

GATEWAYS

Gateways is set in a future where Humanity spread to the stars, then suffered catastrophic setbacks. The feel of the game is relatively 'hard' SF 'space opera', and is inspired by many different works. The foremost visible influences are the works of CJ Cherryh, Babylon 5, Firefly, Stargate, and The Expanse.

The immediate setting is Threshold, a large asteroid and alien artefact, linked to the Gates from Sol system.

This is a precis view, as currently understood by most people on Threshold. There will be other alien races, technologies and major historic events. Some of this may prove incomplete or erroneous.

A Basic Timeline:

- Long Long Ago: Gatebuilders build Gates.
- Not Quite So Long Ago: The Celestes vanish.
- 2141 (T-350) Humanity finds Threshold and discovers the Gates. This leads to a century of Diaspora - various colonies are set up, many on former Celeste worlds. Contact is established with Saurians and Nearlies.
- 2241 (T-250) Gates cease working (aka "The Collapse".)
- 2246 (T-245) The Fall of Earth: a war makes the surface of earth uninhabitable (aka "The Fall").
- 2474-2480 (T-17 to T-11) *The War of Unification/The Cartel War* between the Confederation and the Independent Miners Alliance (IMA) in Sol System.
- 2490 (T-11) Solar Federation formed, Armistice formally ends the war.
- 2476 (T-15 to now) Gates start to gradually reopen; contact is re-established with various Human colonies (some have still not re-opened).
- 2485 (T-6) Humans reconnect with the Saurian homeworld; Saurian ambassadors travel to Threshold.
- 2491 (T-8 months) Humans encounter Shaleel over Roanoke.

Solar Systems:

Bridgehead: Home to the Nearlies. Human habitation on this world is centred on an island off the coast of the main continent. Travel to/from this planet is tightly controlled. Costuming for players from this world should be 'Frontiersman/Cowboys in Space'.

New Nippon: Settled as a national project, this world suffered the collapse of the gates with less trauma than any other colony, and has a relatively high population, and significant technological base. Costuming should be traditional Japanese robes, or 'corporate cyberpunk'.

Roanoke: A Human colony world that didn't make it; all inhabitants died during the Collapse.

Sauria: Homeworld of the Saurians and their Groves. Saurians will be recognisable by costuming including feathers. Non Saurians should not use feathers in their costumes.

Scadia: Settled by Reenactment groups including the SCA, with a 'back to nature' agenda. Costuming for players from this world should be 'Dark ages/Viking/Mediaeval' inspired.

Sol System: A fragmented collection of orbital habitats (or 'Habs'), colonies on the surfaces of moons, and Mars, the only planet with a population on its surface. Following a war just over a decade ago many of these joined to create the Solar Federation, though some, including Threshold remained independent. Costuming should be coveralls, uniforms, suits and other close-fitting clothes - loose clothing or skirts would be unusual.

Tartarus: Originally settled as Elysium, the original settlement died out, and the few remaining Humans on the planet now live in the Hives of a large burrowing species known as the Titans. Costuming for players from this world would be along the lines of robes/saris and abstract/geometric patterns.

Technology:

Artificial Gravity: Sol System has 'Grav plates', copied from Gatebuilder technology used in the corridors of Threshold. Rotating sections are a cheaper approach, often used by larger craft/habs.

Brainpals: Implanted personal computers/communicators in use on New Nippon. They were used on Earth before the fall, but for various reasons are not used in Sol System now. Will not operate on Threshold.

Comms: People have handheld communicators on which they can send each other messages.

Gates: Artificial wormholes connecting two solar systems, requires a 'gate drive' to open and pass through. If a Gate is not 'open' it is visually identical to empty space. The heart of any Gate drive is a 'Gate crystal'.

StellarCom: A Gate Communications facility based on Threshold, owned and operated by the Threshold Council. Aside from StellarComs through the Gates, communications are at lightspeed, or couriered by a subspace ship at FTL speeds when far enough from a sun's gravity well. There is no 'FTL radio'.

Subspace: Ships with a subspace drive can travel between locations in the Sol system in days to weeks, or to the nearer stars in months. Ships travelling in subspace cannot communicate and are hard to detect.

Waldos: Humanoid, but visibly artificial robots that provide 'remote presence' at locations reachable within at most a few light seconds. Waldos Inc. is the leading Waldo rental service.

Alien Races:

Celestes: Alien race that vanished leaving empty worlds full of their artifacts, but no bodies.

Gatebuilders: Whoever built the gates, and Threshold, at least millennia ago; no longer visibly around.

Nearlies: So named because the people who first encountered them saw them as 'Nearly Human'... though they are quite visibly *not* Human. This alien race is tool using, but largely pre-technological.

Saurians: Feathered humanoid aliens, who live in Clans in symbiosis with their Groves.

Shaleel: Butterfly-like aliens, a relatively recent contact, who communicate via their translation devices.

Terminology Note: We chose to use 'Alien Race' rather than the scientifically more accurate 'Alien Species', as the former is in common use within science fiction as a way to refer to intelligent aliens.

What is not being covered in Gateways:

Time Travel: We will not have any time-travel backwards in time (you can travel forwards normally.)

Artificial Intelligence: Sentient AI is not present in this game, and AI rights are not a topic for the game.

Language Difficulties: All humans in the game speak the same language ('Common'), all Aliens in game can also communicate in Common, but some will have a 'translation device' prop.

Human Religions: These do exist in Gateways, but currently existing religions are not a focal point of any character in the game. 'Neo-Shintoism' is prevalent on New Nippon.