Vitality, meaning the elements in their squad will have less than 10 hitpoints.

6. Precision -> Critical Hit Chance - This gives the chance for each attack to score a critical hit, increasing the damage done by 50%. Most characters who are not explicitly trained in marksmanship will start with a precision of 0, meaning they have no chance of scoring a critical hit. The maximum of 100 translates into a crit chance of 25%. Enemies will not be able to land critical hits on player units.



Squad Leader - Stats & Attributes Cont.

7. Positioning -> Defense - This is the ability of a character to disperse their unit or place their vehicle in a way that minimizes the chance of being hit by enemy fire. Most characters start with a positioning value of 50, which translates into no defense bonus. The maximum at 100 gives a defense bonus of 50%, reducing the enemy's accuracy against this unit by 50%.

8. Promotion Tax - For every promotion a squad receives, its Supply Cost increases. This is to encourage the use of less experienced squads.

9. Supply Cost - The cost of using the selected Squad Leader. Increases as you promote them.

10. Unique Starting Perk - Every Squad Leader starts with one specific perk already unlocked. These are very different between Squad Leaders and are designed to make them feel unique and emphasize each individual's character.

11. Growth Potential - Indicates the rate at which a character can increase their attributes. Unlike most RPGs where you can choose which attributes to increase when a character levels up, in MENACE, these increases happen slowly and automatically based on actions on the battlefield.

12. Perk Tree - Each Squad Leader has their perk tree that can be unlocked through "promotions." Not all perks are unique to each character, but the selection and order of unlocks will be different for each.



Infantry Squad Customization

Infantry Squads are going to be the most common type of squad that you will recruit.

1. Squad Size - You'll have access to a limited number of Squaddies at any given time - assign them to the different Squad Leaders to increase or decrease their squad sizes respectively. Additional Squaddies can be acquired in a few different ways to replace those that fall in combat, as we'll describe later. Note that increasing the size of your squad will also increase your Supply cost to deploy on missions.

2. Infantry Weapon - The primary weapon that your squad will use. Hovering over any weapon provides you with a range of stats, helpful in finding the right weapon for the right squad. Consider stats like range, damage, and rate of fire for suppression purposes when equipping your squad with a particular weapon.

3. Infantry Special - Special weapons, such as an LMG, RPG, or Sniper Rifle, can only be equipped in this slot, and are less common than the regular Infantry Weapons. If one is assigned, the Squad Leader carries this weapon instead of the Infantry Weapon, and they will typically have a limited number of uses per battle.

4. Infantry Armor - Your squads can equip themselves with multiple types of armor, which not only protect against different kinds of weapons but can also expand the number of accessories the squad can carry. Armor also has durability that is reduced every time it successfully stops a bullet.

5. Infantry Accessories - These accessories can range from grenades and magazine pouches to explosives and reconnaissance drones, giving your squads an advantage on missions.



Vehicle Customization

Pilot Squad Leaders are much less common, but are equally as varied in their customization.

1. Vehicle - The squad will remain inactive until you select a vehicle for the Squad Leader to operate. Do note that you will need to manually add the squad to the mission using the “Add to Mission” button at the top right.

2. Modular Vehicle Heavy - Heavy and Powerful weapons can be added to this slot.

3. Modular Vehicle Light - Light weapons similar to the Infantry Special Weapon, but designed to attach to the vehicle instead, such as MMGs, light flamethrowers, or plasma rifles.

4. Vehicle Accessories - Similar to Infantry Accessories, these additional items can provide your vehicle with advantages on missions.

Once you've customized your squads, it's time to head into your first Operation.



THE BACKBONE / ALIEN INFESTATION

CLEAR LANDING ZONE

ABORT

MISSION SELECT ➞

O.C.I.

SQUADS

BLACKMARKET

HIRING

DIFFICULTY: ★★★ ★ 1,315

While helping the locals is a high priority, we must first ensure the safety of our deployed troops. Send in a vanguard to clear the area of all dangerous wildlife where we plan to land troops and supplies.

OBJECTIVES

- Sweep the area and clear out 70% of all Aliens.
- Complete the mission within 10 rounds.
- Complete the mission within 14 rounds.
- Recover the lost cargo.
- Complete the mission without losing a squad or vehicle.
- Kill the Bombardeir.

Rewards

PLAN MISSION



Development Build

OPERATIONS

Operations are sets of missions across the Wayback System, and will be your path of progression. On accepting an Operation, you must either complete all of the missions or abort in order to move on to another. This causes a reduction in Faction Standing for the faction you are working with for that Operation.

Missions in MENACE are procedurally generated and drawn from a larger pool of missions depending on the Operation type. You can click on any mission in the set to find out details, including difficulty, Supply limits, description, objectives, and potential rewards. This will allow you to determine which path to follow. Some of these rewards are permanent additions to your inventory, such as equipment, while others specifically help make a particular Operation easier, like reinforcements in the final mission.



Mission Prep

Once you've selected your mission, you'll need to prepare for it. There are a few key elements to look over before starting.

1. Details & Objectives - Provides time of day, weather, and objectives for your mission. Note that certain weather conditions can cause limited visibility for squads, potentially slowing them down and reducing their field of vision, and nighttime missions vastly reduces the line of sight for your squad.

2. Intel Details - Upgrading the TCRN Impetus' Intel Components will allow you to see detailed information about enemy squad positions and squad types.

3. Squad Positioning - You can position all squads within the light orange regions on the mission map. This is essential for mission success, as it allows you to determine where to deploy specific squads to achieve certain objectives or counter enemy squad types once you have gathered Intel. To move your squad, left click and drag the squad to the desired location, and drop it into place.

4. Mission Supplies - Each mission has a limited amount of supplies you can equip. Hovering over each squad, you can see the Supply cost for each squad in the mission. If you are over the supplies limit of the mission, consider modifying your squad's loadouts or squad size, which can be done in the Mission Prep screen.

You're now ready for your first mission - proceed.



COMBAT

Combat in MENACE is based on a traditional turn-based tactical system with some new mechanics that you will need to keep in mind for a successful mission. Missions are comprised of “rounds” or turns where all units on the battlefield are allowed to have their actions before starting the next round.

Unlike other turn-based tactical games, there is no initiative system here, meaning any squad can move during that faction’s turn, and there are no perks, abilities, or weapons that ensure a certain squad can move before any other. Each faction must move all of its squads once before being able to use a prior one again in the next round.



Action Points

Every squad has Action Points, or AP, that determine everything they can do in a single turn, including movement, using equipment, and attacking the enemy. There are numerical indicators for every action that represent the cost of AP for that unit.

For example:

1. Crouching costs 20 AP
2. Firing a rifle costs 40 AP
3. Moving to a new tile will provide a cost next to the "Move" text
4. The AP bar on the bottom of the squad's panel will indicate visually how much of it is left after any action.



Combat Order

In MENACE, you decide the order of your unit's movements. This means you could move a tank into position at the very end of a round, and at the start of the next round, use that same tank to attack first before your other units.

Once you have begun a unit's actions, it is committed until they either use up all their AP or you choose to end their turn before doing so; be cautious - ending that unit's turn means they cannot use their AP again until all units on the battlefield have gone through their turn. If you overextend a squad at the start of your round and stumble on multiple enemy units, those units could converge on your squad, having several chances to attack before you can do anything in response.

Note that there is a Squad Leader Perk that allows that specific squad to move now, then move later in the round.

Once your unit has finished its turn, it will cycle through all other factions on the battlefield, allowing a single squad per faction to complete its turn before returning to you. Note that other factions may have more squads than you do, resulting in multiple cycles of those factions until everyone has had their turn.



Cover and Line of Sight

Both infantry and vehicles can utilize cover, with each tile having various levels of cover depending on terrain or buildings. A building on the left side of a squad can provide full coverage, yet the squad could be entirely open on the right or behind them. Cover can also break the line of sight for a squad, hiding their position, making urban combat much riskier than in the open field.

For units caught in an open field, or to further protect the squad in low cover environments, you can use  and some AP to crouch for a better bonus, which also allows that squad to use their special weapon, should they have the AP to do so. Note that while crouched, the squad cannot move until they get out of the crouching position for a similar AP cost.

Vehicles can also use cover, but it may restrict their line of fire.

Consider moving slowly in areas with lots of terrain elements and buildings to limit the chance of falling into an ambush from enemy units in heavier cover.



Attacking Squads

When you're in a position to attack an enemy squad, select the attack you want to use, and hover over the enemy squad, bringing up an overview of the attack.

Here, you'll be able to determine if it's best to attack or not by looking at potential factors such as Accuracy, Armor Penetration, and Suppression potential towards the enemy unit.

You can also consider modifiers such as whether the squad is in cover, deployed, or crouched, as well as their level of Suppression, armor level, and squad health. No outcome is guaranteed, but this can provide enough information to confirm or cancel the desired attack.





Psychological Effects - Suppression

Suppression represents a unit's performance degrading both physically and mentally due to being attacked, be it directly or indirectly. A unit is harder to suppress the more Discipline it has. When a unit accumulates suppression, it will move from "Unaffected" to "Suppressed" and finally to "Pinned Down." Each subsequent level of suppression reduces the combat effectiveness of the squad, from accuracy to the amount of AP it will have in the next turn.

There are several ways Suppression is applied to a squad:

- Dealing damage to a squad, especially when a Squaddie is killed
- Suppression is applied per shot, so a weapon with a high rate of fire tends to apply more Suppression
- Reduced in cover or when the squad wears heavy armor
- Reduced depending on the Discipline of the squad
- A portion of Suppression is also applied to neighboring tiles

You can see the current level of suppression for any visible squad on the battlefield by looking at the top bar above the squad, or by hovering over the squad to bring up its combat stats.



Psychological Effects - Wavering & Fleeing

When a unit takes repeated attacks or loses multiple Squaddies in a single turn, it can overwhelm them to the point of Wavering, noted by the squad icon pulsing white, then Fleeing, noted by the squad icon staying white. These squads cannot attack in that round but have a chance to recover morale. On the chance they do not, they may flee the battlefield, each round taking a new opportunity to recover.

Tactically, these units are no longer a threat in that round, meaning you can turn to securing mission objectives or other enemy squads if you prefer.



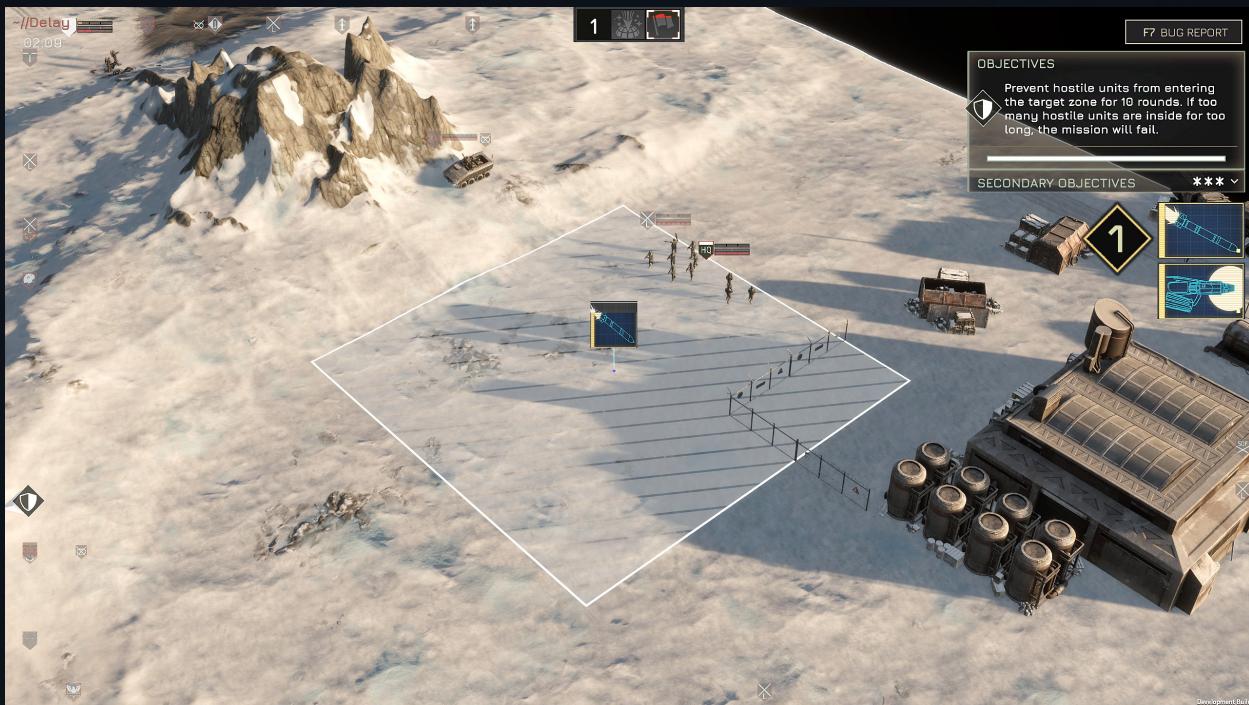
Attacking Vehicles

Attacking vehicles yields slightly different stats. Many vehicles are equipped with directional armor, meaning that certain sides may have more armor than others. When you choose to attack a vehicle, consider its armor levels when you hover over it, and note that certain weapons are more effective against it than others. Choosing a rocket launcher or a heavy gun with high penetration will result in the most devastation.

When taking damage, rather than face psychological effects, vehicles take component damage instead, potentially knocking them out of service and stranding the vehicle.

Vehicles also have different controls from infantry squads. For example, a vehicle can move in reverse while still facing forward. Where infantry squads can crouch using the hotkey **X**, vehicles use **X** to face a certain direction while remaining in a tile. Both of these options are designed to keep the highest level of armor facing directional fire when possible.





Offmap Abilities

Offmap Abilities are unlocked by O.C.I upgrades and provide you with various options for orbital strikes on the battlefield. These types of abilities have a limited number of uses per battle, do not cost AP, and usually take a complete round of all squads to enact. You'll see the Offmap Ability icon fill up as it approaches the point of enactment.

When using these types of abilities, it's often a wise strategy to lay down suppressive fire on units within the selected tiles, preventing them from moving out of the area of effect!



Taking Casualties

Taking Casualties is inevitable for even the most skilled tactician. It's important to understand that since squads are made up of a group of individuals (known as Squaddies), losing these Squaddies also means a reduction in the combat effectiveness of that squad, as they will have less firepower for Suppression, damage, and unit abilities.

Remember that you can bring new Squaddies into your squad in between missions; however, the manpower pool is not unlimited, so it's best to protect your squads as much as possible.



MISSION SUCCESS

After completing your mission, you will receive the items from the mission parameters, as well as any loot that enemies may have dropped. The Mission Result screen provides additional information on a range of mission stats, including mission effectiveness, casualties, and the overall rating.

You will also be rewarded with Promotion Points based on a mission's success and the number of secondary objectives that were completed, which can go towards the aforementioned Promotion Tree to apply new abilities and stats to your squads.



The last screen details your Squad Summary, providing stats on damage dealt or received, Suppression, squad loadout, and any temporary modifiers that might impact the squad's performance in the future.

SYSTEM MAP// BLACKMARKET



THE BLACK MARKET

The Black Market is a not-entirely-legal way to barter goods to upgrade your squads, from modified guns to heavy-duty sniper rifles and turrets, armor to a massive range of accessories, and even vehicle chassis.

Every squad item in the game has a market value displayed in the bottom-right corner of its icon. To purchase a Black Market item, simply select the item on the right and match its value with your own inventory on the left. There is no incentive to overpay for items, so matching the price exactly will be best.

The Black Market's inventory changes after every Operation, so it's highly recommended to check in regularly to see if you enjoy its wares.

YOUR SQUADS 4

DARBY BOG TECH ACHILLEAS

The Forgiven
Kody Greifinger
Lance Corporal

Authority: 30

The infamous Core Worlds terrorist escaped into the Wayback – and is now within our sights again. However, resource depletion makes for strange bedfellows. We could make use of Greifinger's SL-Status talents... for a time.

STATS ATTRIBUTES

Action Points 110
Accuracy 60
Discipline 60
Damage Reduction 15%
Hitpoints 12
Critical Chance 2%
Defense 5%
Promotion Tax 15 Growth Potential 4
Supply Cost 40

HIRE

SQUAD LEADER HIRING

While you start with four Squad Leaders, using them for every single mission will wear them down and give a negative modifier for a number of missions. To counter this, as well as to address the Promotion and Supply Tax mechanics, you will need to hire new Squad Leaders.

Hiring new Squad Leaders requires two things: A dossier purchased from the Black Market, and Authority. Authority, as mentioned in The Bridge section of the guide, modifies the Discipline Attribute of your Squad Leaders. This means you will want to balance exactly when to hire a new Squad Leader, in order to not affect said Discipline negatively for your entire team.

Each Squad Leader has an Authority cost to hire, a Star Ranking, which determines the quality of said SL, a designation of either Infantry or Vehicle, as well as their own set of Stats, Attributes, and Promotion Trees.

You can dismiss a Squad Leader at any time to receive their Authority cost back, in which case they would go back into the Hiring Pool to be hired at any point in the future.

TIPS & TRICKS

- Some OCI upgrades are worth waiting on extra Components, such as providing double the Intelligence of the TCRN equivalent.
- Manpower is limited; losing too many Squaddies could result in half-filled squads in the next mission.
- Consider your Squad Leader's abilities when customizing their loadout. Some squads are better suited to specific types of weapons than others.
- Switch out Squad Leaders often. Using them for too many missions causes them to get an Exhausted debuff to Action Points for a number of missions.
- Take your time on the battlefield. Moving large distances at once could cause you to fall into an ambush that could be avoided.
- Some vehicles can transport squads, protecting them as they move across the battlefield.
- Vehicles can move backwards to protect themselves from heavy fire.
- Vehicles can run over units, causing immediate casualties and increasing their suppression.
- Use cover whenever possible, even at the expense of not using all of your Action Points.
- A suppressed squad has less accuracy and Action Points. Use this to your advantage, or consider converging on a friendly Suppressed squad to protect them.
- Consider repeated attacks on a single enemy squad to keep them locked down.
- The Black Market has an item for additional Squaddies that replenishes after every Operation. Use that to build up your Squaddie pool.

MENACE

However you choose to play, we hope this guide has helped you understand what MENACE has to offer. Enjoy playing through Operations to discover more mission types, figure out that optimal squad composition, and taste sweet victory, or the bitterness of defeat.

OVERHYPE
STUDIOS

