

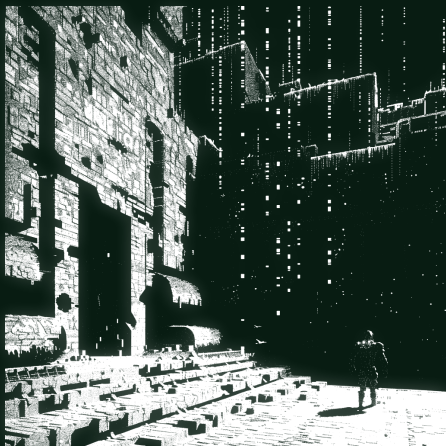


Netrunning basics

You've heard it all before: netrunning is slow. It's a one-person gig that drags the whole crew down, clunky and hard to pull off.

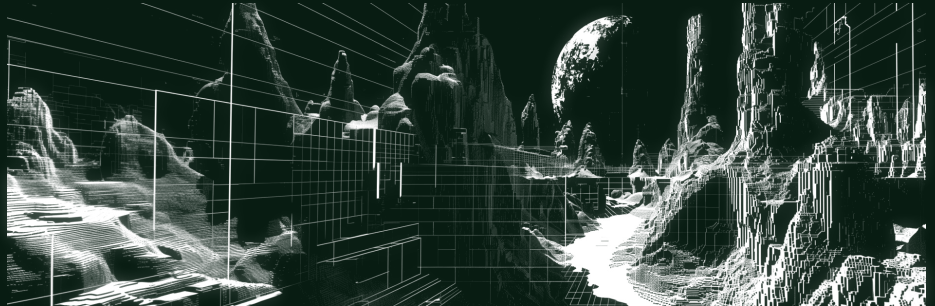
Plenty of folks just hand these ops over to third-party contractors, letting someone else handle the digital dirty work.

This article is here to flip that script and show you how to see netrunning through a fresh lens, all while sticking to the core rulebook. Get ready to up your game, chummers.



There are two ways to run a netrunner encounter. The standard grind is the dungeon run. You jack into a datafortress and start poking around like you're playing an old-school D&D game. Each room comes with its own surprises and monsters - programs with avatars like hellhounds and gargoyles.

Sure, this keeps the suspense high and the tension tight, but it's also slow and, well, kinda "gamey." Cyberpunk Red stuck with this vibe, swapping rooms for virtual elevators with surprises on every floor.



But guess what? We don't roll like that here.

Let's talk about expectations

First things first. When you crack open the Netrunner manual, you get this wild vision of battling the big corps, raiding Arasaka, and jacking ultra-secret files to sell or sabotage. And yeah, every netrunner dreams of this and might even wet their bed fantasizing about it.

But hold up - that's like reading a thief class and thinking you're gonna rob the National Bank every weekend. That's not your day-to-day grind; that's your magnum opus, The Heist.

Usually? You're hitting much smaller datafortresses, little servers with the nuggets you need for your current gig.

Taking on a big corp? That's a team effort, not a solo netrunner's playground. Corporations have too much cash and aren't just gonna throw a watchdog and a couple of Black ICE programs at their vaults. Their systems are crawling with sysops and decked out with top-tier hardware and software that would make even Bartmoss think twice - or not, 'cause that dude's crazy anyway.

So, what's the play? Let's say your crew is digging into a crime that went down in a mall. You know there's a whole cam circuit that might've caught the action, but you ain't a cop and you don't have direct access to the servers with the juicy data.

Jacking the cameras will only give you live feeds, not the past recordings you need. Your job? Find an access point into the security circuit, slip past the Data Walls, and snag those recordings for later analysis.

Get in, get out, and get the intel without breaking a sweat.

So, ditch those crossword puzzle maps. The referee is going to have a note in their papers like this:

MALL SECURITY FEED

CPU	: 1 (INT 3)
Data Wall	: 3 STR
Code Gate	: 5 STR
Monitored	: No

SOFTWARE:

Detection	+4 (Watchdog)
Attack	+3 (Flatline)

Fries Interface chip on cyberdeck.

How Does It Work?

First, you need to find an Access Point in Meat Space. In this example, the Mall's Security Feed isn't connected to the wide web, so you've got to locate an entry point. The simplest way? Unplug one of the cameras and jack in. Or, find a secluded spot, use a tech roll to splice some cables, and make your own entry. You might even find a computer with access to the net.

No need to sweat LDL jumps or making your connection untraceable - you've got no access to the wide web anyway.

Once you're in, it's time to pick your software. Roll your program STR against the Data Walls or Code Gates, then use your stealth program against the Data Fortress Detection STR.

Now, just grab the files you need (or all of them) and disconnect.

Forget the fancy descriptions, the pointless movements, and grids. Save all that immersive jazz for when you're hitting something worth your time, not a bare-bones mall Data Fortress with a Plain wireframe VR that screams "boring work job."



Data Fortress Galore

Don't get me wrong, hitting up big Places is a blast, but it's best to save those epic runs for when you are alone with your Referee - between sessions when the whole crew isn't waiting on you. But if you stick to the quick checks formula, you can squeeze in quite a bit of netrunning action.



GANG HIDEOUT

A small fortress where gangs maintain their info on deals and contacts.

CPU : 2 (INT 6)
Data Wall : 4 STR
Code Gate : 6 STR
Monitored : Sysop

NODES: Doors, Cameras, Mines, Memory Units.

SOFTWARE:

Detection +3 (Bloodhound)
Attack +2 (Killer 2)
+3 (JackAttack)

DRONE TANK

Huge drone resembling a tank able to be remotely operated but also autonomous.

CPU : 2 (INT 6)
Data Wall : 6 STR
Code Gate : 8 STR
Monitored : AI

NODES: Optics, Weapons, Locomotion systems.

SOFTWARE:

Detection +6 (Hellhound)
Attack +3 (Flatline)
+4 (Hellbolt)

Remember the key values of "quick netrunning": Keep checks short and to a minimum. The whole ordeal should just be a few rolls long.

- Roll to break the Datawalls or Code Gates.
- Roll to avoid detection.
- Roll to break encryptions or other restrictions.

If combat breaks out, keep it short too - no need for grids or anything fancy.

- Roll for initiative.
- Roll for attack/defense.

That's all.

Most Places are ignored and unmonitored. AIs cost a fortune, so don't expect to run into them often, if at all. Even if a Watchdog or similar program catches you, it doesn't matter if your buddies have taken care of the sysop.

If there's no one to unleash that nasty Black ICE on you, you're in the clear. Get in, get what you need, and get out before anyone even knows you were there.

