GENERAL

assassins warhammer 40 000 codex

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Introduction

In the grim darkness of the far future, where war is a way of life, the most lethal and elusive warriors are often the ones that strike from the shadows. In Warhammer 40,000, those shadows are inhabited by the **Assassin** units—sleek, deadly, and designed to eliminate high-value targets with surgical precision. Whether you are a seasoned veteran of the tabletop or a newcomer eager to build an army that can outmaneuver its foes, understanding the **codex**that governs these units is essential. This article dives deep into the Assassin codex, exploring lore, rules, tactics, and practical tips for painting and assembling these iconic models.

What Is a Codex in Warhammer 40,000?

A **codex**is the official rulebook for a specific faction in Warhammer 40,000. It contains unit lists, special rules, lore, and army-building guidelines. Each codex is updated with every new edition of the game, reflecting changes in balance, aesthetics, and narrative focus. For the Assassin units, the codex serves as the definitive source for everything from deployment to the most lethal abilities.

Why Codices Matter for Players

- Strategic Clarity: Codices provide clear, unambiguous rules that prevent disputes during games.
- Army Building: They offer guidance on how to construct a balanced army, including points costs and unit combinations.
- Lore Insight: Codices weave narrative threads that enrich the gaming experience, giving context to each unit's role.
- Artistic Inspiration: Detailed model descriptions and painting suggestions help players bring their armies to life.

The Assassin Units Across Factions

While the term "Assassin" might evoke a single archetype, Warhammer 40,000 actually features Assassin units across multiple factions, each with distinct backgrounds and playstyles. Below, we break down the most prominent Assassin units and their respective codexes.

Adeptus Custodes: Custodian Assassins

The Custodian Assassins are a specialized squad within the Imperial Guard's elite Adeptus Custodes. These warriors are the Emperor's personal bodyguards, trained to eliminate threats that even the Emperor himself cannot confront. Their codex offers unique rules that emphasize stealth, precision, and the ability to take out high-value targets in a single strike.

Adeptus Mechanicus: Mechanus Assassins

In the Mechanicus codex, the Mechanus Assassins are a blend of machine and mysticism. These units combine the Mechanicus's technological prowess with the lethal efficiency of an assassin. Their rules focus on rapid deployment and high damage output, making them a formidable threat on the battlefield.

Other Factions

While the Custodian and Mechanus Assassins are the most well-known, other factions such as the Dark Eldar and

the Orks have units with assassin-like qualities—though they are not formally called “Assassin” in the codex. Understanding the nuances of each faction’s assassin units can give you a tactical edge.

Deep Dive into the Custodian Assassin Codex

The Adeptus Custodes codex has long been a fan favorite, especially for those who enjoy playing a disciplined, high-value unit. Below is a breakdown of the key rules and abilities that define the Custodian Assassins.

Core Rules

- Unit Size: Custodian Assassins are typically a 5-10 model squad.
- Weaponry: Standard weapons include the Guardian Blade and the Guardian Axe. These weapons have high damage and the ability to ignore armor.
- Special Rules: Stealth allows them to move without provoking a fight, while Assassin's Creed gives them a bonus when targeting a high-value enemy.

Unique Abilities

1. Assassin's Creed: When a Custodian Assassin targets a unit with a Commander or Hero status, the attack rolls for that strike are increased by +1.
2. Silent Strike: If a Custodian Assassin remains within the enemy’s line of sight but does not engage, it gains a +1 bonus to its Hit rolls for the next attack.
3. Guardian Resolve: Custodian Assassins can re-roll failed Save rolls for any enemy unit within 6 inches of them.

Deployment Tactics

Deploying Custodian Assassins effectively is critical to maximizing their potential. Here are some proven strategies:

- Targeted Placement: Position them near enemy leaders or high-value targets to exploit their Assassin’s Creed bonus.
- Flanking Maneuvers: Use them to flank the enemy’s main force, forcing the opponent to spread their attention.
- Cover Utilization: Place them behind natural cover—trees, buildings, or terrain features—to take advantage of their stealth rule.

Painting and Modeling Tips

Custodian Assassins are visually striking. To bring them to life:

- Color Palette: Classic white and gold with a touch of crimson for the Emperor’s insignia.
- Detailing: Use a fine brush for the blade’s edge to highlight the sharpness of the Guardian Blade.
- Base Placement: Place them on a base that reflects the Emperor’s domain—perhaps a miniature marble or a stylized Imperial banner.

Exploring the Mechanus Assassin Codex

Mechanus Assassins bring a different flavor to the battlefield—one that blends the ancient lore of the Mechanicus with the lethal efficiency of an assassin.

Key Rules

- Unit Size: Typically a 5-10 model squad, similar to Custodian Assassins.
- Weaponry: Equipped with the Monolith Dagger and the Monolith Bow. These weapons have a high Damage rating and a special “piercing” effect.
- Special Rules: Machine Precision allows them to re-roll failed Hit rolls, while Technological Edge grants a +1

bonus to Save rolls for the squad.

Unique Abilities

1. Technological Edge: The squad can re-roll failed Save rolls for any enemy unit within 6 inches.
2. Monolith Precision: The Monolith Dagger can ignore a target's armor value.
3. Rapid Deployment: Mechanus Assassins can move up to 12 inches during the movement phase without provoking a fight.

Tactical Deployment

Mechanus Assassins excel at rapid strikes and high damage output. Deploy them in the following ways for maximum impact:

- Rapid Advance: Use their rapid deployment rule to get them close to enemy units before the enemy can react.
- Targeted Attacks: Focus on enemy units with high Save values to exploit their Technological Edge.
- Combined Arms: Pair them with other Mechanicus units that can provide covering fire or support.

Painting and Modeling

Mechanus Assassins have a more mechanical aesthetic. Consider the following when painting:

- Color Palette: Dark metallic hues—steel grey, copper, and a touch of violet for the Mechanicus sigils.
- Detailing: Highlight the monolith's sharp edges with a metallic sheen.
- Base Design: Use a base that reflects the Mechanicus's mechanical environment—perhaps a miniature circuit board or a stylized machine platform.

Strategic Synergy With Other Units

Assassin units are most effective when paired with complementary units that can either distract or protect them. Here are some suggestions for both Custodian and Mechanus Assassins.

Custodian Assassin Pairings

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