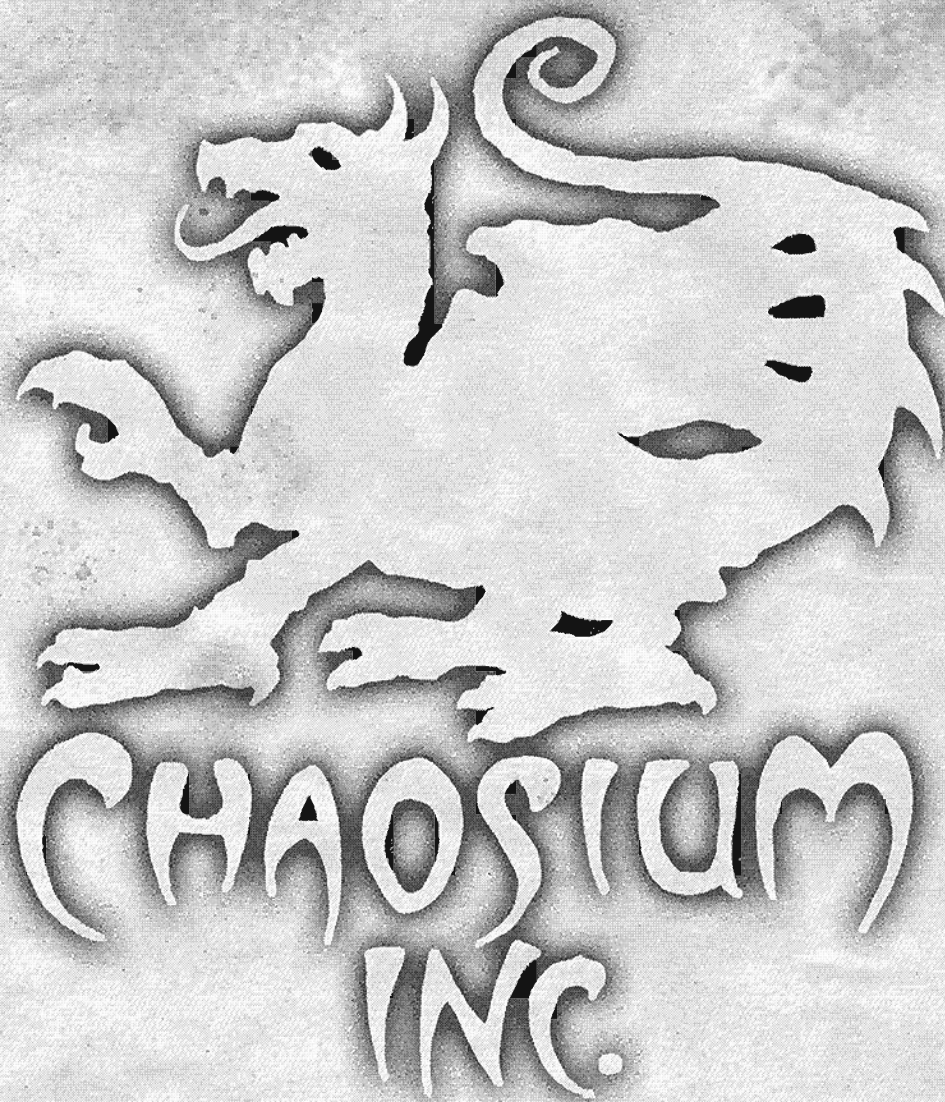


A Complete Game

Worlds of Adventure For Every Roleplaying Style





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BASIC ROLEPLAYING

The Chaosium Roleplaying System

Revised by
Jason Durall and Sam Johnson

Edited by
Charlie Krank and Lynn Willis

Based on the Basic Roleplaying system created by
Steve Perrin, Steve Henderson, Warren James, Greg Stafford,
Sandy Petersen, Ray Turney, Lynn Willis

Basic Roleplaying system contributions by
Ken St. Andre, William Barton, Bill Dunn, William Jones, Ben Monroe,
Gordon Monson, Sam Shirley, Mark Morrison, Richard Watts, *et al.*

As presented in the Chaosium Inc. games
Call of Cthulhu, Stormbringer, RuneQuest, Worlds of Wonder,
Superworld, Hawkmoon, Elfquest, Ringworld, Nephilim,
Elric!, and other fine games and supplements.

Chaosium Inc. is
Lynn Willis, Charlie Krank, Dustin Wright, Fergie,
Meghan McLean, and a few curious others.



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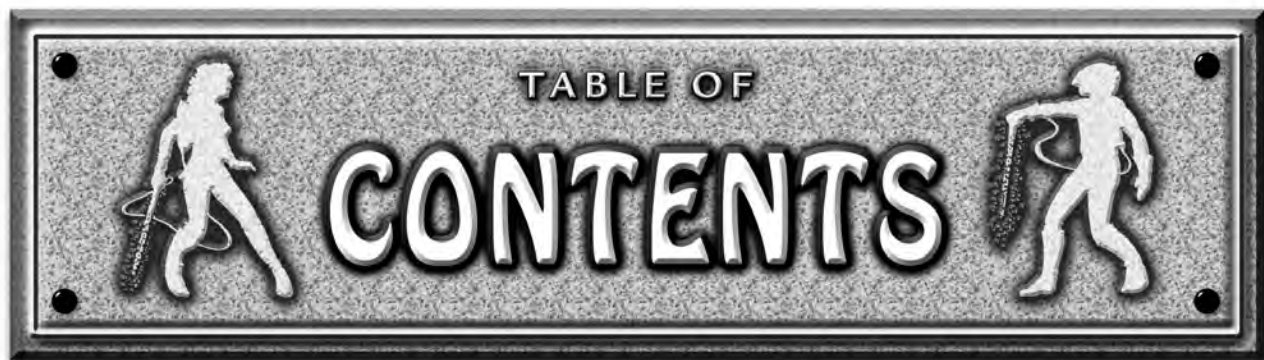
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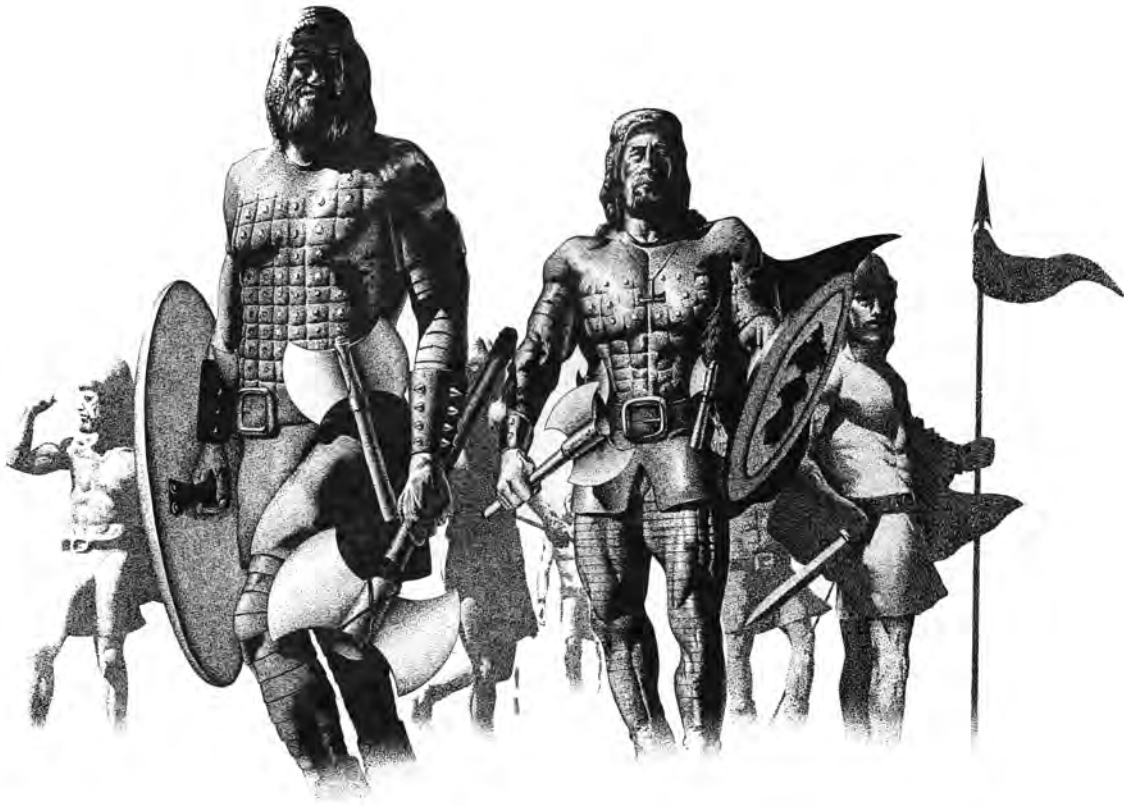
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Special Thanks

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system, a book that collects in one place rules and options for one of the most influential role playing game systems in the world.

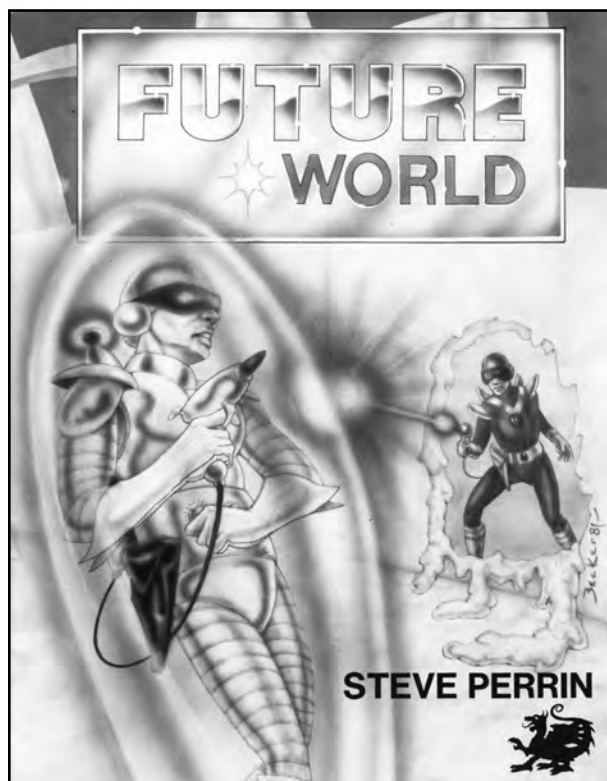
If you're already familiar with roleplaying games and know how to play them, and if you've played some of the Chaosium Inc. games founded upon the *Basic Roleplaying* system, you can skip this section and move right to the next. These pages cover the basics of roleplaying games, introductory notes about the *Basic Roleplaying* system in general, and won't really contain anything surprising or new. The only section in this intro you should pay attention to is the box titled "Optional Rules" on page 10.

The book you hold in your hands comprises a roleplaying game system, a framework of rules aimed at allowing players to enact a sort of improvisational radio theater—only without microphones—and with dice determining whether the characters succeed or fail at what they attempt to do. In roleplaying games, one player takes on the role of the gamemaster (GM), while the other player(s) assume the roles of player characters (PCs) in the game. The gamemaster also acts out the roles of characters who aren't being guided by players: these are called non-player characters (NPCs).

This introduction is aimed at you, the player, though it is also secondarily addressed to the gamemaster.

Roleplaying is a form of social gaming, akin to acting out a novel. You, as a player, act out a primary role in a game: you and your fellow players are the protagonists, the heroes around whom the stories revolve. Your character might be a swaggering gunfighter, depressed private eye, brightly-clad super hero, or a humble spacefarer trying to make ends meet. The gamemaster, on the other hand, devises and presents the situations you and other players adventure through, describing the world where you roam and how that world is





"Future World"
part of Worlds of Wonder



"Magic World"
part of Worlds of Wonder

affected by your actions. While you as a player act out only one role, the gamemaster presents the entire game setting—he or she acts as all of its people, places, monsters, and even gods.

The gamemaster will have an adventure he or she wants to present to you—an interactive scenario in which you will be challenged to interact with imaginary other characters that the gamemaster personifies. Play is mostly conversation. The gamemaster outlines some situation or encounter. Next, you and the other players say what your characters propose to do. Through this conversation, you and the gamemaster enact the roles of the characters and describe the world and events in it. You use the rules to provide impartial guidelines for success and failure at actions attempted. Your character will face challenges and use skills that he or she has defined through the rules, to oppose these imaginary other characters (these could be monsters or other people), and to explore the setting the gamemaster has created for you.

As a player, you usually create your character, defining him or her with rules that help measure him or her in quantifiable terms. These terms include things like strength, intelligence, speed, education, skills, and other abstract elements that make up a person—though your character's 'personality' is evoked by how you play or describe your character. For example, though there is no numerical value for "irritable", you may speak in such a manner and give that sort of personality to your character. Your

character's abilities are a cross between a resume and a report card: they define what he or she can do, and how good he or she is at it. The rest is your roleplaying that brings your character to life.

Using the game rules, the gamemaster tells you how your character's actions will work in the game world. You and the gamemaster roll dice to determine whether your character or a non-player character succeeds or fails at an action and in some cases, how well or how badly. Dice rolls—with their unpredictable results—keep everyone honest and can deliver surprises, triumphs, unexpected reversals of fortunes, dismal defeats, and hair's-breadth escapes. The combination of rules and odds is what keeps everything from being entirely random.

There is a major difference between what you, the player, know and what your character knows in the game world. At the gaming table, you will be privy to behind the scenes information that your character does not have, and you must be careful not to take advantage of what you know about the game versus what your character would reasonably expect to know. Dice rolls are what will tell you if your character will know something, even if you (as a player) already know the answer.

For example, in a horror film, the audience sees a teenager walking toward a door. The camera switches to the other side of the door, and we see a deranged killer waiting silently, knife out and ready. The camera cuts back to the teenager's hand on the doorknob, and then back to the killer's eyes. The assumption is



"Superworld"
part of Worlds of Wonder

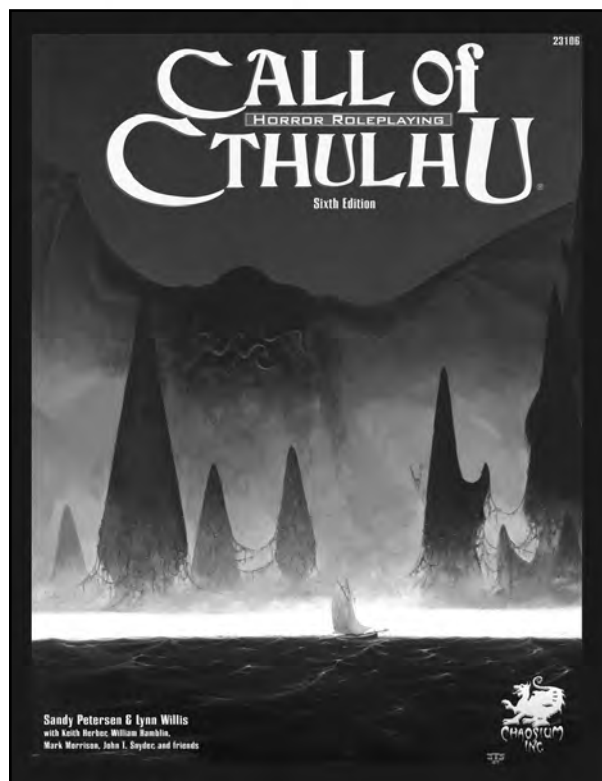
that the teenager does not know about the killer. The door opens, and the killer leaps out and attacks the teenager.

If this scene were in a roleplaying game, the gamemaster would ask the player of that teenager to make a Listen roll. If the roll fails, the gamemaster may begin rolling dice secretly to see if the killer hears the teenager. Since the player knows that the roll failed, something is up. Since there is no way that the character would know about the killer on the other side of the door, the player of the teenage character should open the door and act surprised at whatever happens.

In some ways, you as a player are also the audience, watching your character get into the way of danger, and potentially acting on incorrect information. The drama comes in seeing how your character perseveres through the experience, not how it can be avoided.

Part of the pleasure in roleplaying is the interaction and cooperation between players: a novel gives solitary pleasure, but roleplaying gives the satisfaction of theater. Cooperation among players is important in successfully completing the task or quest the scenario set forth, and in making the game enjoyable for all. You are not only the actors, but the audience as well. Success in roleplaying comes not from players bent on eliminating each other, as in chess or backgammon, but in memorably adopting the personae of characters quite different from themselves, and in reacting as those characters would to otherworldly scenes and creatures.

The rules in this book provide guidelines first for you to create a character in the gamemaster's world and



Call of Cthulhu, 6th ed.

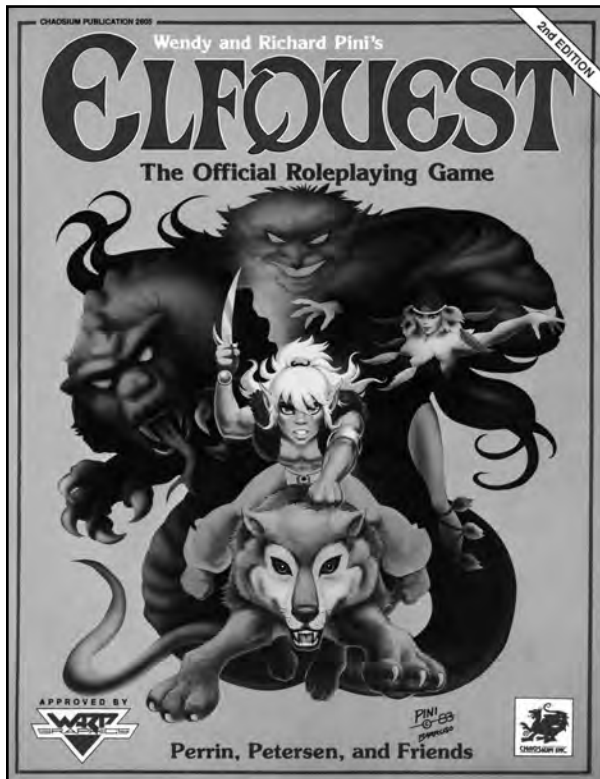
for the gamemaster to represent the world he or she wants you to explore, with rules to cover most situations and conditions. Many optional rules are provided allowing the gamemaster the ability to add complexity to the system as desired.

Responsibilities of the Players

You have the duty to roleplay your character within the limits of his or her personality and abilities. When roleplaying, try to act as if you know as little or as much as the character would in life; the skill rolls the gamemaster requests will aid you in this. If you develop your character well enough that everyone knows what he or she will do in a specific situation, count yourself among the best role players.

You don't need to know much about the game rules, especially if you're just getting started. Read the two-page spread "Creating a Character" on pages 22-23, since you'll want to create a character to play. Examine the "Terms Used in *Basic Roleplaying*" section later in this chapter. If you have time, skim **Chapter Two: Characters** and **Chapter Five: System** and **Chapter Six: Combat** to get some familiarity with the game rules. If the setting you'll be playing in has powers of any sort, read **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information on those. As you can, become familiar with the rules.

The first eight chapters of this book are directed at you, as a player. **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**



ElfQuest 2nd ed.

through **Chapter Twelve: Appendices** are specifically directed at the gamemaster, though he or she should obviously be familiar with most of the game rules and contents of the player chapters.

Responsibilities of the Gamemaster

Oftentimes, the gamemaster has the most fun in the game, but this is balanced by the largest share of responsibility. Using a published scenario or one he or she has created or one improvised on the spot, the gamemaster narrates the game universe and acts as the player characters' opposition. That opposition must be smart and mean (or you and the other players will be bored) and it must be presented fairly (or you will be outraged). Whereas each player must share the spotlight with all of the other players, the gamemaster is always "on-stage" and constantly interacts with all of the players.

To be a gamemaster, you should read all of the rules sections, and then become familiar with the rest of the book. The gamemaster chapter has some useful entries and a stock of non-player characters. Know the general procedures for combat and powers, but don't feel you need to memorize everything—most questions can be answered as they arise.

As for scenarios, there are a vast range of scenarios for many different settings and games. Chaosium Inc. has published many adventures for *Call of Cthulhu* and other game lines, most of which utilize the *Basic*

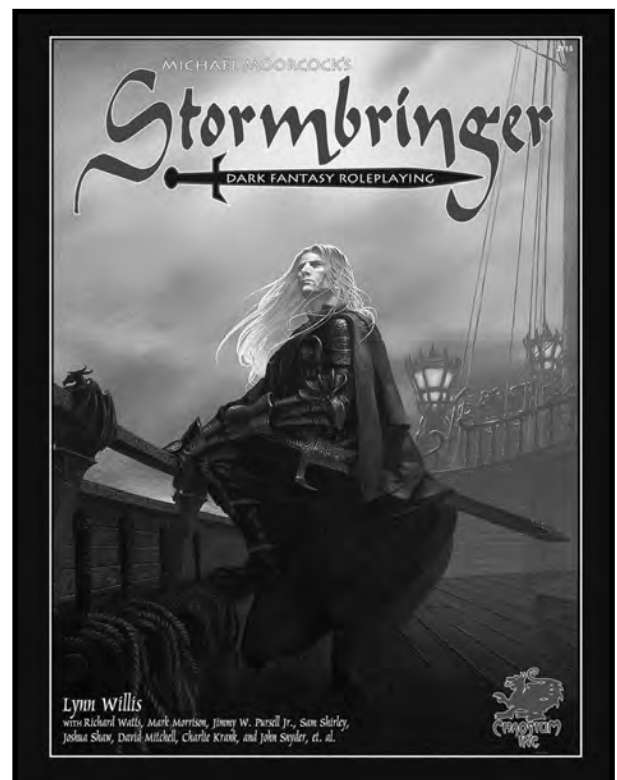
Roleplaying (BRP) system. Other games are plentiful—and converting a scenario from one of them to *Basic Roleplaying* is fairly easy. Ideas for scenarios are also easy to come by—almost any film or book with some aspect of danger and excitement can be turned into a role-playing scenario. Photocopy some character sheets, then invite some friends over and have them create characters. Summarize the rules for them, and you're ready to play.

The Purpose of Play

The purpose of roleplaying is to have a good time. It's fun to deal with dangers that are not truly dangerous, threats that vanish when everyone rises from the table, and monsters who evaporate when the lights go on. If you play well, you and your friends enter an exciting new world for a while, find strength in coping with it, and perhaps know victory. Emerging, you return to a world that is a darker or a brighter place because of what you experienced, and you see yourself as more active in it.

Length of Play

How long does roleplaying take? It depends. There are three ways to measure time spent roleplaying. First is the session. This is the actual amount of time you and your friends meet to play the game. Usual durations for game sessions range from three to five hours, though some are shorter and sometimes they go for longer.



Stormbringer, 5th ed.

The second measure of game time is the *scenario*. This is a chapter of the story. There is usually a beginning, middle, and an ending to a scenario, consisting of some roleplaying, some action, and a dramatic resolution. A scenario may take one session to complete, or may take several sessions.

The longest measure of game time is the *campaign*, a series of scenarios linked together to form an epic or engrossing longer story. The term *campaign* comes from the early origins of roleplaying games as offshoots of military wargaming—a campaign represented a military campaign. For an easy way to wrap your head around it, liken it to reading a novel. The session is the amount of time you read a chapter. The scenario is one or more chapters. The campaign is the whole novel itself. “One-shot” games are scenarios that do not have a place in a campaign—they’re like short stories. They may take longer than one sitting to read, but they do not continue beyond the end of the story.

An Introduction to the Basic Roleplaying System

The *Basic Roleplaying* system was first created in 1978 for *RuneQuest*, a roleplaying game set in Greg Stafford's fantasy world of Glorantha. The basic mechanics, designed by Steve Perrin, Steve Henderson, and Ray Turney, were viewed as an easier and more intuitive set of game mechanics than those few other roleplaying

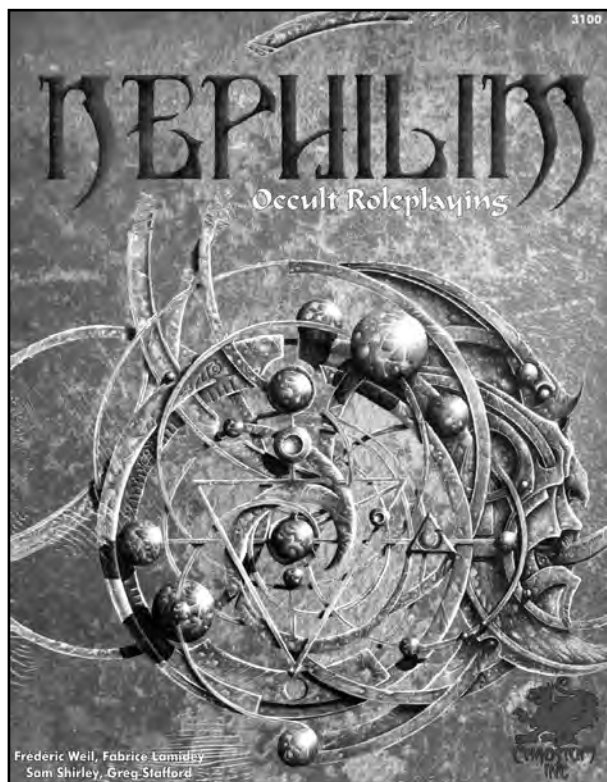


Runequest, 2nd ed.

game systems existing at that time. A second edition of *RuneQuest* was published in 1980. The next incarnation of the *Basic Roleplaying* rules came from the game *Stormbringer*, an adaptation of Michael Moorcock's Elric dark fantasy series. The *Stormbringer* rules were a bit looser than the *Basic Roleplaying* system, but introduced many exciting variants. Sandy Petersen then rewrote the system once more when he adapted H.P. Lovecraft's world of cosmic horror in *Call of Cthulhu*, the first horror roleplaying game, and perhaps the most popular version of the *Basic Roleplaying* system.

Worlds of Wonder, a boxed game set, illustrated the strength of the *Basic Roleplaying* system with three games set in distinctly different genres—super hero, fantasy, and science fiction—using the same basic rules system. The power system rules given in this book are a direct descendent of the rules systems presented in *Worlds of Wonder* (and in some cases, paraphrase them explicitly) and special thanks are offered the authors of that work; Steve Perrin, Steve Henderson, and Gordon Monson.

Other variations of *Basic Roleplaying* followed *Worlds of Wonder*, with roleplaying games based on Larry Niven's *Ringworld* science-fiction novels, the comic-book series *Elfquest*, another Moorcock world with *Hawkmoon*, Arthurian adventure in *Pendragon* (which used a highly modified version of *Basic Roleplaying*), more super heroics with *Superworld* (expanded from *Worlds of Wonder*), a new



Nephilim

edition of the French occult roleplaying game *Nephilim*, and others. Furthermore, *Basic Roleplaying* has influenced many other game systems directly or indirectly, particularly in Europe, where many games are openly based on its system. Some examples are Fantasy Games Unlimited's *Other Suns* and Äventyrsspel's *Drakar och Demoner* (*Demons and Dragons*). Proving its longevity, *Basic Roleplaying* is still one of the more popular systems in gaming, and many of its innovations are considered to be standards in roleplaying games today.

From its origin, *Basic Roleplaying* was designed to be intuitive and easy to play. While character attributes follow a 3D6 curve, most of the other *Basic Roleplaying* mechanics are even simpler. Virtually all rolls determining success or failure of a task are determined via the roll of percentile dice. This means that there's less fiddling with dice of different types, and the concept of a percentile chance of success is extremely easy for beginners and experienced players to grasp. There aren't many easier ways to say a character has a 70% chance of succeeding at an activity.

The core virtues of the system are as evident today as they were when it was first introduced. Primary characteristics of *Basic Roleplaying* that have emerged from decades of play, across many different varieties of the system are as follows:

- ❖ The system is remarkably friendly to newcomers. It is easy to describe the basics of the game system, and the percentile mechanics, to non-gamers.
- ❖ Players of other game systems often find *Basic Roleplaying* to be much less mechanistic and less of a barrier to the actual act of roleplaying. Less time spent on game systems usually equals more time available for roleplaying and thinking "in character."
- ❖ Most of the information players need to know is present on their character sheets.
- ❖ Characters tend to evolve based on practicing the skills they use the most. They do not arbitrarily gain experience in skills and qualities based on ephemeral elements such as levels or experience ranks.
- ❖ Combat can be very quick and deadly, and often the deciding blow in a conflict is the one to land first.
- ❖ *Basic Roleplaying* is remarkably modular: levels of complexity can be added or removed as needed, and the core system works equally well with considerable detail as it does with a minimal amount of rules.
- ❖ The internal consistency of *Basic Roleplaying* allows for rules judgments to be made rapidly and with little searching through the rulebook for special cases.

This book represents a first for *Basic Roleplaying*—a system complete in one book, without a defined setting. Previously, *Basic Roleplaying* has been an integral part of standalone games, usually with rich and deep world settings. Due to differences in these settings, *Basic Roleplaying* has had many different incarnations. Variant

OPTION

Optional Rules & Basic Roleplaying

The *Basic Roleplaying* system (BRP) has seen many applications over the years since it was first designed. It has been the core rules set for many different games spanning a number of genres. Originally designed as a fantasy roleplaying game system, *Basic Roleplaying* has been used for modern-day and historically-based horror, science fiction, super heroics, historic adventure, baroque post-apocalyptic science fantasy, modern and historical occult thrillers, and other settings. As such, various rules systems were introduced into *Basic Roleplaying* to cover requirements that other games did not have, such as expanded combat systems for fantasy games, rules for insanity and research for horror games, rules for the use of vehicles and spaceships, rules governing grand passions and personality traits, different magic systems more appropriate to each genre, and countless other expansions. Furthermore, over the course of its lifetime, various core systems have been changed or treated differently in various *Basic Roleplaying* games, and sometimes in different editions of the same game.

As a result, the perception of what this book actually 'is' can differ greatly from one player to another, and to address this, Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system treats these variant systems as optional rules. These are presented in boxes like this one, with notes about why these rules are optional, suggestions as to when they're appropriate, and some suggestions or guidelines about what they do to the system and how they interact with other optional rules.

The goal of Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system is to present as accessible a version of *Basic Roleplaying* as possible, without sacrificing the interesting and valuable additions to the system that have appeared over the years. As noted above, the perception of the game varies considerably, and your gamemaster may have a favorite element of one flavor of *Basic Roleplaying* that he or she would like to use with another. Thus, the appearance of optional rules systems means that the gamemaster can pick and choose which optional rules systems he or she would like to use in the course of games sessions or campaigns (and these might vary depending on the genre and the style of play). Additionally, some other, newer systems are introduced in Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system, also presented as optional rules.

Each optional rules section has a small white box in the upper right corner, which serves as a check-box for you and the gamemaster to know whether or not the optional rules are being used in the game they are playing. Additionally, a check-list is presented in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering** and in the appendices, listing all of the optional rules in a format allowing the gamemaster and players can decide what optional rules (if any) will apply to the game session or campaign.

and sometimes contradictory rules have emerged between versions, to better support one particular setting over another.

Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system reconciles these different flavors of the system and brings many variant rules together between the covers of one book, something that has never been done before. Some of these rules are provided as optional extensions, some as alternate systems, and others have been integrated into the core system. By design, this work is not a reinvention of *Basic Roleplaying* or a significant evolution of the system, but instead a collected and complete version of it, without setting, provided as a guide to players and gamemasters everywhere and compatible with most *Basic Roleplaying* games. It also allows the gamemaster the ability to create his or her own game world (or worlds), to adapt others from fiction, films, or even translate settings from other roleplaying games into *Basic Roleplaying*.

Terms Used in Basic Roleplaying

The following terms are used throughout this rulebook. Though many of these terms are commonly used in roleplaying games, they are provided here as an aid to new and experienced gamers alike. Each of these is touched-on briefly here, but is explained at length in relevant sections.

Allegiance: An optional system measuring your character's devotion to a spiritual being, principle, or deity by performing favored actions.

Base Chance: The default chance your character has at succeeding with a skill he or she has no training or experience in. *For example, on the character sheet, Hide (20%) means that even if your character has not invested any skill points in the Hide skill, he or she has a 20% natural ability in it.*

Base Range: The normal distance within which a missile weapon can hit a target.

Character: The role you assume in a game session, described in game mechanics by values such as characteristics and skill totals. Generally, characters have names and backgrounds determined by the player, with assistance and/or approval from the gamemaster (see also: Player Character and Non-player Character).

Characteristic: Your character's physical, mental, and spiritual attributes (Strength, Constitution, Size, Intelligence, Power, Dexterity, and Appearance), rated numerically on a scale (usually 3–18), with a human average being 10–11. *For example, if the initial maximum characteristic is 18, a STR 17 means your character is very strong, while a DEX 7 means he or she is a bit clumsy.*

Characteristic Roll: A roll involving one of your character's characteristics against a multiple (*Intelligence x 3,*

for example), expressed as a percentage, and rolled with percentile dice. Usually a characteristic roll is $x 5$, but other multiples may be used. *For example, if your character's Intelligence characteristic is 14, he or she has a 42% chance at succeeding with a characteristic check with a multiple of $x 3$.*

Combat Round: A 12-second (or equivalent) amount of time imposed during combat or dramatic activities, where the order that actions occur is important. This is game time, not actual time—the events of a few seconds of action may take several minutes to actually play out between the players and gamemaster.

Critical Success: This is the result of a skill check roll that is 1/20 (or 5%) of the regular chance of success. Generally, a critical success is rewarded with greater results, though in some cases a critical success is required for success at all. *For example, if the regular chance for success is 75%, any roll of 4 or under is a critical success (1/20 of 75% is 3.75, rounded up to 4).*

D100: A percentile die roll, attained by rolling two 10-sided dice (2D10), with one representing the tens, and the other the ones. Some dice come already marked as 'tens' (00, 10, 20, etc.) and are always used as the first number in a D100 roll. A roll of 01 is the best possible result, while 100 (which usually reads as 00) is the worst. *For example, a roll of 6 and 2 equals a result of 62.*

Damage: A value representing injury, subtracted from a character's hit points. Weapons, unfortunate events, and other hazards inflict damage on characters.

Damage Bonus: A modifier to rolled damage due to above-average Strength and Size characteristics.

DEX Rank: Based on the Dexterity characteristic, this organizes when your character can usually act during a combat round. Characters with higher DEX will generally act before characters with lower DEX.

Difficulty Modifier: The amount a skill's chance is adjusted by, based on the circumstances surrounding its use. These range from *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to skill), and *Difficult* (skill is halved) to *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the gamemaster's discretion).

Experience Rolls: If, during the course of play, you are successful with a roll for one or more of your character's skill or characteristic resistance rolls, you should mark your character sheet in the provided check box (sometimes this action is called an "experience check"). Later, between adventures or during down-time, you can determine if your character's ability has improved in that skill or if the characteristic has increased through successful use.

Failure: A roll of percentile dice above the required chance for success. *For example, a roll of 89 when the required chance was 56% indicates a failure.*

Fatal Wound: A wound that costs your character more hit points than he or she currently possesses. Without intervention (medical or otherwise) death comes at the end of the following combat round.

Fatigue Points: An optional system, using your character's Constitution characteristic to determine how long he or she can endure strenuous physical activity before tiring.

Full Turn: A period of time consisting of 25 combat rounds, equaling 5 minutes of game world time.

Fumble: A roll of 99 and/or 00 when rolling percentile dice to determine success. Generally, when a fumble is indicated something bad happens above and beyond a simple failure.

Gamemaster (GM): The director, or guide for the game, who helps you create characters, comes up with the adventure, and represents the world outside your character, rolling dice for the non-player characters and the opposing forces.

Game Time: The time said to elapse as a scenario or campaign unfolds. This is not usually the same as the real time you and the gamemaster experience.

Hit Location: An optional system for specifying where a successful attack lands on your character's body, or where his or her attacks hit a foe.

Hit Points: A measure of the relative health of your character, represented in a value derived from his or her Constitution and Size characteristics. Attackers inflict damage in hit points, subtracted from the target's total hit points. Usually when your character reaches 0 hit points, he or she is dead.

"In character" or "Out of character": The distinction in the chat between players and the gamemaster around the gaming table, representing the difference between real-world discussion and game discussion. Both means of communication achieve the same goal, but represent different styles or aspects of play, and can be used interchangeably in the course of play. Some groups or players lean towards one or another—it's an element of preference. "In character" discussion is flavorful and immersive, while "out of character" discussion is essential to describe rules mechanics and to speed along play through unnecessary detail. *For example, in character, you might say 'Sir Wilfric asks the innkeeper "Could you perhaps allow us the night's stay for a promise of future*

payment!'" while out of character, you might say "I try to Persuade the innkeeper to let us stay a night without pay."

Major Wound: An injury causing enough damage to exceed half the character's normal hit point total in a single blow. Usually accompanied by a debilitating effect.

Minor Wound: Any single injury that is less than a major wound in severity (less than 1/2 normal hit points).

Modifiers: These are temporary additions or subtractions to your character's rating in a skill, usually stemming from circumstances, environment, or equipment. *For example, trying to pick a lock with a bent paper clip is an example of sub-standard tools, for a -20% modifier. Using a standard lockpick does not modify the skill. Using a deluxe set of calibrated precision lockpicks and lockpicking equipment adds +20% to your character's skill rating.*

Move (MOV): The rate of movement your character can make during a single combat round. This measurement is a flexible one, but usually translates to one meter of unhurried movement per point of MOV.

Non-Player Character (NPC): A character or creature in the game world that is played or otherwise represented by the gamemaster, instead of being played by you or another player.

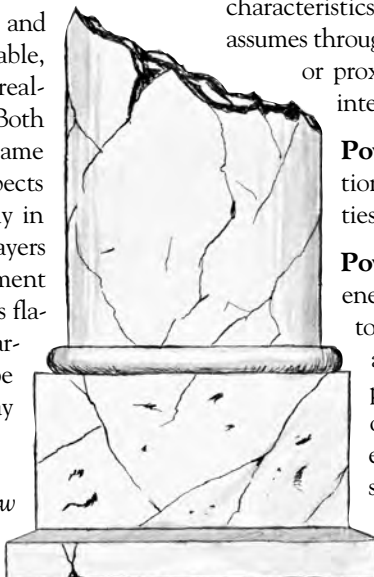
Opposed Roll: When your character wants to attempt an action another character (or non-player character) wants to oppose with an "opposite" skill that cancels or thwarts the initial action. In this case, both skill checks are made, and the results compared.

Percentile Dice: Two D10s rolled together, with one designated as the tens figure, and the other as ones. Some dice are numbered in units of ten, ie 10, 20, 30, etc. See also D100, above.

Player Character (PC): This is your character, usually created and almost-always controlled by you, comprised of characteristics and skills and an identity the player assumes through roleplaying. Your character is your avatar or proxy in the game world, and enables you to interact with the setting.

Power: A generic term for magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super abilities your character may possess.

Power Points: The amount of willpower or energy your character has, represented as a total usually based on his or her Power characteristic. These are expended to use special powers or abilities, and can be drained by other abilities. When your character reaches 0 power points, he or she falls unconscious.

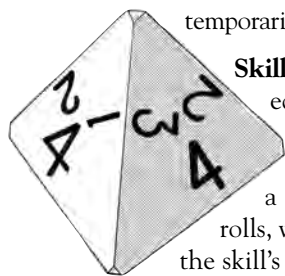


Profession: Your character's occupation represented as a list of skills he or she has been trained to use (or has had the opportunity to learn).

Resistance Roll: When your character wants to attempt an action being resisted by an inanimate object or force, the character's relevant characteristic (*for example, Strength*) is opposed to another appropriate characteristic (*for example, the stuck door's Strength*). The two numbers are cross-referenced on the resistance table (see below) to determine a chance of success, and one or both characters roll dice to see who succeeds. Equal characteristics mean a 50% chance of success. Resistance rolls can also be used when pitting one character against another character, such as an arm-wrestling match (Strength vs. Strength).

Resistance Table: The table showing the ratio of characteristic versus characteristic. To use the resistance table, find the opposing force on the vertical column, the resisting force on the horizontal column, then cross-reference them to find the likelihood of success, expressed as a percentile chance.

Sanity: Sanity is an optional system used in games where your character's mental health is important. It provides a relative gauge of his or her capacity to withstand horrific sights, events, and revelations. As your character's Sanity gets lower, his or her grasp on reality diminishes. If your character loses too much Sanity at once, he or she can go temporarily or permanently insane.



Skill: An ability, training, field of knowledge, talent, specialty, or some thing your character knows something about (or is talented in), quantified as a skill level. Skills are used with skill rolls, where percentile dice are rolled against the skill's rating.

Skill Rating: The degree of competence your character has with a skill, expressed as a number from 00% (no skill whatsoever) to 100% or higher (world-class expert).

Skill Roll: A percentile roll using D100 to determine whether an attempt at performing a skill was successful. The result of a skill roll is a critical success, special success, success, failure, or a fumble. Additional means of determining the quality of success are presented in optional rules.

Special Success: A roll of 1/5 of the required score for success indicates that your character performed exceptionally well and achieves a greater result than a traditional success. This is especially important in combat. *For example, if your character has a 70% in a skill, and rolls 14 or lower, he or she has achieved a special success.*

Success: The result of a percentage dice roll where your character performed the task adequately, and achieved an

average quality of success. If the roll is very low, it may be a special or critical success, described above). *For example, if your character has a 70% in a skill, and rolls 70 or lower, he or she has succeeded.*

A Note about Gender and Race

Though the wording of these rules seem to assume players will be playing characters who are human and either male or female, this shouldn't limit the possibilities of the game. This was done solely for clarity—the gamemaster is encouraged to stretch the limits of the imagination with the options he or she presents to the characters, from elves to aliens and artificial intelligences, to species with multiple genders, changeable genders, or no gender identification at all.

For chapters relating to character creation (**Chapter Two** through **Chapter Four**), we've tried to use "you" whenever possible, addressing the text directly at the player, though it applies equally to the gamemaster as well. Similarly, we've tried to use 'his or her' wherever possible. In the later chapters directed at the gamemaster, this means of address switches to 'the character' and 'the player' and their equivalents. No offense or bias is intended with any manner of usage.

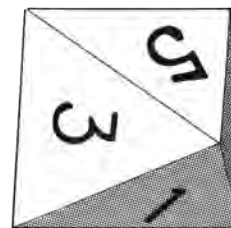
Materials Required to Play

As a player using Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system, you need little other than this book, a pencil, maybe some scratch paper, and a set of gaming dice. Dice are available at most gaming and hobby stores, and come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, quality, and prices; you will need at least one set but more are useful. See below for more information on dice and dice-rolling methods.

Some gaming groups use miniatures as a representation of the characters, so if this is true of your group, you might want to bring a miniature that resembles your character somewhat. Generally, though, you merely need to bring your creative energy to the game. Snacks are appreciated, too.

As a gamemaster, you will need a little bit more than a player, but not much. You should have a copy of this rulebook, and more blank paper for your notes. It is a good idea to make copies of the character sheet provided on pages 17-18, or found online at www.chaosium.com.

Additionally, you should have an adventure prepared; either of your own creation or a ready-made adventure from Chaosium Inc. The *Call of Cthulhu* game uses a slightly different version of *Basic Roleplaying*, but is readily adaptable to the system presented in this book. Many



other adventures are planned in support of this game's release. Alternately, you can readily adapt an adventure from another game company for other game systems. You can prepare other materials depending on how much you like to prepare handouts or reference sheets. You will learn more about all of this in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**.

Dice

Basic Roleplaying uses four-sided, six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided, twelve-sided, and 20-sided dice (abbreviated as D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, and D20). Dice are generally rolled and the results read as shown, and if multiple dice are rolled, they are added together. Thus, 3D6 means roll three six-sided dice, and add the results. *For example, a 3D6 roll resulting in 1, 4, and 6 would be a total of 11.* Dice can also be added together in different denominations, such as 2D6+1D4, meaning roll two six-sided dice and a four-sided die, and add their totals together.

Dice results are sometimes modified by adding or subtracting numbers to the initial roll, such as 1D6-1, meaning roll one six-sided die and subtract 1 from the total, meaning that the roll has a range of 0 through 5. Other times dice totals can be multiplied, such as 1D10 x 10, meaning that the roll has a range of 10 to 100.

Sometimes dice rolls do not seem to correspond to exact dice numbers, such as D3, which is the result of a D6 roll divided by two and rounded up. A roll of D2 or D5 utilizes a D4 and a D10, respectively, and are rolled and divided in similar fashion. These sorts of rolls are rare.

Percentile dice are two D10s, rolled together, with one die designated as the tens figure, and the other as ones. *For example, a roll of two D10s might yield a 7 and a 3, or 73%.* A roll of 01% is considered ideal, while 100% (rolls of 0 and 0) is usually a failure and the least-desired roll. It is common to use dice of different colors for the tens and ones digits, though percentile dice are now easily available with the tens being denoted by 00, 10, 20, 30, etc. for greater ease of interpretation.

Here are the most commonly-used dice:

D2: *This yields a result of 1 or 2. It can be achieved by rolling a D4 (or any other even-sided die) and dividing it in half, with a coin toss (heads = 1, tails = 2), or taking any die and rolling it (odd result = 1, even result = 2).*

D3: *The result of a D6 rolled and divided in half, rounded up.*

D4: *A four-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 4. It is often used with damage bonuses.*

D6: *The second most commonly used die type, this yields a result of 1 through 6. You are probably already familiar with dice like these.*

D8: *An eight-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 8.*

D10: *A ten-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 10, with the 0 face representing 10. It is most commonly used in conjunction with another D10 as part of a percentile dice roll (see below).*

Some D10s come as tens, with the faces numbered 10, 20, 30, etc. making it easy to read a D100 roll (see below).

D12: *A 12-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 12. This dice type is not used very often.*

D20: *A 20-sided die, yielding a result of 1 through 20. This dice type is rarely used outside of the optional hit location system.*

D100: *Two ten-sided dice, rolled together with one die representing the tens value and another representing the ones value. This is the most common roll of the dice in BRP. Though usually used as a percentile roll, these dice are sometimes rolled for a basic result. For example, the gamemaster might determine that each member of a group of bandits has D100 copper pieces in his or her possession. If the bandits are defeated, the gamemaster rolls the dice for each one. As noted above, D10s made to be tens digits can simplify the rolling and reading of D100.*

The less traditional die types (D2 and D3) can be created by buying special, unmarked dice at your local hobby store and marking an equal number of sides as appropriate.

Miniatures

Roleplaying games were initially inspired by miniatures-based wargames. Because of this, roleplaying games have long been linked with the use of miniatures to represent tactical simulations on a map or an abstracted type of game board. The *Basic Roleplaying* system has always been more narrative in tone, and even though many early *Basic Roleplaying* games referred to and were presented in conjunction with miniatures, the game system is not intrinsically tied to the use of miniatures. Currently, roleplaying games are less focused on the necessity for miniatures in combat resolution, and Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system follows suit. Though they are not required for use here, the optional rules section "Miniatures and Maps" on page 202 covers the use of miniatures in brief.





CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTERS

Put simply, your character is your “voice” in the game world. The character is the focus of all roleplaying games—an abstraction of physical and mental abilities, skills, and other descriptors that define who you portray in the game world. You interact with the gamemaster in that world through your player character.

Notes about the Gamemaster: The GM describes the setting, the environment and the adventure situations to the players. The gamemaster has at his or her disposal a roster of other characters, called *non-player characters*, or NPCs. Both player- and non-player characters use the same rules for creation, though generally non-player characters are less detailed than player-characters, as NPCs rarely face the same variety of situations player-characters do.

Chapter Eleven: Creatures describes the ways the gamemaster can create appropriate non-player characters, and provides a roster of ready-to-use non-player characters (as well as monsters and other creatures) for a variety of settings and eras. This section deals with player characters, and is essential reading for you and the gamemaster alike.

Creating a Character

To play in a roleplaying game, you first need a character. Following is a quick creation system for developing your character. This system creates reasonably competent characters. Suggestions are provided in each step for more powerful characters. It is suggested that you write in pencil, and lightly



enough that you can erase. When creating a character, values often can change. Sometimes it is good to keep a sheet of scratch paper around to write temporary values on until transferring them to the character sheet.

When you get ready to create your characters, your gamemaster should have already decided what sort of game he or she'd like to run, whether it be a science fiction, fantasy, modern horror, historical intrigue, espionage, pulp action, techno-thriller, or any number of other genres. The gamemaster should be prepared to guide you and the other players through the character creation process, knowing what professions are allowed and appropriate to the game or campaign, and what level of competency the characters should exhibit. These issues are most important to Step Seven, and may influence Step Three.

Step One (name & characteristics)

Write your character's name at the top of the page. This should be appropriate to the setting and game being played. If no idea suggests itself yet, wait until you are further through the process and name your character then. You should, at least, write your own name on the character sheet as your gamemaster may need to keep track of which character belongs to whom if he or she keeps hold of them between game sessions.

- ❖ Choose your character's gender and write it in the correct space. There are no differences between the way male and

female characters are created, and neither gender has an advantage system-wise.

- ❖ Roll 3D6 for the characteristics Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Appearance (APP). Enter the results in the appropriate places on your character sheet.
- ❖ Roll 2D6+6 for the Intelligence (INT) and Size (SIZ) characteristics.
- ❖ These numbers provide the bare bones of your character, determining what characteristics the character is strong or weak in. If you wish, redistribute up to 3 points between your characteristics. No characteristic can begin at more than 21 points. If you aren't satisfied with the characteristics you have, and the gamemaster approves, you can erase all of them and start over.

If the campaign is using powers of some sort (magic, psychic, or super), the gamemaster may allow you to increase your starting characteristics. **Chapter Four: Powers** contains extensive rules for improving characteristics in this fashion, particularly the Diminish/Enhance Characteristic power on page 152.

Choosing Characteristic Values (option): Traditionally, characteristics are rolled in order, with up to 3 points redistributed. The gamemaster may allow you to roll the appropriate number of times and choose which result goes to which characteristics. This results in more player control over the character and their characteristics.

Higher Starting Characteristics (option): If you are playing in a more adventuresome game such as pulp adventure, epic fantasy or science fiction, roll 2D6+6 for all characteristics (at the gamemaster's discretion).

Education (option): Roll 2D6+6 for Education (EDU) if that characteristic is being used to simulate growing up in a society where education is relatively commonplace, or at least available to a character.

Cultural Modifiers (option): If the gamemaster is using cultural modifiers to emphasize characteristic differences between different human cultures (SIZ is a common one), initial characteristics may be adjusted or limited at this point. More information on this can be found in the optional rules for "Culture and Characters" on page 38.

Non-Human Characters (option): If players are able to create non-human characters, they may use different dice rolls and modifiers to determine initial characteristics. Information about non-human characters can be found on page 331 of **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**.

Point-Based Character Creation (option): The standard rules assume a random rolling system for characteristics. An optional rules system allows for a more custom-built approach that enables players to purchase characteristic points from a pool. This optional system is presented on page 19 of this chapter.



The coarse numbers resulting from character generation should be presented in more creative terms when you describe your character. Your fellow adventurers would not see APP 16 when looking at one of the maidens above, but instead would see "an uncommon beauty". Rather than Persuade 63%, you might say that she is "a charming conversationalist", and her Energy Blaster 88% might suggest that "she carries herself confidently".

BASIC ROLEPLAYING



NAME _____

Race _____ Gender _____

Handedness _____ Height _____ Weight _____

Description _____

Age _____

Distinctive Features _____

MOV _____

Gods/Religion _____

Profession _____ Wealth _____

Characteristics & Rolls

STR _____ Effort roll _____%

CON _____ Stamina roll _____%

SIZ _____ Damage Bonus _____

INT _____ Idea roll _____%

POW _____ Luck roll _____%

DEX _____ Agility roll _____%

APP _____ Charisma roll _____%

EDU _____ Know roll _____%

Hit Points

Major Wound _____

DEAD(-_____) _____

00 01 02 03 04 05

06 07 08 09 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17

18 19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31 32 33 34 35

Skills

COMMUNICATION

bonus (_____) _____

☐ Bargain (05%) _____%

☐ Command (05%) _____%

☐ Disguise (01%) _____%

☐ Etiquette (05%) _____%

☐ Fast Talk (05%) _____%

Language, Own (INT/EDUx5%) _____%

☐ _____%

Language, Other (00%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Perform (05%) _____%

☐ Persuade (15%) _____%

☐ Status (15% or var.) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Teach (10%) _____%

MANIPULATION

bonus (_____) _____

Art (05%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

Craft (05%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Demolition (01%) _____%

☐ Fine Manipulation (05%) _____%

Heavy Machine (01%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

Repair (15%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Sleight of Hand (05%) _____%

MENTAL

bonus (_____) _____

☐ Appraise (15%) _____%

☐ First Aid (30%) _____%

☐ Gaming (INT+POW) _____%

Knowledge (_____) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

Literacy (_____) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Medicine (_____) _____%

☐ Psychotherapy (_____) _____%

Science (01%): _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Strategy (01%) _____%

Technical Skill (_____) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

PERCEPTION

bonus (_____) _____

☐ Insight (05%) _____%

☐ Listen (25%) _____%

☐ Navigate (10%) _____%

☐ Research (25%) _____%

☐ Sense (10%) _____%

☐ Spot (25%) _____%

☐ Track (10%) _____%

PHYSICAL

bonus (_____) _____

☐ Climb (40%) _____%

☐ Dodge (DEX x02%) _____%

Drive (_____) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Fly (_____) _____%

☐ Hide (10%) _____%

☐ Jump (25%) _____%

Pilot (01%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Projection (DEX x02%) _____%

Ride (05%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ Stealth (10%) _____%

☐ Swim (25%) _____%

☐ Throw (25%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

COMBAT

bonus (_____) _____

Martial Arts (01%) _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

see WEAPONS below for more combat skills

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

☐ _____%

Weapons

weapon type	attack/parry	damage	range	attacks	length	hand	HP
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Brawl (25%)	_____%	1D3+db	touch	1	close	1h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Grapple (25%)	_____%	special	touch	1	close	2h	n/a

Armor

armor type	armor value
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
shield type	parry/attack damage HP
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____%

Player

Name _____



Power Points

Power Points () Battery ()

points

UNCONSCIOUS 0 01 02 03 04 05 06

07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58
59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71
72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97

Powers

[illegible]

Attack Powers

attack power		skill	damage	range	energy type	energy cost	power	energy type	level	base chance	energy cost
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ %	_____

☐ Projection (DEX x02%) _____ %
 ☐ Throw _____ %
 ☐ Brawl _____ %
 ☐ Fly _____ %
 Defense _____ %
 ☐ Dodge _____ %

Fatigue

EXHAUSTED (—) **0** 01 02 03 04
05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42
43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61
62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80
81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

Sanity

[illegible]

OPTION

Point-Based Character Creation

Though the basic character creation system presented here uses random results to determine starting characteristics, your gamemaster may allow you to use a point-based system instead of relying on random dice rolls. If so, the adjustments below are made to Step One on page 16.

If point-based characteristic generation is allowed, the next step for a game utilizing powers would be the alternate Step Two described in **Chapter Four: Powers** on page 87. For a non-powered game, character creation should then skip to Step Four on the next page.

- ❖ All of your character's characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, and APP) begin at 10.
- ❖ You have 24 points to spend on your character's initial characteristics. This is the equivalent of the 'normal' power level for a campaign.
- ❖ Each STR, CON, SIZ, or APP characteristic point is worth 1 of these points; each point of DEX, INT, and POW each cost 3 of these points.
- ❖ You can choose to lower your starting characteristics below the starting value of 10. For each point of STR, CON, SIZ, or APP you reduce below 10, you get another point to spend on other characteristics. For every point of DEX, INT, and POW, you get 3 points back.
- ❖ No initial characteristic can be raised to higher than 21, and no initial characteristic can be lowered to below 3. Only with a gamemaster's permission can you raise or lower a starting characteristic beyond this range. It is recommended that for

higher power levels (epic and superhuman), the characteristic maximum be ignored.

- ❖ If powers are being used, the gamemaster may allow you to apply any unused points from your characteristic generation to your power budget. This is only with the gamemaster's permission, as it may result in you losing points overall.

HIGHER STARTING CHARACTERISTICS (option): For higher-powered campaigns (where a roll of 2D6+6 would be utilized instead of the normal 3D6), the starting point total is 36 points, equivalent to the heroic campaign level. This may be scaled up by a factor of 12 for each higher level of campaign, so epic campaign characters begin with 48 of the characteristic points to spend, and superhuman characters begin with 60 points. Again, for these levels of power, the normal characteristic maximums should not apply.

EDUCATION (option): If the EDU characteristic is being used, the gamemaster should assign a value to EDU based on your character's age (described in Step Eight on page 24) and background. You can modify this with any points you choose. Each point of EDU costs 3 points.

CULTURAL MODIFIERS or NON-HUMAN CHARACTERS (option): If the gamemaster is allowing cultural modifiers for starting characteristics, the gamemaster should apply these modifiers to characteristics after the point expenditure. If non-human characters with cultural modifiers to starting characteristics are available for players, the gamemaster should adjust your starting points and/or initial characteristics appropriately. **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** contains advice on allowing non-human characters.

Step Two (powers)

Stop everything and read this! If the game you're playing in involves magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super powers, you may begin with some of these powers. Ask your gamemaster about it and refer to **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information. These systems will need a bit more time to explain and describe than can be provided in this quick character walk-through. If there are no powers in the campaign, ignore this step and proceed onward through the rest of character creation. The following types of powers are available:

- ❖ **Magic (page 88):** Simple spell-casting with a wide variety of applications.
- ❖ **Mutations (page 103):** Strange genetic anomalies, some beneficial, some adverse.
- ❖ **Psychic Abilities (page 110):** Using the power of the mind to manipulate time and space.
- ❖ **Sorcery (page 122):** A more baroque and specialized form of spell-casting, including elemental and demonic summoning.

- ❖ **Super Powers (page 140):** Mighty and remarkable powers that defy the physical world and human limitations.

These powers are described in considerably more detail in their relevant sections. Expansions to Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system will include additional powers and new power types.

Step Three (age)

The default age for characters is 17+1D6 years old. The gamemaster may choose to alter this based on the requirements of the game setting. If you wish to begin play with a character younger or older, choose an age that seems appropriate to you, and that meets with your gamemaster's approval.

- ❖ Age brings experience. For every full 10 years you add to the default rolled starting age of your character, you can allot another 20, 30, or 40 professional skill points (based on the level of the campaign, as described in Step Six).
- ❖ Youths lack experience. Any fraction of years below 10 does not qualify for this skill bonus. For every year below

the minimum age (18) described above, subtract 20, 30, or 40 skill points (based on level of campaign) from your character's professional skill points.

- ❖ The gamemaster may choose to limit professions available to characters below 18 years of age, based on the campaign setting.
- ❖ Age does not come without a price. For every 10 years above 40 (starting at age 50), subtract 1 point from one of the following characteristics (your choice): STR, CON, DEX, or APP. For every 10 years above 70 (starting at age 80), you must subtract 1 each from three of these characteristics. See the optional rules "Aging and Inaction" on page 183 for a more detailed (and severe) method. Your gamemaster may wish to use these optional rules if he or she prefers, and if so, refer to that section for alternate aging rules.
- ❖ Youths have not reached their potential. For every year below the minimum age above, subtract 1 point from one characteristic of your choice. The gamemaster may require that you make SIZ one of these lowered characteristics. These points can be gained through play (experience), training, or gradually through natural means (gamemaster's discretion). See "Aging and Inaction" (page 183) for more details on this.

Education (option): If you're using the EDU characteristic, your character's starting age must be at least EDU+5 (to represent the time spent actually learning). Every 10 years added to your character's starting age (amounts less than 10 years do not count for this bonus), adds +1 to your character's EDU characteristic. Be sure to increase the relevant skill points generated in Step Six.

Step Four (characteristic rolls)

Here's where you determine your characteristic rolls. By now you should know what your final characteristics are, but if not, hold off on this step until you've finalized them.

- ❖ Multiply STR x 5 for your Effort roll, and enter the value.
- ❖ Multiply CON x 5 for your Stamina roll, and enter the value.
- ❖ Multiply INT x 5 for your Idea roll, and enter the value.
- ❖ Multiply POW x 5 for your Luck roll, and enter the value.
- ❖ Multiply DEX x 5 for your Agility roll, and enter the value.
- ❖ Multiply APP x 5 for your Charisma roll, and enter the value.

Know Roll (option): Multiply EDU x 5 for your Know roll (if EDU is being used), and enter the value.

Step Five (derived characteristics)

Now it's time to get your character's derived characteristics, particularly damage bonus, hit points, power

points and experience bonus. If you're using optional systems, you should also determine your initial fatigue points and sanity points.

- ❖ Add STR + SIZ and find the damage bonus corresponding to your character's total on the "Damage Bonus Table" on page 29. Pencil in the damage bonus provided.
- ❖ Add CON + SIZ and divide the result by 2. Round up any fraction. Circle the corresponding number in the hit point box and write the total on the hit points line. The circled number is your character's maximum hit points. If your character loses hit points, mark them off with a pencil, and erase the marks as hit points are healed or otherwise restored.
- ❖ Your major wound level is 1/2 hit points, rounded up.
- ❖ In the power point (PP) box, circle the number equal to POW and write the total on the power point line. The circled number is your character's maximum power points. These fuel magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, or super powers. Mark power points off with a pencil as they're spent, and erase the marks as they're recovered or otherwise restored. The number written in the space, equal to your POW characteristic, is the value your power points will rise to naturally, with rest.
- ❖ Make a note of your character's experience bonus: this value is equal to 1/2 your character's INT, rounded up.
- ❖ Your character's MOV is how fast during a combat round he or she can move. Human characters can normally move 10 units per round. A unit is a somewhat variable amount usually equaling 1 meter. "Movement Rates" on page 181 covers this in more detail.

Skill Bonuses (option): If the game is using characteristic-based skill category bonuses (see page 31), calculate the bonus for each skill category for your character using the Skill Category Bonus Table on page 31. Note these values in the spaces for each skill category. This bonus adds to the base chance for every skill, if any. For each category:

- ❖ Add 1% for every point in the primary characteristic over 10; subtract 1% for every point below 10.
- ❖ Add 1% for every 2 points in the secondary characteristic above 10, subtract 1% for every 2 points under 10 (rounding down the bonus if required).
- ❖ Subtract 1% for every point in the negative characteristic above 10; add 1% for every point under 10.

Hit Points per Location (option): If the game is using the optional hit location system (see page 204-205), determine the number of hit points for each of your character's hit locations. The head, abdomen, and each leg have 1/3, the chest has 4/10, and each arm has 1/4 of the character's maximum hit point value. Round all fractions up. See page 29 for more information.

Fatigue Points (option): If fatigue rules are being used; add your character's STR+CON to get initial fatigue points. In play, as your character expends



Demonstrating Agility: Though Juggling is a specialty of the Perform skill, the gamemaster may allow players to improvise and use the Agility roll instead. It won't look as good as someone with the actual skill, but it is enough to keep the balls in the air.

energy or perform rigorous physical activity, he or she will lose fatigue points. You should mark them off lightly in pencil, as they recover rapidly through rest and other means.

Sanity (option): If Sanity rules are being used; multiply your character's initial POW score by 5 to get his or her current sanity total. Profession (see Step Six, below) may modify this number. In play, mark off these points in pencil if your character loses sanity points.

Step Six (personality)

This optional step is recommended only for extremely competent characters—the stalwart heroes of pulp adventure, epic fantasy, sweeping space opera, or gritty science fiction settings. The gamemaster should determine and tell you whether you should complete this step.

Study the characteristics of your character and imagine the sort of person you would like your character to be. Choose one of the following options, or roll 1D4 for a random result. These packages of skills are a quick way to develop your character—there will be more skills in the next step. Skills are defined on pages 46-84 and classes of weapons are described beginning on page 257.

D4 result

- 1 Your character thinks first of solving problems by means of **physical force and brawn**. Give 20 skill points each to Brawl, Climb, Dodge, Grapple, Insight, Jump, Ride, Sense, Stealth, Swim, Throw, and to any two Combat skills.
- 2 Your character believes that **technique, craft, and expertise** are the secrets of success. Give 20 skill points each to Appraise, any one Craft, Disguise, Dodge, Fine Manipulation, First Aid, any one Knowledge skill, Navigate, Pilot, Ride, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and to any one Combat skill.
- 3 Your character first tries to **outsmart an opponent** to gain an advantage. Give 20 skill points each to Appraise, Bargain, Disguise, Insight, any two Knowledge skills, Listen, Research, Sense, Spot, Stealth, any one Technical skill (appropriate to setting), and any one Combat skill.
- 4 Your character enjoys **persuading other people** to work, while he or she makes the decisions. Give 20 points each to Appraise, Bargain, Command, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Perform, Persuade, any one Language (Other), Language (Own), Sense, Status, and any one Combat skill.

The gamemaster may have created additional definitions for personalities as above, though if your gamemaster agrees, you can create your own definition of a character, choosing 13 skills (some restrictions may be enforced by the gamemaster) and adding 20 points to each skill rating.

When distributing these skill points, add the bonus points to the base chance for each skill. Write that total after the skill. *For example, adding 20 skill points to Fast Talk (base chance 15%) yields a final rating of 15+20=35%.*

Step Seven (skills)

You will now determine the starting skills for your character.

Turn to the professions list on page 33. Choose a profession there. Professions are described fully beginning on page 31. The gamemaster may place restrictions on what professions can be chosen for the particular game or campaign, so consult with him or her before making this choice. Some professions provide special advantages, such as the use of magic. Note these on the character sheet.

Once a profession has been chosen, determine the size of the character's professional skill point pool. These skill points represent what your character has learned in that profession, whether through training or on-the-job experience. As always, skill points are added to any skill points granted from previous steps and the skill's base chance.

The guiding principle in determining character skill points is the campaign's power level. The gamemaster should have decided by now what kind of game he or

(continued on page 24 . . .)

A Guide to Creating A Character

STEP 1: NAME & CHARACTERISTICS

1

- ❖ Write your character's name at the top of the page.
 - ❖ Write your own name on the character sheet.
 - ❖ Choose your character's gender and write it in the correct space; neither has an advantage system-wise.
 - ❖ Roll 3D6 for the characteristics Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Appearance (APP). Enter the results in the appropriate places on your character sheet.
 - ❖ Roll 2D6+6 for the Intelligence (INT) and Size (SIZ) characteristics.
 - ❖ Redistribute up to 3 points between your characteristics. No characteristic can begin at more than 21 points.
- OPTIONS:** Choosing Characteristic Values (p. 16), Higher Starting Characteristics (p. 16), Education (p. 27), Cultural Modifiers (p. 38), Non-Human Characters (p. 335), Point-Based Character Creation (p. 19).

STEP 2: MAGIC & POWERS

2

The following types of powers are available:

- ❖ Magic (page 92)
- ❖ Mutations (page 102)
- ❖ Psychic Abilities (page 111)
- ❖ Sorcery (page 122)
- ❖ Super Powers (page 141)

STEP 10:

BACKGROUND & FINAL GROOMING

10

If you couldn't think of a name beforehand in Step One, now is the time to name your character. It is also a good time to fill in all of the blank spaces that describe your character, mentally and physically, and come up with some ideas about his or her background.

In Step Eight you determined your character's distinctive features, so you should decide whether your character has other less distinctive features. What colors are hair, skin, and their eyes? How does he or she dress? Any interesting mannerisms, or motto or saying? An interesting reputation?

Where is your character from? Where did he go to school (if at all)? What is her relation with family? Any significant organizations? An interesting past? Significant religious or political beliefs?

The back of the character sheet has places for additional descriptive or background elements. Fill out as many or as few of these as you'd like, and check with the gamemaster to make sure that he or she knows about them and that they're suitable for the game.

STEP 9: ARMOR & EQUIPMENT

9

In immediate possession:

- ❖ A complete set (or sets) of clothing appropriate to your character's home environment and the setting of the campaign.
- ❖ An amount of pocket money and personal savings based on your character's wealth level.
- ❖ A personal item showing some relation to your character's family. This can be an heirloom, keepsake, or some trinket of little relative value but having some emotional connection.
- ❖ Any trade tools or equipment suitable to your character's profession.
- ❖ Any weapon that your character has a skill of over 50% in, if appropriate.
- ❖ Based on the setting and the campaign, your character's profession, and his or her Status skill, your character may have an appropriate vehicle such as a horse, wagon, bicycle, automobile, personal flier, small space transport, or some other means of transportation. This is subject to the gamemaster's approval.
- ❖ No specific rules for finances are provided; the suggested wealth for professions and the Status skill are the best guidelines for determining what items and monies your character begins play owning or having access to. The gamemaster should be able to help you describe this in an appropriate level of detail, and may have additional restrictions based on the requirements of the campaign and/or setting.

BASIC ROLEPLAYING



NAME		Characteristics & Rolls		Hit Points
Race	Gender	STR	Effort roll	Major Wound
Handedness	Height	CON	Stamina roll	DEAD: ()
Description	Weight	SIZ	Damage Bonus	00 01 02 03 04 05
	Age	INT	Idea roll	06 07 08 09 10 11
Distinctive Features	MOV	POW	Luck roll	12 13 14 15 16 17
		DEX	Agility roll	18 19 20 21 22 23
Gods/Religion	Wealth	APP	Charisma roll	24 25 26 27 28 29
Profession		EDU	Know roll	30 31 32 33 34 35

Skills		
COMMUNICATION	MENTAL	PHYSICAL
<input type="checkbox"/> Bargain (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Command (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fore Ad (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (15% 40%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Deceive (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gaming (50% 100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive (25% 50%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Etiquette (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fly (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (25%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Hide (15%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Language, Other (50% 100%)		<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Language, Other (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literacy (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Perform (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Projection (15% 40%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychotherapy (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (15%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Status (15% 40%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (25%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teach (25%)		COMBAT
MANIPULATION		<input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy (25%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Craft (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Skill (25%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition (25%)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fine Manipulation (25%)	PERCEPTION	
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Machine (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Insight (25%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Repair (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (25%)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (25%)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research (25%)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sense (25%)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot (25%)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (25%)	

Weapons		Armor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dagger (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Chainmail (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Leather (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Crossbow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Knife (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Plate (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Scale (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Flail (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mace (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Steel (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hammer (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spear (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Iron (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cloth (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Javelin (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sword (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Brass (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hide (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lance (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tin (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Net (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Whip (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shell (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Pistol (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Club (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Horn (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Rifle (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bat (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copper (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ivory (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Shotgun (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stick (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sword (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Platinum (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gem (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Throwing (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Net (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diamond (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Crystal (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Whip (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sapphire (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Bow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerald (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Amethyst (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Crossbow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Garnet (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Topaz (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Flail (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Peridot (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Zircon (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hammer (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Aquamarine (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Moonstone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Javelin (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Opal (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Obsidian (25%)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Javelin (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jade (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Onyx (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lance (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Turquoise (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bloodstone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Net (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jet (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Obsidian (25%)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Shotgun (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gem (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sword (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Crystal (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Throwing (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sapphire (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerald (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Whip (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Garnet (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Peridot (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Bow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Aquamarine (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Moonstone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Crossbow (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Opal (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Obsidian (25%)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Hammer (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Turquoise (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bloodstone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Javelin (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jet (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Obsidian (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lance (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shell (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bone (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Net (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Horn (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ivory (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Pistol (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gem (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Rifle (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Crystal (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruby (25%)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Throwing (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Aquamarine (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Moonstone (25%)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Lance (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gem (25%)

see pages 42-43 for advice on Character Creation

STEP 3: AGE & EXPERIENCE

The default age for characters is 17+1D6.

- ❖ For every full 10 years added to the above allot another 20, 30, or 40 professional skill points (based on campaign level); a fraction of years below 10 does not qualify.
- ❖ For every year below the minimum age (18) described above, subtract 20, 30, or 40 skill points (based on campaign level) from professional skill points.
- ❖ For every 10 years above 40 (starting at age 50), subtract 1 point from one of the following (your choice): STR, CON, DEX, or APP. For every 10 years above 70 (starting at age 80), subtract 1 from three of these characteristics.
- ❖ For every year below the minimum age, subtract 1 point from one characteristic of your choice. These can be gained through play (experience), training, or gradually through natural means.

OPTION: Education (p. 27)

STEP 4: CHARACTERISTIC ROLLS

- ❖ STR x 5 for Effort.
- ❖ CON x 5 for Stamina.
- ❖ INT x 5 for Idea.
- ❖ POW x 5 for Luck.
- ❖ DEX x 5 for Agility.
- ❖ APP x 5 for Charisma.

OPTION: Know Roll (p. 28)

STEP 5: DERIVED CHARACTERISTICS

- ❖ Damage Bonus: STR + SIZ, consult table.
- ❖ Hit Points: CON + SIZ and divide by 2. Round up.
- ❖ Major Wound is 1/2 hit points. Round up.
- ❖ Circle number equal to POW in Power Point box; write total.
- ❖ Experience Bonus: 1/2 INT, round up.
- ❖ Human MOV is 10.

OPTIONS: Skill Bonuses (p. 31)
Hit Points per Location (p. 29)
Fatigue Points (p. 32)
Sanity (p. 32)

DAMAGE BONUS

STR+SIZ	Dam. Mod.	STR+SIZ	Dam. Mod.
2 to 12	-1D6	33 to 40	+1D6
13 to 16	-1D4	41 to 56	+2D6
17 to 24	None	57 to 72	+3D6
25 to 32	+1D4	Ea. +16	+1d6



STEP 6: PERSONALITY TYPE OPTION

D4 result

- Solve problems by means of physical force and brawn.** Give 20 skill points each to Brawl, Climb, Dodge, Grapple, Insight, Jump, Ride, Sense, Stealth, Swim, Throw, and to any two Combat skills.
- Technique, craft, and expertise are the secrets of success.** Give 20 skill points each to Appraise, any one Craft, Disguise, Dodge, Fine Manipulation, First Aid, any one Knowledge skill, Navigate, Pilot, Ride, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and to any one Combat skill.
- Outsmart opponents to gain advantage.** Give 20 skill points each to Appraise, Bargain, Disguise, Insight, any two Knowledge skills, Listen, Research, Sense, Spot, Stealth, any one Technical skill (appropriate to setting), and any one Combat skill.
- Persuade others to work while making the decisions.** Give 20 points each to Appraise, Bargain, Command, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Perform, Persuade, any one Language (Other), Language (Own), Sense, Status, and any one Combat skill.

STEP 7: SKILL POINT ALLOCATION

- ❖ **NORMAL GAME:** allot 250 points to profession skills; no skill begins higher than 75%. If factors increase a skill to 75% or more skill points being added, do not add any additional skill points.
- ❖ **HEROIC GAME:** 325 points to profession skills; no skill begins higher than 90%, with the same note as above.
- ❖ **EPIC GAME:** 400 points to profession skills; no skill should begin higher than 101%, with the same note as above.

❖ **SUPERHUMAN GAME:** 500 points to profession skills, no limit.

OPTIONS: Education (p. 27), Cultural Skills (p. 24).

PERSONAL POINT POOL

INT x 10 to create your personal skill point pool, spending them on any skills you like. The total must not exceed the skill limit for game type set above.

OPTION: Increased Personal Skill Points (p. 24).

(... continued from page 21)

she will run, and how powerful and competent player characters should be.

- ❖ For a **normal** game where most of the characters are mostly normal people, players should allot 250 points among their professional skills. No skill should begin higher than 75%. If you are using the optional skill category bonus, the limit is still 75%, and you must spend any points in excess of this on other skills. If some combination of factors increases the skill to more than 75% without any skill points being added, do not add any additional skill points.
- ❖ For a **heroic** game where the characters are better than normal, but still bear some resemblance to real-world heroes, allot 325 points to the profession's skills. No skill should begin higher than 90%, with the same restrictions as above.
- ❖ For an **epic** game where the characters are highly competent and experienced heroes, allot 400 points to the profession's skills. No skill should begin higher than 101%, with the same restrictions as above.
- ❖ For a **superhuman** game where the characters are supremely competent at what they do, spend 500 points among the profession's skills, with no limit to skill ratings. See the optional rules "Skill Ratings Over 100%" on page 175.

Education (option): If the Education (EDU) characteristic is being used, instead of a base 250/325/400/500 skill point pool, make the initial skill points be based on $EDU \times 20$ for normal level characters, $EDU \times 25$ for heroic level characters, $EDU \times 30$ for epic game characters, and $EDU \times 40$ for superhuman level characters.

Cultural Skills (option): If the campaign involves significant differences in human cultures and the gamemaster wishes this to have an effect on starting skill percentages or beginning skills allowed, consult "Culture and Characters" on page 38.

If you've created an original profession, allot the proper number of points among the skills chosen for that profession, based on game type as above. The gamemaster may have some restrictions on how these skill points can be spent.

Once all professional skill points have been allocated, multiply your character's $INT \times 10$ to create your character's personal skill point pool. Spend these skill points on any skills you like, with your gamemaster's approval. Add points spent on a skill to its base chance, profession bonuses (if any), professional skill point allocations, and skill category bonuses (if any). The total must not exceed the skill limit for game type set above. The gamemaster may impose a cap of 50% on personal skills that range too far outside a character's profession. This skill cap may be raised based on the level of the campaign, such as 75% for heroic, 90% for epic, and 100% for superhuman. Skills that naturally exceed

these numbers through various bonuses should still be allowed, though no additional points can be spent on them.

Calculate the adjusted base chances for all character skills using the listed base chance, profession bonuses, and the optional skill category bonuses (if used). You might want to shift some points around at this time, but be sure to keep the professional skill points and personal skill points separate.

Increased Personal Skill Points (option): The normal $INT \times 10$ skill point total may be increased to $INT \times 15$ for heroic characters, $INT \times 20$ for epic characters, or $INT \times 25$ for superhuman characters, depending on the level of the campaign. This option is only recommended for campaigns where characters are tremendously competent and skilled beyond their current profession would indicate.

Step Eight (distinctive features)

This step is primarily cosmetic, and is not entirely necessary. You may now choose to determine your character's height and weight, based on SIZ , as provided on "Defining a Character's SIZ " table on page 26. If your gamemaster wishes to use the optional "Distinctive Features" system, consult the chart on page 34-35. Note the features under your character's name on the character sheet.

Step Nine (profession)

Some characters are defined by what they have. Professions list beginning wealth levels and the Status skill can provide guidelines for what sort of equipment that your character might be able to lay hands upon.

In most cases, your character will have in immediate possession:

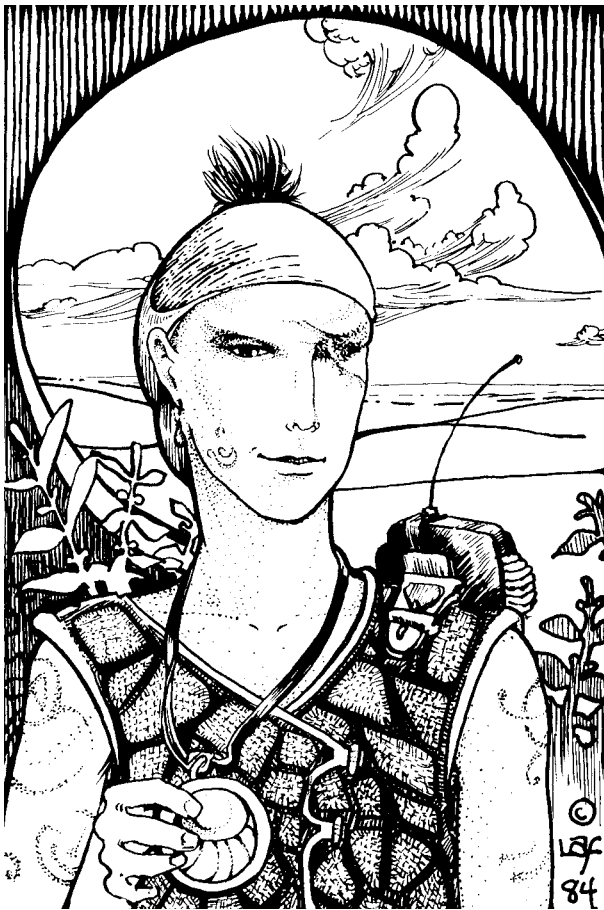
- ❖ A complete set (or sets) of clothing appropriate to your character's home environment and the setting of the campaign.
- ❖ An amount of pocket money and personal savings based on your character's wealth level.
- ❖ A personal item showing some relation to your character's family. This can be an heirloom, keepsake, or some trinket of little relative value but having some emotional connection.
- ❖ Any trade tools or equipment suitable to your character's profession, if appropriate.
- ❖ Any weapon that your character has a skill of over 50% in, if appropriate.
- ❖ Based on the setting and the campaign, your character's profession, and his or her Status skill, your character may have an appropriate vehicle such as a horse, wagon, bicycle, automobile, personal flier, small space transport, or some other means of transportation. This is subject to the gamemaster's approval.

- ❖ No specific rules for finances are provided; the suggested wealth for professions and the Status skill are the best guidelines for determining what items and monies your character begins play owning or having access to. The gamemaster should be able to help you describe this in an appropriate level of detail, and may have additional restrictions based on the requirements of the campaign and/or setting.

Step Ten (name & finish)

This is the final determination of various aspects of your character. If you couldn't think of a name beforehand in Step One, now is the time to name your character. It is also a good time to fill in all of the blank spaces that describe your character, mentally and physically, and come up with some ideas about his or her background.

In Step Eight you determined your character's distinctive features, so you should decide whether your character has other, less distinctive, features. What colors are his or her hair, skin, and eyes? How does he or she dress? Does he or she have any interesting mannerisms, or a motto or saying he or she uses often? Does he or she have an interesting reputation?



The rugged life of the Martian colonies spawns independent-minded adventurers—here a 31-year old scout is equipped with a battery pack to power his energy armor and comdisk to keep in touch with his comrades in the field.

You should determine where your character is from. Where did he or she go to school (if at all)? What is his or her relation with their family? Is the character a member of any significant organizations? Does he or she have an interesting past? Does he or she have any significant religious or political beliefs? If appropriate, you should work with the gamemaster to determine these issues before play begins, or at least do some thinking about them ahead of time. During the course of play you will also flesh-out other details of your character's background.

The back of the character sheet has places for additional descriptive or background elements. Fill out as many or as few of these as you'd like, and check with the gamemaster to make sure that he or she knows about them and that they're suitable for the game.

Characteristics

Your character is measured and defined by a set of seven (or eight) characteristics, numerical values that represent his or her physical and mental capabilities. Higher characteristic numbers are always better. Characteristic values indicate the kinds of situations and actions your character is best or worst at, suggesting ways that your character might act or react in the course of play.

Characteristic values can change over the course of play. Injuries or adverse conditions can decrease characteristics, while training, exertion, and conditioning can increase them. Physical characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, DEX, and APP) have a maximum value of 21 for humans. Mental characteristics (INT, POW, and EDU) can be raised without limits. If other races or species are allowed in the campaign, they may have higher or lower characteristic maximums. Magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super powers can also raise characteristics, without limit.

Strength (STR)

The Strength score measures your character's brawn and raw muscle power. The *Effort roll* (STR x 5) is its characteristic roll. The STR score helps determine how much your character can lift or carry, push or pull, or how tightly he or she can hang on to something. In combat, STR determines what kind of weapons your character can use in hand-to-hand combat, as well as how much extra damage (if any) your character can inflict with any hit. STR can be increased through exercise, while certain injuries and diseases can permanently reduce STR. A character with STR 0 is an invalid, unable to rise from his or her bed.

Constitution

(CON)

Health, vigor, and vitality are all measured by your character's Constitution. The *Stamina* roll (CON x 5) is its characteristic roll. Your character's CON determines how well he or she can resist fatigue, poison, disease, drowning, and other hardships, and is a critical factor in calculating your character's hit points. CON can be increased through conditioning. Diseases, poisons, and some injuries can temporarily or permanently reduce your character's CON. Your character will die when his or her CON falls to 0.

Size

(SIZ)

Size defines your character's height, weight, and bulk. There is no SIZ-associated characteristic roll; on the character sheet the space is used to note your character's Damage Bonus. Resistance rolls using SIZ can determine whether or not your character can stand firm against resistance, see over an obstacle, or squeeze through a crack. A character's SIZ, as body mass, is an

important factor in determining hit points and damage bonus (if any). Normal factors like gluttony or rigid diet can increase or decrease your character's weight, and therefore affect their SIZ. Some powers may also affect your character's SIZ. Severe injuries (like lost limbs) can also permanently decrease your character's SIZ. Your character will die if he or she loses more than half his or her base SIZ due to starvation or extreme diet. A character reduced to SIZ 0 through magic or other influences simply disappears, wasting away to nothing. The gamemaster should be the arbiter of any involuntary character SIZ changes, as these are uncommon.

Defining Character SIZ

This chart provides height and weight values based on SIZ score, allowing you to define your character's height and weight. Each value has a range, embodying the normal extremes of human height and weight. Once your character's height has been set, only weight should change as your character's SIZ score changes. Note that the ranges account for the normal extremes in human height and weight, and are for descriptive purposes only. With the gamemaster's permission, your character can choose to be taller or shorter than his or her indicated height, though his or her bodily weight should be adjusted in the opposite direction, so a character who chooses to be taller than his or her indicated SIZ would be quite thin, and a character who is shorter would be stockier and heavier.

Character SIZ Chart

SIZ Score	Character Height		Character Weight	
	Inches	Centimeters	Pounds	Kilograms
1	0-12	0-30	0-20	0-10
2	13-24	31-60	11-40	5-20
3	25-36	61-90	21-60	10-30
4	37-42	91-105	31-80	16-40
5	43-48	105-120	41-100	21-50
6	49-54	121-135	51-120	26-60
7	55-59	136-150	61-140	31-70
8	60-62	151-155	80-160	36-73
9	62-64	155-160	85-180	39-82
10	64-66	160-165	90-200	41-91
11	66-68	165-170	95-220	43-100
12	68-70	170-175	100-240	46-109
13	70-72	175-180	110-260	50-118
14	72-74	180-185	120-280	55-127
15	74-76	185-190	130-300	59-136
16	76-78	190-195	140-320	64-146
17	78-80	195-200	150-340	68-155
18	80-82	200-205	160-360	73-164
19	82-84	205-\	180-380	82-173
20	84-86	210-215	200-400	90-182
21	86-88	215-220	220-420	100-191
22	89-90	221-225	211-440	106-220
23	91-92	226-230	221-460	111-230
24	93-94	231-235	231-480	116-240
25	95-96	236-240	241-500	121-250

To convert the weight of objects into SIZ scores resistance rolls, see the *Object SIZ Examples* table, on page 277. Values for SIZ characteristics higher than 25 can be found in *Chapter Eight: Equipment* on page 237.

Intelligence

(INT)

Representing reason, mental acuity, and wits, INT measures how well your character learns, remembers, and analyzes data. The *Idea* roll (INT x 5) is its characteristic roll. Your character's INT score is critical in helping determine his or her initial skill values. Possibly the most important characteristic, INT has no fixed maximum and can conceivably rise indefinitely through study and mental exercise. Wounds to the head, prolonged exposure to drugs, or certain types of diseases can reduce your character's INT score. A character with an INT 0 is a babbling idiot, barely able to survive independently.

Power

(POW)

The most intangible of characteristics, Power represents your character's willpower, magical aptitude, and spiritual development. POW is essential to leadership, intuition, and magic. The *Luck* roll (POW x 5) is its characteristic roll. POW serves as the basis of your character's power points (see p. 30) and Sanity score (if that optional characteristic is used, see page 318). Like INT, human POW has no set maximum, and can rise indefinitely. Magical influences can reduce your character's POW (temporarily or permanently) and some magic is fueled by the perma-

nent sacrifice of the POW characteristic. If powers are being used (see **Chapter Four: Powers**), POW is probably the most important characteristic if your character is going to have powers. POW is the suggested basis for initial power choices, so a character with higher POW will have more powers (or more levels in those powers). A character whose POW score reaches 0 has lost his or her soul, and becomes a catatonic zombie without any will or life force.

Dexterity (DEX)

Your character's Dexterity score measures balance, agility, speed, and deftness. Characters rely upon DEX when reacting to an attack, climbing, performing delicate work, or moving stealthily. The *Agility roll* (DEX x 5) is its characteristic roll. Human characters have a maximum natural DEX of 21. Injuries or nerve diseases can reduce your character's DEX, while rigorous training can quicken reflexes and improve balance. A character with DEX 0 is utterly immobile.

Appearance (APP)

The Appearance score determines how likeable or attractive your character seems to other people, and is based as much on presence, personality, and demeanor as simple physical appearance. The *Charisma roll* (APP x 5) forms its characteristic roll. APP is used to measure first impressions, and indicates how eager others will be to associate with your character, through physical attraction or an agreeable manner. Though Appearance might seem to indicate only visual appearance, it actually represents many of the features that combine to make your character noticeable. Your character's APP cannot naturally exceed 21. APP can be raised through physical conditioning, cosmetic surgery, or careful application of grooming and etiquette. Your character's APP can be reduced through injury or disease, at the gamemaster's discretion. A character with an APP 0 is truly hideous, provoking disgust from all who see him or her.

Characteristic Rolls

Some of the challenges that arise over the course of play do not fall intuitively under the purview of given skills. *Can your hunter character stay awake in a blind all night waiting for his or her quarry? Can your hardened detective piece together the tantalizing clue hidden in the scraps of evidence?* In these situations, the gamemaster can call for a characteristic roll: a D100 roll against an appropriate characteristic times a multiplier. The gamemaster decides which multiplier to use based on the difficulty of the task. Standard characteristic rolls use a multiplier of 5, though extremely difficult tasks may require a

OPTION

The Education Characteristic

The seven standard characteristics serve for most campaigns, regardless of setting. Gamemasters may wish to use Education (EDU), an optional eighth characteristic, to help generate starting skill values for your characters. EDU works best in modern or futuristic settings, but can be easily adapted to any campaign setting.

Education (EDU)

The optional Education characteristic measures your character's grasp of general knowledge gained through a rounded educational system or some other broad learning method. It is not a substitute for specific knowledge about a field—instead it represents general knowledge of the world. Whether gained through formal study, training, or hard-won experience, EDU can also measure how many years your character has trained or studied to reach his or her current knowledge level. However, EDU does not automatically correlate to 1 EDU point = 1 year in school. It can also represent general life knowledge as well as dedicated study. Not all years in school are educational, just as all time spent outside school does not mean nothing is learned. EDU can be readily adapted to most settings—its meaning is obvious in settings with standardized educational systems. In a medieval setting, it might represent study in collegiums or monasteries, or extensive travel along exotic trade routes and to foreign ports.

Memory loss can reduce your character's EDU, while a year of hard study or intensive training increases it by 1 point. A character with an EDU 0 indicates a void of knowledge of the outside world, though this does not mean that everyone is a near-amnesiac in campaigns where this characteristic is not used. EDU does not apply to animals or creatures without an EDU characteristic—their knowledge is either instinctual or is based on different precepts.

Use of the EDU characteristic should also indicate that the optional Know roll (EDU x 5) is also used, as described on the following page.

multiplier of 2, or even be based on the characteristic itself as a percentage. For more details on task difficulty and modifier selection, see page 177 of **Chapter Five: System**.

Effort Roll (STR x 5)

Most feats of strength involve matching your character's STR against the SIZ of the lifted object on the resistance table (see **Chapter Five: System** on page 171 for more details). In cases when a SIZ rating is not available or is difficult to determine, use an Effort roll.

Effort rolls can also be used as an easy alternative to encumbrance or fatigue. Is your heavily-laden character worn out at the end of a march? An Effort roll is a quick way to decide.

Stamina Roll (CON x 5)

Based upon CON, Stamina rolls measure endurance. Use a Stamina roll whenever physical or intestinal fortitude is in question. To list a few examples, a Stamina roll might determine whether or not your character can stay awake all night, or endure seasickness, ill-prepared food, or strong drink with no ill effects.

Idea Roll (INT x 5)

An Idea roll represents your character's ability to make clever guesses, informed hunches, or reasonable deductions based upon nothing but observation and raw intellect. When no skill seems appropriate, an Idea roll can show understanding of a concept or the ability to unravel a puzzle. Memory is also part of the Idea roll: your character may use an Idea roll to remember an important detail, retrace his or her steps through a labyrinth, or memorize a lengthy formula.

If the course of the game is getting bogged down, a gamemaster may allow an Idea roll to your character if he or she is stymied by a mystery, getting him or her back on track by revealing the hidden meaning of some already uncovered clue, or letting your character know that something 'doesn't quite seem right' about a particular person, place, or thing. Remember, these kinds of Idea rolls should only be granted at the gamemaster's discretion, and are not generally solicited by players. Such generosity should be kept to a minimum, or else players may come to rely upon "hint" rolls instead of their own wits!

Your gamemaster may also require you to make an Idea roll for your character if you wish to have your character think or behave in a manner that is clearly greater than his or her general level of intelligence. If your character is a primitive hunter encountering modern technology, for example, the gamemaster may require an Idea roll for your character to be able to grasp basic concepts of the item.

Luck Roll (POW x 5)

Luck is the knack of being in the right place at the right time, or the uncanny ability to escape a random peril unscathed. *Did your character remember to bring that one special bit of rope or equipment? Will a friendly passerby lend your character a hand if he or she is stranded by the side of the road? Does the hideous creature attack your character, or his or her horse? Does your character fall through a weak floor, or snag his or her clothes on a splintered plank and escape plummeting to death?*

OPTION

The Know Roll (EDU x 5)

Instead of requiring your character to use one or more specialized knowledge skills, a *Know roll* can be used to approximate the facts and trivia that the average person knows as 'general knowledge.' Know rolls can be used to recall different kinds of facts, depending on the setting and even the culture of a given character. A medieval peasant might use a Know roll to remember the name of a noble lord or the details of the lives of saints, while a modern citizen of the U.S.A. would recall important presidents, or remember what happens if bleach and ammonia mix. Know rolls should rarely take the place of a more specialized Knowledge skill, and deal strictly with facts. Making good use of those facts is a function of INT. You will need to be using the optional EDU characteristic to form the basis of the Know roll.

Luck rolls can be used to answer all of these questions. Successful Luck rolls can create fortunate coincidences under normal circumstances, or save your character from certain doom in an emergency.

Agility Roll (DEX x 5)

Whenever a feat of deftness, balance, or agility is called for and no appropriate skill exists, use an Agility roll to measure success. An Agility roll might, for example, determine if your character can keep his or her balance on a heaving ship's deck, gather up all the pieces of a broken vase, run carrying a precious elixir without spilling any, or grab the vine at the edge of a cliff.

Charisma Roll (APP x 5)

Use Charisma rolls to adjudicate interpersonal reactions not covered by an existing skill. Making a good first impression, seducing an acquaintance, or becoming the person a group turns to first for guidance are all good uses for a Charisma roll. If your character is standing outside a trendy night club wanting to be let in, a successful Charisma roll will get him or her noticed and waved through the door.

Derived Characteristics

In addition to characteristics (and their attendant characteristic rolls), your character is also defined by a set of derived characteristics, computed from his or her characteristic scores. If injuries, magic, or other factors increase or decrease a characteristic, all characteristics derived from that characteristic immediately change to reflect the new value.

OPTION

Hit Points by Hit Location

For a more complex combat system, hit points are divided among your character's body parts. If an attack is successful, a D20 roll is made to determine where, exactly, the blow hits. If the gamemaster employs the optional hit location system (see "Hit Locations" on page 190 for more information), your character's hit points are divided among his or her various hit locations. Use the following formula for humanoids:

Location	Hit point value
Leg, Abdomen, Head	1/3 total hit points
Chest	4/10 total hit points
Arm	1/4 total hit points

Round all values up, as displayed on the following table:

Location	Maximum Hit Points														
	1-2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11-12	13-15	16-17	18	19-20	21
Each Leg	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7
Abdomen	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7
Chest	1	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	5	6	7	8	8	9
Each Arm	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6
Head	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7

The sum of your character's hit points by locations exceeds his or her maximum hit points, but whenever a character is wounded, the rolled damage is subtracted from that location's hit point total *and* your character's maximum hit points. Damage exceeding a location's total hit points renders it useless. Damage equal to twice a location's hit point total crushes or severs it. See "Damage per Hit Location" on page 204 for more information.

For example, your character has 14 hit points, with 5 hit points in each leg, 5 hit points in the abdomen, 6 hit points in the chest, 4 hit points in each arm, and 5 hit points in his or her head. Even though his or her hit points in all locations total 34, your character will die when she suffers a total of 14 hit points of damage.

The Major Wound system (page 208) is not easily compatible with the hit location system, and should a gamemaster choose to use the optional hit locations and "Damage by Hit Location" systems (on pages 190 and 204, respectively), the major wound system should be eliminated or adapted considerably, perhaps with the nature of the major wound being chosen by the gamemaster where applicable.

For example, your character (CON 16, SIZ 14, HP 15) falls victim to a deadly poison, which reduces his or her CON value to 10. Your character's maximum hit points immediately drop from 15 (16+14=30, divided to 15) to 12 (10+14=24, divided to 12). Additionally, his or her major wound total drops from 8 to 6. If wounds had already brought your character lower than 12 hit points, he or she would not take any additional damage, but he or she is limited to the 12 hit point maximum until his or her original CON is restored.

Damage Bonus (STR + SIZ, see table)

Bigger, stronger characters and creatures are more powerful in physical combat, inflicting more damage than average with each strike. Smaller, weaker beings inflict less damage with their attacks. Your character's damage bonus reflects this advantage. The damage bonus is expressed in terms of extra damage dice, which are added or subtracted from the damage of successful attacks.

Your character adds his or her full damage modifier to all hits with brawling or melee weapons. In the case of a negative damage bonus, subtract the appropriate

dice from any inflicted damage. If the total is 0 or less, the blow is too soft to inflict any harm.

Missile weapons don't allow your character to use his or her full damage modifier. If your character's damage

modifier is positive, divide the results in half when using a thrown weapon or a bow. If the damage modifier is negative, double the penalty. Self-propelled weapons (firearms, energy missile weapons, etc.) do not receive a damage bonus.

To calculate your character's damage bonus, add his or her STR and SIZ scores together, and find

Damage Bonus

STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier
2 to 12	-1D6
13 to 16	-1D4
17 to 24	None
25 to 32	+1D4
33 to 40	+1D6
41 to 56	+2D6
57 to 72	+3D6
73 to 88	+4D6
89 to 104	+5D6
105 to 120	+6D6
121 to 136	+7D6
137 to 152	+8D6
152 to 168	+9D6
Ea. add'l +16	+1d6

OPTION

Total Hit Points

A gamemaster who would like harder player-characters able to survive quite a bit more damage may choose to instead utilize the formula of $CON + SIZ = \text{total HP}$. This results in characters who can handle themselves well in combat, take injuries without much inconvenience, and means that major wounds (described below) are much less common. Using this formula also means that injuries caused by special and critical successes are much less likely to kill characters outright. This optional system can easily be used with the hit points per location system (see page 29), increasing the chances that characters will remain attached to their limbs, and vice versa.

To draw a major distinction between player-characters and weaker "cannon-fodder" non-player-characters, the gamemaster might allow only the player-characters and important non-player-characters to have hit points equaling $CON + SIZ$, while all other non-player-characters have hit points based on the normal formula of averaging CON and SIZ . This will give a significant advantage to player-characters, and allow them to survive more than a few solid injuries. It also allows for player-characters who are able to take on large numbers of non-player-characters without significant fear of being killed by one critical blow.

the result on the Damage Bonus table (found on the previous page).

Experience Bonus (1/2 INT)

The smarter your character is, the faster he or she can learn, especially under stress. To determine your character's experience bonus, divide his or her INT by 2, rounding up. Add the experience bonus to the learning roll for each experience check your character makes to improve a skill or characteristic. Consult **Chapter Five: System** and "Skill Improvement" on page 182 for more information.

Hit Points (average of CON and SIZ)

Hit points represent your character's capacity to withstand punishment and physical injury. Calculate your character's maximum hit points by adding his or her CON and SIZ scores, then dividing the total by 2. Round all fractions up.

Your character will lose consciousness when his or her hit point tally falls to 2 or less, and if his or her hit point total reaches 0, your character dies at the end of the following round. Lost hit points heal naturally at a rate of 1D3 points per game week, though medical attention can speed recovery. See "Damage & Healing" on page 207 for more information.

Major Wounds**(1/2 of HP)**

Divide your character's hit point total in half, rounding up if necessary. This total is his or her major wound level. If your character takes this amount of damage from a single wound, he or she may suffer horrific side-effects as well as simple hit point loss. See "Major Wounds" on page 208 for more details.

Power Points**(Max = POW)**

Power points (PP) represent your character's vital essence, his or her reserves of spiritual or life energy. Your character will spend power points to cast or resist spells. Your character's maximum power points are usually equal to his or her POW characteristic. Generally, spent power points regenerate at a rate of 1 per hour of sleep or total rest, or 1 for every two hours of normal activity. See the chart below for power point recovery rates for higher POW scores. If your character is engaged in strenuous activity, he or she cannot regain power points. When your character's power point total falls to 0, he or she is completely exhausted, and will faint until regaining at least one power point.

POWER POINT RECOVERY RATE

Max PP	Asleep	Awake
1-24	1 per hour	1 per 2 hours
25-48	2 per hour	1 per hour
49-72	3 per hour	1 per 40 minutes
73-96	4 per hour	1 per 30 minutes
97+	+1 per hour	divide time in half

Unlike hit points or fatigue points (described below), power points can climb above your character's maximum for brief times under certain conditions. As noted, if your character receives additional power points (usually through the use of a power), he or she can store up to twice his or her POW characteristic in extra power points. Any power points beyond these will be lost. If your character uses any power

OPTION

Other Kinds of Power Points

Due to the variety of powers represented in these rules, the generic name "power points" is used in place of other names like "temporary power" or "magic points", as it is contradictory to fuel mutations, psychic abilities, or super powers with magic points. If desired, the gamemaster can change the name to "energy points" or "magic points" or whatever is appropriate to the setting. If systems other than magic or sorcery are used, it is recommended to keep them called power points, to avoid confusion. Do not use two different names for power points in the same game.

points while over his or her normal maximum, these must come from the extra power points first. These extra power points will not be renewed or regenerate as normal, and will dissipate entirely after a night's sleep or a suitable juncture determined by the gamemaster.

Items that store power points and allow you to use the stored power points do not count against this total, as long as the power points are not stored in your own character's reserve. In most cases, the power points are used straight from the item's reserve, and do not affect your own maximum storage capability. See **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more on items with power point reservoirs.

Movement (MOV)

All human and humanoid characters begin with a movement (MOV) attribute of 10 units. This measures how much distance your character can move in a combat round. A unit is a flexible amount of measure, and

can range from 1–5 meters, depending on how quickly your character is moving. A walk is 1 meter per MOV, while a run is up to 5 meters per MOV. An average rate of movement in combat is 3 meters (yards) per unit, meaning that on average, your character moves 30 meters a combat round. Movement rates are described further in "Movement Rates" on page 179.

Professions

In addition to being defined by characteristics, your character is also defined in terms of his or her skills. Characteristics are the natural abilities your character was born with or developed independently, while skills are learned through life experience, often as part of a profession. A profession is a job or vocation your character is assumed to be a part of when he or she begins play (or was a part of before play began). Your charac-

OPTION

Skill Category Bonuses

If you and the gamemaster want your character's characteristics to influence their skill ratings, you should employ this system. As described in the **Chapter Three: Skills**, each skill is grouped into skill categories. Each category is linked to one or more characteristics that are used to compute a skill category bonus for each category. To compute the bonus for each skill category, note the primary, secondary and negative characteristics of each category (or use the chart below):

- ❖ **PRIMARY** characteristics add 1% for every point over 10, and subtract 1% for every point under 10.
- ❖ **SECONDARY** characteristics add 1% for every 2 points over 10, and subtract 1% for every 2 points under 10. Round down.
- ❖ **NEGATIVE** characteristics subtract 1% for every point over 10, and add 1% for every point under 10.

Skill Bonus Table

Value	Primary	Secondary	Negative
1	-9%	-4%	+9%
2	-8%	-4%	+8%
3	-7%	-3%	+7%
4	-6%	-3%	+6%
5	-5%	-2%	+5%
6	-4%	-2%	+4%
7	-3%	-1%	+3%
8	-2%	-1%	+2%
9	-1%	-0%	+1%
10	+0%	+0%	-0%
11	+1%	+0%	-1%
12	+2%	+1%	-2%
13	+3%	+1%	-3%
14	+4%	+2%	-4%
15	+5%	+2%	-5%
16	+6%	+3%	-6%
17	+7%	+3%	-7%
18	+8%	+4%	-8%
19	+9%	+4%	-9%
20	+10%	+5%	-10%
21	+11%	+5%	-11%
Etc.	+1%/point	+1%/2 points	-1%/point

Category	Primary	Secondary	Negative
Combat skills	DEX	INT, STR	—
Communication skills	INT	POW, APP	—
Manipulation skills	DEX	INT, STR	—
Mental skills	INT	POW, EDU	—
Perception skills	INT	POW, CON	—
Physical skills	DEX	STR, CON	SIZ

For example, your character has the following characteristics: STR 14, CON 13, INT 8, SIZ 12, POW 10, DEX 12, and APP 8. His or her skill category bonuses are:

Combat: +3% (+2 for DEX, +2 for STR, -1 for INT)

Communication: -3% (-2 for INT, 0 for POW, -1 for APP)

Manipulation: +3% (+2 for DEX, -1 for INT, +2 for STR)

Mental: -2% (-2 from INT, 0 for POW, EDU is not used in this campaign)

Perception: -1% (-2 for INT, 0 for POW, +1 for CON)

Physical: +3% (+2 for DEX, +2 for STR, +1 for CON, -2 for SIZ)

See the **Chapter Three: Skills** for more information about skill categories, category bonuses, and base skill chances.

Simpler Skill Bonuses

If the gamemaster decides that the calculation of the skill category bonuses is too cumbersome, each category

bonus can instead be defined as 1/2 of the primary characteristic (round up). This method results in higher initial skill chances and eliminates the chance of a category penalty. On the negative side, this method diminishes the importance of associated characteristics providing some value, makes INT and DEX the only relevant characteristics, and leads to non-intuitive situations such as having SIZ have no effect on Physical skills like Hide or Stealth.

OPTION

Fatigue Points and Sanity Points

Throughout these rules, some optional systems and powers refer to fatigue points and sanity points. For a more detailed encumbrance and fatigue system, your gamemaster should use fatigue points (described below). Furthermore, campaigns based on horror, blasphemous sorcery, or indescribable atrocity will depend heavily on the use of the sanity system (also below).

Fatigue Points

(Max = STR + CON)

Fatigue points (FP) measure your character's endurance, measuring how long he or she can engage in strenuous activity before exhaustion sets in. Your character's maximum fatigue points are equal to his or her STR + CON. Your character will expend 1 fatigue point per combat round of strenuous activity (melee combat, swimming, jogging, climbing, etc.). Sprinting or backbreaking labor costs 1 fatigue point per turn. Forced marches cost 1 fatigue point per hour.

When your character drops below 0 fatigue points, he or she suffers a 1% penalty to all skill, characteristic, and resistance rolls for every negative point of fatigue. When your character's negative fatigue point total equals his or her base fatigue value (STR + CON), he or she is incapacitated by exhaustion, and is incapable of any action. At the gamemaster's discretion, an exhausted character may fall unconscious. Even if he or she remains awake, an exhausted character cannot take any action until his or her fatigue point value regenerates to a positive number. Your character's encumbrance value (ENC) also affects his or her base fatigue value. See 'Encumbrance' on page 180 for more information.

Your character regains 1 fatigue point every minute (5 rounds) where he or she does not spend fatigue points. Resting, walking at a slow pace, or riding a beast or vehicle does not expend fatigue. An average character will recover from 0 to his or her full fatigue point total in 20 minutes (assuming a STR 10, CON 10, and 1 fatigue point recovered per minute of rest).

SIMPLE FATIGUE: As an alternate and much simpler version of fatigue that does away with fatigue points alto-

gether, the gamemaster may declare that after some massive endeavor or extreme physical hardship, your character is fatigued. Your character is either ready for action, or he or she is fatigued. The gamemaster may allow you a Stamina roll to escape being fatigued after a period of physical exertion. Using this easier method, your character will ordinarily grow tired after spending CON x 3 uninterrupted combat rounds in battle or difficult physical activity. After that, your character is automatically fatigued, and all skill rolls are *Difficult*. After spending CON x 4 uninterrupted combat rounds in battle or difficult physical activity, your character makes all of his or her skills as if they were 1/4 the normal skill rating, and must make a successful Stamina roll to do anything physical before the skill rating can even be attempted. After CON x 10 rounds of such activity, your character is utterly exhausted, and is barely able to lift his or her weapon, stand upright without something to lean on, etc. At this point, your character must make a *Difficult* Stamina roll to do any basic action, and the gamemaster may rule that any skill roll is *Impossible*, or limited to your character's POW x 1.

Sanity Points

(Max = POW x 5)

As described in 'Sanity' (page 318 of **Chapter Ten: Settings**), sanity (SAN) points represent your character's mental and emotional fortitude, and his or her ability to withstand shock, terror, and cosmic awfulness. Your character's base SAN points equal his or her POW x 5. Whenever your character is exposed to a horrifying situation or mind-bending strangeness, he or she must roll D100 against his or her current SAN point total. If your character fails (or perhaps even if he or she succeeds) he or she will lose sanity points. A character who suffers sufficient SAN loss will likely go mad. Your character's Sanity Threshold (like a Major Wound Threshold) equals 1/5 of his or her current SAN. Losing this many SAN points in one game hour results in some form of indefinite insanity. Sanity points do not naturally regenerate, and can only be recovered under very specific circumstances. Characters can gain SAN beyond their base value, to a maximum of 99. Certain types of blasphemous knowledge can limit your character's maximum allowable SAN score.

ter's profession is essentially a loose description of what he or she was doing (or was trained to do) prior to the game session or campaign, offering a guide to skill allocation. It is not a determinant of all that your character can be and do—your character can grow and change over the course of a campaign.

Professions by Setting

The following section is a listing of the more common professions, with notes about the settings in which they would be commonly encountered. These settings are described in **Chapter Ten: Settings**. Obviously, some of

the profession titles and initial skill lists may not be suitable for the setting, but these can be adjusted by the player and gamemaster as required.

For example, in campaign set in ancient Japan, the gamemaster tells you that the warrior profession is called samurai, assassin is a ninja, the thief is a bandit, the criminal is a Yakuza, and the noble is a courtier.

These lists are not exhaustive, and instead represent the most logical and suitable professions for each general setting. These can be expanded as the gamemaster and players see fit. Our own modern world still has small pockets of tribesman and shamans, for example,

though they are hardly common. Future releases for Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system may include new professions.

Settings and Skills

You and the gamemaster should take care to ensure that the skills associated with a profession fit the game's setting. In areas where a skill would be inappropriate, you can substitute a different specialty for skills that require specialties. If no other specialty is appropriate, choose another skill within the same category. See **Chapter Three: Skills** for more information on skill specialties and skill categories.

Professions A Through Z

Following is a list of professions in alphabetical order. Each profession is presented in a generic fashion to make them suitable for many settings or eras. Each profession includes a general description, a list of appropriate skills for that profession and a suggested wealth level. Each of the settings in **Chapter Ten: Settings** provide a number of appropriate professions for each era or setting.

The list of professions is not exhaustive; depending on the setting, gamemasters may need to create additional professions, or adapt existing professions even more. Information on creating new professions or adapting existing ones is found in "Creating New Professions" on page 44. Finally, professions do not have to be used at all; see the optional rules for "Freeform Professions" on page 41.

Your gamemaster may choose to make a random chart for you to roll on to determine your character's starting profession. However, usually it is preferable to choose a profession for your character, and it is sug-

gested that if a profession chart is utilized, you be allowed to ignore unfavorable results and either roll again or pick accordingly, to prevent being forced to play a character you will not enjoy.

Skills: These skills are the main skills used by the profession. Your character will spend his or her professional skill points on these skills during character creation. Your character does not have to have all of these skills, but these are a suggestion of which skills would be appropriate. With the gamemaster's permission, you can substitute any of these skills for another if the skill does not fit with the era, setting, or character concept.

For example, you wish to play a constable with a penchant for deduction in a campaign set in 12th century England. You look at the professions list, and see that the Detective template lists the Firearms (Pistol or Revolver) skill. It would be wholly reasonable to switch this with Melee Weapon (Sword) for that setting.

Wealth: This entry provides a brief description of an average wealth level for a character in that profession. In some cases, a range is provided, allowing for you and the gamemaster to decide the most appropriate to the setting. The description is meant to be a suggestion only; you and the gamemaster may choose to adjust the suggested wealth level up or down depending on your character concept.

An alternate method of determining initial wealth level where a range is presented is to begin with your character at the lowest of the wealth ranges, adjusted upward for each successful Status roll you can make. This should be done after your character has been created.

While the Status skill (page 79) describes the ways in which Status and wealth relate to one another, a brief description of each wealth level follows:

Special: This indicates whether a member of the profession is likely to have powers, described in **Chapter Four: Powers beginning** on page 85.

Artist

You make your living through the creation of art, whether by drawing, painting, sculpture, design, photography, or any other means of creative expression in a physical medium. Performers should refer to the Entertainer profession.

Wealth: Any, but usually Poor or Average.

Skills: Any two Art skills, any Craft, Insight, one appropriate Knowledge skill, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Research, and Spot.

Professions Listed in this Section

Artist	Gambler	Scientist
Assassin	Hunter	Servant
Athlete	Journalist	Shaman
Beggar	Laborer	Slave
Clerk	Lawman	Soldier
Computer Tech	Lawyer	Spy
Cowboy	Mechanic	Student
Craftsman	Merchant	Teacher
Criminal	Noble	Technician
Detective	Occultist	Thief
Doctor	Pilot	Tribesman
Engineer	Politician	Warrior
Entertainer	Priest	Wizard
Explorer	Sailor	Writer
Farmer	Scholar	

OPTION

Distinctive Features

Distinctive Features is a way of describing notable features about your character. These are descriptive only and have no numerical game value. They serve to help make your player character seem more real. The more extreme your character's Appearance (APP) characteristic, the greater number of distinctive features he or she has.

**Character's Appearance
Characteristic**

Character APP	Number of Distinctive Features
3 or less	4
4-7	3
8-9	2
10-11	1
12-14	2
15-16	3
17 and up	4



For example, if your character has a low APP characteristic, "bright eyes" might be described as a piercing and uncomfortable glare. Similarly, a high APP might have "bright eyes" that seem to sparkle and are attractive.

If your character's APP is high (11 and up), the features somehow make your character more attractive or impressive-looking, even if the feature would be normally not one thought of as attractive.

For example, a long scar across your character's face might make him or her seem more rugged and formidable, rather than sinister. Another imperfection might be distinctive and endearing to an otherwise classic beauty.

As you choose, try to keep a coherent picture of your character in your mind, and try to imagine how he or she would appear in the setting the gamemaster has specified. You can also combine different features in interesting ways. Your gamemaster may veto certain distinctive features if they would be completely out of place, depending on the setting.

For example, in a campaign where all of the characters are in the United States Marine Corps, it might not be appropriate for distinctive features relating to clothing or hair styles, due to military regulations and restrictions. Distinctive features such as "crew-cut" or "always wears olive green" aren't that distinctive in the Marine Corps.

Roll 1D10 below or choose a category for each distinctive feature your character has. You can choose the same category multiple times. Then choose a feature, or features, from the entry. These are all cosmetic elements of your character's appearance, and do not affect game values. You should keep your character's characteristics and skills in mind when picking distinctive features.

For example, your character with "powerful arms and hands" does not get a bonus to STR, and may have a rather low STR (in this case, the appearance is deceptive).

If your character's APP is low (10 or below), then these features are unpleasant and somehow help make your character appear less attractive or unusual looking, even if the characteristic would not normally be thought of as unpleasant. Choose as appropriate.

1—HAIR ON HEAD: Bald, bald on top, blond, black, braided, brown, crew-cut, curly, dirty, full of lice, glossy, gray, long, lustrous, matted, oily, perfumed, receding, red, shaven, spiky, very long, wavy, wig, feature of your choice.

2—FACIAL HAIR: Arched eyebrows, braided beard, bushy beard, curled and perfumed beard, enormous mustachios, eyebrows grown together, goatee, long beard, no eye-

(continued on the next page . . .)

Assassin

Death is your trade, and you have no remorse for your life as a cold-blooded professional killer. Whether you kill for money or some other cause, you are skilled in the termination of other living beings, usually in secrecy.

Wealth: Average or Affluent. You will also have a wide range of weapons and false identities, as appropriate to setting.

Skills: Dodge, Hide, Listen, Spot, Stealth, and five of the following as appropriate to setting: Brawl, Disguise, Drive, Electronics, Grapple, Firearm (any), Fine Manipulation, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Ride, Throw, Track.

Athlete

Whether professional or amateur, state-sponsored or still in school, you excel in a style of sports or exercise,

honing your body and resolve for solo or team athletic competition.

Wealth: Poor through Wealthy, usually Average or Affluent.

Skills: Climb, Dodge, Jump, Stealth, Throw and choose five of the following as appropriate to setting and sport: Brawl, First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Listen, Martial Arts, Spot, Ride, or Swim.

Beggar

You survive by begging for money, food, and other necessities. You may call yourself a hobo, homeless, or a wandering vagabond. Perhaps you had a run of bad luck, or insanity or substance abuse drove you to this state.

Wealth: Destitute, though some beggars are actually Poor and only pretend to be worse off.

Skills: Bargain, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Knowledge (Region: local area), Listen, Persuade, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Stealth.

OPTION

(... continued from the previous page)

brows, sideburns, strange designs cut in close-trimmed beard, thick eyebrows, feature of your choice.

3—FACIAL FEATURE: Birthmark, black eyes, blue eyes, bright eyes, broken nose, broken teeth, brown eyes, buck teeth, deeply tanned, double chin, earrings, enormous chin, eye patch, fleshy lips, gap in teeth, gray eyes, hairy ears, high cheekbones, hooked nose, large eyes, large nose, long eyelashes, jagged teeth, jug-handled ears, nose ring, pale, pockmarked skin, pointed chin, pointed teeth, pug nose, round face, scar, sensuous lips, stained teeth, tattooed, thin lips, tiny ears, turned-up nose, warts, weak chin, white teeth, wide-eyed, yellow teeth, feature of your choice.

4—EXPRESSION: Adoring, alluring, arrogant, bemused, bright-eyed, curious, cringing, dour, drunken, friendly, guarded, haughty, lecherous, leering, meek, mischievous, naïve, outgoing, piercing, pleasant, proud, seductive, sneaky, sneering, squinting, expression of your choice.

5—CLOTHES: Ancient, armored hat, athletic, barefoot, clothes leave wearer too hot or too cold, clothes leave wearer too wet, conical hat, embroidered with special emblem, expensive, fashionable, fine boots, for wrong sex, formfitting, full of holes, garish, gaudy, ill-fitting, lots of cheap jewelry, new, nightclothes, partly nude, peaked hat, prim, rich, sandals, satiny, sexy, skintight, sporty, subdued, too much ornamentation, uniform, utilitarian, vulgar, wide hat, clothes of your choice.

6—BEARING: Angry, casual, clumsy, confident, ethereal, fearful, graceful, humble, jaunty, languid, military, nimble, plodding, pushy, reserved, slouching, sprightly, stiff, swaggering, sensual, swaying, wary, weary, yielding, bearing of your choice.

7—SPEECH: Accented, affected, aggressive, deep, demanding, drawling, faint, hard-of-hearing and hence

loud, hesitant, high-pitched, imperious, lisping, musical, mumbling, nasal, raspy, sharp, sensual, shrill, slow, smooth, soft-spoken, stammering, strong, stuttering, throaty, unintelligible, whining, speech characteristic of your choice.

8—ARMS AND HANDS: Birthmark visible, bracelets or other arm jewelry, bulging biceps, calloused hands, deeply tanned, hairless, hairy, knobby elbows, large knuckles, left-handed, long arms, long fingernails, muscular, one arm longer than the other, one finger missing, one too many fingers present, pointed elbows, pointed fingernails, powerful arms and hands, rings, scar, slender, smooth-skinned, tattooed, unlined, very hairy, very pale skin, feature of your choice.

9—TORSO: Barrel-like, belly ring, birthmark visible, broad-shouldered, curvy, every bone shows, fat, flat chest, flat stomach, hairless, high waist, lean, long torso, many scars, muscular, narrow, no navel, one nipple gone, potbellied, prominent scar, short, shrunken chest, sinewy, sleek, slender, slim-hipped, svelte, tall, tan lines visible, tanned, tattooed, thick, thin, very hairy, very pale, willowy, feature of your choice.

10—LEGS AND FEET: Birthmark visible, bulging thighs and calves, calloused feet, deeply tanned, hairless, hairy, knobby knees, limping in one leg, many scars, muscular, one toe missing, one too many toes present, scar, scars from flame or acid, sleek, smooth, tanned, tattooed, toe ring, very hairy, very long legs, very pale skin, very short legs, weathered skin, feature of your choice.

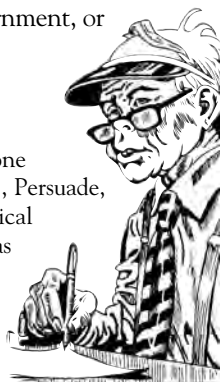
The gamemaster is encouraged to let you come up with distinctive features of your own if these are not sufficient, and for games featuring non-human character races, the gamemaster should revise this selection to incorporate new and unique features specific to new races, or disallow inappropriate features.

Clerk

You spend your days at a desk, usually working in some financial field. This profession could be one where you deal with customers, such as an accountant or salaried employee in a company, government, or other organization.

Wealth: Average

Skills: Bargain, Etiquette, Knowledge (Accounting), Knowledge (Law), one other Knowledge, Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Status, and either Technical Skill (Computer Use) or Literacy, as appropriate by era.



Computer Tech

You could be a normal software engineer, writing code for a large-scale program, a small cog in the machinery of a huge corporation. Or you

could be an illicit hacker, living by your wits, “testing” the network security systems of those same huge, faceless corporations to see if you can (and to see what you can get away with). Alternately, you could be assembling networks for a major company. Either way, much of your life is spent interfaced with a computer, often connected to the world’s information network. Lines of code, data, and other virtual assets are as real to you as the tools and materials of other craftsmen.

Wealth: Average to Affluent.

Skills: Craft (Computer Hardware or Code), one Knowledge skill, Language (Other) (a programming language), Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Research, Science (Mathematics), Status, Technical (Computer Use), and choose one of the following skills as specialties as appropriate to setting: Accounting, Hide, or Knowledge (Law).

Cowboy

You make your living tending beef cattle, riding the open range and taking care of the herds, finding strays and bringing them to market when it is time to sell.

Wealth: Poor to Average, occasionally Affluent.

Skills: Craft (usually knots), Firearm (Rifle), Knowledge (Natural History), Knowledge (Region: the Range), Listen, Navigate, Ride, Spot, Throw, Track.

Craftsman

Whether a village blacksmith, a glassblower, or a maker of finely tuned watches, you make trade goods by hand and sell them to interested buyers. You usually work in a shop, whether you own it or are merely employed there.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Appraise, any one Art, Bargain, any two Craft skills, Spot, Research, Status, and choose two of the following as appropriate to setting and trade: Fine Manipulation, Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), or Heavy Machine.

Criminal

You make your way through the world by breaking the law, whether by strong-arm theft, organized crime, picking pockets, or some other means of gaining valuables or money illegally.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, sometimes Wealthy, usually Average.

Skills: Bargain, Hide, Stealth, Drive or Ride, and choose any six of the following as appropriate to setting and racket: Appraise, Brawl, Climb, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, Firearm (any), Gaming, Grapple, Insight, Jump, Knowledge (Law), Listen, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any, usually knives or clubs), Persuade, Spot, Throw.

Detective

Whether employed by the police or working privately, you use skills of observation, deduction, and criminology to determine who has committed crimes. You may have a wide range of forensic and scientific skills, or operate on gut instincts.

Wealth: Average or Affluent.

Skills: Firearm (Handgun), Knowledge (Law), Listen, Persuade, Spot, Research, and choose four of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Art, Brawl, Disguise, Dodge, Drive, Fast Talk, Firearm (any), Grapple, Hide, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Language (Own), Medicine, Ride, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use), Stealth, or Track.

Doctor

You have made it your calling to treat the injured, infirm, sick, and otherwise unhealthy, using diagnostic skills and medical practices gained through extensive training and study. You may have taken an oath to help any who need it, no matter what they have done or who they are.

Wealth: Average to Affluent.

Skills: First Aid, Language (Own), Medicine, Persuade, Research, Spot, and choose four of the following as appropriate to setting: Insight, Language (Other), Psychotherapy, Science (any), and Status.

Engineer

You build, repair, or maintain machines, work in construction, or are a mechanic dealing with technology appropriate to your era and setting, from simple stone architecture to highly advanced spaceship drive systems. Some engineers maintain and operate a large and complex vehicle of some sort, from a sailing ship to a space cruiser, while others are employed in the creation and maintenance of siege engines or architectural structures.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Craft (any), Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Spot, Status, and five of the following, as appropriate to setting and concept: Art (usually Drafting), Drive, Heavy Machine, Knowledge (any), Pilot (any), Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Science (any), or Technical (Computer Use).

Entertainer

You use your performing talent to entertain audiences of all sizes, improvisational, or scripted, in person or through broadcast transmission or prerecorded distribution.

Wealth: Destitute to Wealthy, usually Average.

Skills: Art (any), Disguise, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Perform (any), and Persuade.

Explorer

You have made it your life's work to seek out the unknown corners of the world, go where none have gone before, and to bring back knowledge of what you have found, either for glory or in the name of discovery.

Wealth: Affluent or Wealthy.

Skills: Climb, Language (Other), Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Spot, and four of the following as appropriate to setting: Knowledge (Anthropology, Group, History, Natural World, or Region), Drive, Fast Talk, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Rifle), Navigate, Pilot (Aircraft or Boat), Ride, Science (Geology), Swim, or Track.

Wealth Levels Defined

Destitute

Penniless, your character must rely on scavenging food and drink from their environment, or rely on the charity of others. Homeless, your character sleeps wherever he or she can find a dry and safe spot. Your character may have some small possessions other than what he or she can carry, but these will not be particularly valuable and are hidden away, and will be stolen if discovered. This level of poverty is probably reflected in your character's appearance, and your character may have difficulty performing normal tasks due to prejudice against the destitute.

Poor

While your character has some money, and does not want for a place to sleep or food to eat, his or her life is without much luxury, and your character does not have very much free coin to spend on luxuries, or on a higher standard of living. With level of wealth, your character's abode is humble and potentially in a bad part of town. He or she is partly employed, is unemployed, or is working hard for meager wages.

Average

Your character has a comfortable income and is able to live without much difficulty, though major purchases must be weighed carefully. He or she has an average home, and may have a reasonable amount of money in savings, though few would think your character is anything other than middle class or of average income. Your character is able to pay his or her bills and expenses, and can splurge occasionally on luxury items, but he or she is generally living a lifestyle that is average to the majority of people in his or her culture and era.

Affluent

Your character is doing quite well, and has a considerable income with which he or she can live well and enjoy life. Any living accommodations will be on the nicer side, and your character does not need to think twice about making major purchases. Your character has a fairly large amount of money saved, and he or she may live a life of excess and luxury.

Wealthy

Your character has vast material wealth, from a near-inexhaustible source. He or she can make purchases of considerable expense without a second thought, and the quality of life is enviable among most classes. Your character has a great amount of money saved, and due to his or her level of wealth, is likely to have many social and business opportunities beyond those of any other income level.

Farmer

As a farmer you dwell in a rural or barely tamed area, coaxing a living out of the land through growing crops or tending animal herds. It is a hard life with long days of backbreaking labor, but satisfying nonetheless.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Bargain, Craft (any), Knowledge (Natural History), Listen, Spot, and five of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Brawl, Drive, Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), First Aid, Heavy Machine, Knowledge (History), Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Science (Biology, Botany, or Geology), Track.

Gambler

You survive by the whim of chance, or by cheating fate in games of luck and skill. Inevitably, you travel around; drifting from one gambling arena to another, sometimes one step ahead of the law, hoping your luck won't dry up.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Bargain, Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Gaming, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Sleight of Hand, Persuade, and Spot.

Hunter

Whether for survival or for the thrill of the hunt, you specialize in tracking and either trapping or killing wild animals or other beings.

Wealth: Poor or Average, unless a big game or sport hunter, then Wealthy.

Skills: Climb, Hide, Listen, Navigate, Spot, Stealth, Track, and three of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), Knowledge (Natural History or Region), Melee Weapon (usually Spear), Missile Weapon (any), Language (Other), and Ride.

Journalist

Whether a columnist for a weekly paper, a photojournalist, a television anchor, or a gonzo commentator, you make a living from the coverage and analysis of events, to be broadcast or distributed in some other medium. This may come with some measure of fame or notoriety.

Wealth: Average to Affluent.

Skills: Fast Talk, Insight, Language (Own), Listen, Persuade, Research, Spot, and three of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Art (Photography), Craft (Photography), Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Status, Stealth, or Technical (Computer Use).

Laborer

You are a blue-collar worker, whether on a factory line, in a warehouse, or simply heavy labor. Your muscle and

Culture and Characters

Many settings, particularly historical or fantasy, offer distinct and original cultures, usually presented in gaming terms as some qualities common to people from those countries, social groups, or even planets. As the rules in *Basic Roleplaying* are not specific to any one setting, the gamemaster will need to develop his or her own set of cultural backgrounds appropriate to the setting. Sometimes these can lead to stereotypes, and the gamemaster should consider these with care before using this optional system.

Cultural backgrounds are not necessary—members of a culture are certainly different enough to allow a diverse set of skills and characteristics, but you and your gamemaster may feel that they add a valuable element to the game setting. Each cultural background description can contain some or all of the following sections, with others substituted or added at the gamemaster's discretion:

LEADER: The ruler, president, authority, or other governing body of the country or region.

CULTURE: The dominant culture of the area. Usually human, though **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** contains samples of non-human races.

APPEARANCE: This might be a few of the "Distinctive Features" from page 34 that are frequent to folk of this area, or common hair and skin colors.

DEMEANOR: If appropriate, this can be a few personality traits that are common to those raised in the region. Naturally, not everyone is like this.

LANGUAGE(S): The language or languages commonly spoken or known by natives of this region.

OCCUPATIONS: Professions common to the folk of the region. These are not the only ones practiced here—they are merely the most common or emblematic of the society. Three is a good number of these.

RELIGIONS: What god or gods are worshiped commonly in this region? If Allegiances (page 315) play a part in the campaign, then religion should be included.

CULTURAL WEAPONS: In historical or fantasy settings, medieval-style weaponry is often quite different country-to-country, and armies of each land tend to train with different weapon styles. This is less distinctive as settings become more modern, though the gamemaster can use this information when equipping non-player characters. A few choices here are appropriate.

ARMOR: If body armor is worn in this setting, what types are commonly used and available?

CULTURAL SKILLS: As with cultural weapons above, these are a few skills (two, commonly) that are commonly taught and used within this culture, usually trained as a part of socialization and common education. At the gamemaster's discretion, these skills might gain a small bonus. *For example, members of an ancient world culture of dour Northern crag-dwelling barbarians might gain a +20% to the Climb skill.* If bonuses to skills are used, it is recommended that every culture gain equal bonuses, though to a different skill or skills.

ITEMS: This might include a significant possession common to someone from this area, often of religious or personal significance. It does not have to be valuable, and characters from this region are under no compulsion to possess this item.

OPTION

Cultural Modifiers

Some cultures might receive modifiers to basic characteristics, such as SIZ. This can be a potentially sensitive topic with your players. The gamemaster is encouraged to award such bonuses with caution, and to balance positive bonuses with negative ones, or to equalize play by giving all cultures an equivalent bonus, though maybe to different characteristics or attributes. No player should be penalized for choosing a particular culture. It is also recommended that this be used only for settings where such distinctions are commonly acceptable, such as in fantasy worlds where bloodlines are unique or in science-fiction settings where humanity has been shaped by genetic manipulation and has adapted to the galactic environment.

ability to do repetitive tasks are more important than any brainpower you can muster.

Wealth: Poor or Average.

Skills: Climb, Craft (any), Drive, Brawl, Grapple, Heavy Machine, and four others, as appropriate to setting: Appraise, Fine Manipulation, Language (Other), Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Literacy or Technical (Computer Use).

Lawman

You have the authority and the jurisdiction to uphold and defend the law, ideally in defense of the common

folk. Your enforcement of the law and legal code is supported by the power structure in your community.

Wealth: Usually Average. Corrupt lawmen are sometimes Affluent.

Skills: Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Knowledge (Law), Listen, Spot, and four of the following, as appropriate to setting and concept: Drive, Firearms (any), First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Knowledge (Region or Group), Language (Other), Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Pilot (any), Ride, Status, Technical (Computer Use), or Track.

Lawyer

You are trained in the use of the legal system, negotiating settlements in legal disputes, representing individuals, organizations, or governments in courts of law. Though you have no authority above or beyond that of the common citizen, your inside knowledge of the legal system gives you considerable power in the legal system.

Wealth: Destitute, Poor, Average, Affluent, Wealthy

Skills: Bargain, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Law), one other Knowledge skill, Language (Own), Perform (Oratory), Persuade, Research, and Status.

Mechanic

A grease monkey, you spend your time maintaining, repairing, and sometimes building machines, vehicles, or more complex constructions. You are good with tools, and able to easily decipher technical problems or issues.

Wealth: Poor to Average, usually Average.

Skills: Bargain, Craft (Metalwork), Drive, Fine Manipulation, Heavy Machine, Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), and Spot.

Merchant

You make your living in retail or wholesale, purchasing resources for less and selling for more. You might work in or own a shop, or you might be mobile: a traveling salesman, a wandering tinker, an adventuresome spice merchant, or an international sales representative.

Wealth: Average to Wealthy, usually Affluent. The gamemaster and player should determine whether the character owns their own shop or trade vessel.

Skills: Appraise, Bargain, Fast Talk, Knowledge (Accounting), Knowledge (Business), Persuade, Research, Status, and any two other skills as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept.

Noble

You were born into wealth and the ruling class. In a society that recognizes such social distinctions your status is often associated with ranks and titles, but even if such titles are meaningless you are still easily recognized as among the elite. You are accustomed to an elegant and extravagant lifestyle, and you know and are known to the wealthy and other highborn of society.

Wealth: Affluent to Wealthy, usually Wealthy.

Skills: Bargain, Drive, Etiquette, Language (Own), Language (Other), Literacy, and Status, plus any other three skills as hobbies or fields of interest.

Occultist

You are a student of obscure secrets, hidden lore, and magical power, believing in the influence and primacy of supernatural forces. If appropriate to the setting, the gamemaster may allow you to use powers (probably magic or sorcery) perhaps studied while a member of an occult organization or secret society.

Wealth: Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.

Skills: Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Anthropology), Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Language (Own), Research, and any two other skills as appropriate to setting, usually from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Knowledge (Archaeology), Medicine, Science (any), or Status.

Special: If magic is present in the setting, the gamemaster may allow you to have magic powers. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information on this.

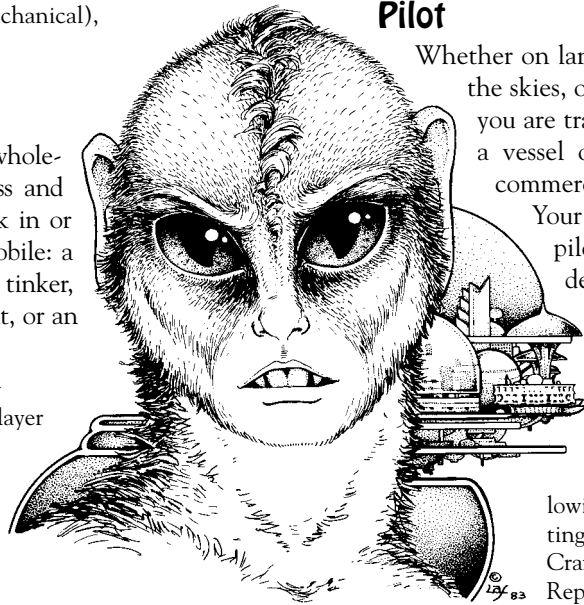
Pilot

Whether on land, on or below the water, in the skies, or through the deeps of space, you are trained in guiding and piloting a vessel of some sort, steering it for commercial, official, or military ends.

Your job ranges from space fighter pilot to tramp steamer captain, depending on the setting.

Wealth: Average to Affluent. If you own your own vessel, Affluent.

Skills: Drive, Heavy Machine, Listen, Navigate, Pilot (any), Spot, plus any four of the following skills, as appropriate to setting: Bargain, Climb, Command, Craft (any), Knowledge (Region), Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Language (Other), Persuade, Science (Physics), Science (Astronomy), or Technical (Computer Use).



*The Denebian Noctin (stygiophagus sapiens) are agile but frail, and enjoy increased nighttime visual acuity.
(+20% Night Perception, +2 DEX, -3 CON)*

Politician

You have been elected or appointed to a position of authority, and make your living taking part in or directing government activities, whether city-wide or greater. You could be a medieval magistrate or a galactic senator, depending on the setting.

Wealth: Affluent to Wealthy, usually Affluent.

Skills: Bargain, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Status, plus any three other skills as appropriate to the setting, usually from the following: Knowledge (Accounting, Group, History, or Region), Listen, Language (Other), Language (Own), Perform (Oratory), or Research.

Priest

Your faith and belief in a religion has led you to the calling of the priesthood, and you spend your time preaching or in activities befitting the worship of your deity (or deities). You could be an ascetic monk or a televangelist, depending on the setting.

Wealth: Poor to Affluent, usually Average, possibly Wealthy if you are the religious leader of a large group of worshippers, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Skills: Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Philosophy), Knowledge (Religion), Language (Own), Perform (Ritual), Persuade, and two of the following: Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Listen, Literacy, Perform (Oratory), Research, Status, or Teach.

Special: Your affiliation with a faith or cult may grant you access to magical or supernatural powers, at the gamemaster's discretion. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information on this.



Spiritual leaders are common to all races, cultures, and eras. A well-balanced adventuring party makes sure someone knows how to Fast Talk, how to fight, and how to heal (spells or First Aid).

Sailor

You ply the ocean waves, working hard to maintain your vessel's integrity, whether as a pirate, a naval officer, or an ancient world trader.

Wealth: Poor or Average, usually Average.

Skills: Climb, Craft (any), Dodge, Grapple, Navigate, Pilot (Boat), Swim, and any three of the following: Artillery (any, usually shipboard), Command, Language (Other), Listen, Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), or Spot.

Scholar

Study and learning define your life, and you specialize in one or more fields of knowledge, eagerly seeking out all there is to know within your intellectual domain. You might teach this knowledge to students, or hoard it for your own use.

Wealth: Average or Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Language (Other), Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Teach, and choose five Knowledge or Science skills appropriate to setting and related to your field of study.

Scientist

Whether employed by a corporation, educational institution, government, or working on your own, you explore a field of science through rigorous speculation, experimentation, and observation, repeating the process and refining the base of data in your field.

Wealth: Average or Affluent, usually Affluent.

Skills: Craft (any), Persuade, Research, Status, Technical (Computer Use) or Heavy Machine, and any five Knowledge or Science appropriate to setting and related to your field of study.

Servant

You are employed as a helper or servant, tending to the household affairs and domestic needs of an affluent employer. You might be a gentleman's manservant, the adjutant of a general, or you could be a scullery maid in a sprawling castle.

Wealth: Poor to Average, though sometimes servants have limited access to their employer's lifestyle of Affluent or Wealthy, at the gamemaster's approval.

Skills: Craft (any), Etiquette, Hide, Language (Own), Listen, Stealth, and choose four of the following as personal specialties, as appropriate

to the setting and concept: Bargain, Drive, First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Language (Other), Persuade.

Shaman

You are a tribal magician, skilled in contacting the spirit world and lending advice and aid to your chieftain and the members of your tribe. You have secret knowledge, passed down from mentor to student, and you may have the ability to use magic. Most shamans are members of a more primitive culture, though there are some modern practitioners.

Wealth: Poor or Average, at a tribal-level existence.

Skills: Art (any), Insight, Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Occult), Language (Own), Listen, Perform (Rituals), Persuade, and two of the following as specialties, as appro-

priate to setting and concept: Craft (any), Fast Talk, First Aid, Hide, Knowledge (Anthropology), Medicine, Language (Other), Science (Pharmacy), or Status.

Special: Depending on the setting, you may be able to use magic. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information on this.

Slave

Captured by slavers or born into captivity, you are a slave or indentured servant to an individual master, or to an organization or religion. You might be treated well: the head of a household's staff, or perhaps you are beaten and regularly punished and live in fear. To be classified as a slave, it is assumed that most of your life has been spent as a slave. If you were captured and enslaved recently, use your previous profession instead.

Wealth: Destitute to Poor, though sometimes slaves have limited access to their owner's lifestyle of Affluent or Wealthy, at the gamemaster's approval.

Skills: Craft (any), Dodge, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Language (Other), Listen, Stealth, and one other skill as an occupational specialty.

OPTION

Freeform Professions

You may be uncomfortable with the limitation of the profession templates and may ask the gamemaster for permission to create your own profession, allocating wealth, skills, and special abilities as you see fit. The advantage to this is that you end up with exactly the character you would like to create. The downside is that the gamemaster needs to be more careful about character creation and what you are allowed to come up with. This form of character creation is recommended for a more freeform or looser play style.

With this option, you choose the title for the profession, then spend your character's professional skill points as freely as you would like. The gamemaster may wish to oversee the skill point expenditure a bit closer than when using the regular system to discourage you from coming up with anomalies such as a lawyer with professional skills in Firearm (Machine Gun) and First Aid. Your gamemaster may not have any objection to such odd characters, and should judge whatever is suitable for his or her own campaign. Alternately, he or she can impose a cap (50%, for example) on skills that are clearly not normally within the skill set of a normal member of the profession.

Wealth level should be determined with the gamemaster's approval, based again on the campaign and setting, using similar character professions as a guide. In this, the gamemaster's word is final.

Soldier

Whether through enlistment or conscription, you are a professional soldier, charged with the defense of your country or organization. You might be a mercenary or sellsword, or you might believe in the cause you fight for. Either way, you've received martial training, and work in a squad of other soldiers, doing what you're ordered to.

Wealth: Poor or Average, but frequently given access to expensive or otherwise-prohibited equipment.

Skills: Brawl, Climb, Dodge, First Aid, and six of the following, as appropriate to setting: Artillery, Command, Drive, Firearm (usually Rifle, but any), Grapple, Heavy Weapon (any), Hide, Language (Other), Listen, Jump, Medicine, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Navigate, Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Spot, Stealth, or Throw.



Good knights fight well and die honorably. Great knights fight well and live to fight again another day. Learn to love your shield.

Spy

You are skilled in subterfuge and infiltration, entering countries or organizations under cover or in secret, finding out their secrets, and reporting them back to an enemy or interested party.

Wealth: Average or Affluent, depending on the setting.

Skills: Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Listen, Research, Spot, Stealth, and three of the following, as appropriate to setting: Art (Photography), Brawl, Disguise, Etiquette, Firearm (any), Grapple, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Language (Own), Martial Arts, Navigate, Pilot (any), Psychology, Repair (Electronics), Repair

Advice on Character Creation

Naturally, you'll want the best of everything for your character, but that's not possible in a world where most people are poor. Across the board, you'll also want high characteristics and skills for your character, but having high scores in everything won't be possible either. Here are some tips for creating characters ready for adventure and for survival in your gamemaster's campaign, depending upon the setting.

Weapon Skills: Though most folks in the world don't carry weapons day-to-day, people in adventure settings are usually capable with them, even if they don't carry them. Furthermore, a big part of adventure games are the willingness to use weapons or violence to defend oneself. If you don't want non-player characters to regularly defeat your character, have a weapon skill at 51% or better, since that gives you at least even odds of hitting someone. Higher weapon skills are going to be suitable for campaigns and settings more focused on action and combat. Since the parry percentage for a weapon drops by -30% each time the weapon parries in a round, a high hand-to-hand weapon skill can be quite useful. Also, the chances for a critical or special success rise as your character becomes more skillful.

Shields: If your character intends to do serious hand-to-hand fighting with ancient or medieval weapons, he or she needs a shield, or at least a second weapon to parry with. If your character parries with a shield, then the risk of breaking a weapon drops greatly, and he or she ignores

certain fumble table results. If your character has skill, a shield is more reliable than armor, and blocks stronger attacks.

Armor: If you are regularly entering melee combat, wear the best armor possible, whether soft leather or energy shields. Armor is not always proof against injury—critical results will usually overcome it, and most special successes will have some other effect that cannot be stopped by the armor. Nonetheless, armor can make the difference between a major wound and a minor wound, or between a major wound and death. It may be your character's only protection from an ambush or attempted assassination.

Dodge: If the campaign you're in will have a lot of combat, it will pay to have the highest Dodge skill possible. As you might imagine, being able to dodge a blow from a dagger, say, can be very handy. Dodge and parry are integrated maneuvers in this game; a high Dodge skill gives your character as much flexibility of choice as possible.

Powers: If your campaign is such where you will be facing foes who have powers and you do not, high percentages in combat skills provides an excellent means of combating them. Many powers, supernatural or otherwise, depend on a high POW characteristic, and your character's power point total is derived from this characteristic, so a high POW is essential if you are a power-user. A high POW also improves your Luck roll, which is almost never a bad thing in any setting.

Clustering Skills: It's a good idea to have different sorts of skills, but it is also handy to have skills that work together.

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(Mechanical), Ride, Swim, Technical (Computer Use), Throw, or Track.

Student

You spend your days studying, either as a general student, or an apprentice to some master. Your curriculum may be at a prestigious university, a martial arts academy, a wizard's school, or at some private and exclusive institution.

Wealth: Poor to Wealthy, usually Average.

Skills: Language (Own), Research, and choose eight other skills as courses of study, as appropriate to the setting and concept. Common choices are from the following list: Art (any), Craft (any), First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Medicine, Repair (any), Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use), and one Physical skill (if involved in athletics).

Special: Students or apprentices of the arcane arts may have limited access to magical spells, at the gamemaster's discretion.

See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information.

Teacher

You are an instructor of one or more subjects, teaching groups or tutoring a single student. Whether employed by a university, a high school, or other educational institution, you instruct students in an academic setting towards some standard of achievement.

Wealth: Average or Affluent, usually Average.

Skills: Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Status, Teach, and choose five other skills as areas of expertise, as appropriate to the setting and concept. Common choices are from the following list: Art (any), Craft (any), First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Medicine, Repair (any), Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use).



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For instance, high Sense, Stealth, and Track skills suggest a character that is a hunter or trapper, just as high Bargain, Insight, and Literacy suggest a diplomat or merchant. Clustering skills creates a general area of expertise, giving your character flexibility of action and response, and making his or her personality more understandable to role play.

Communication Skills: Try to have a high Bargain, Fast Talk, Perform (Oratory), or Persuade: your character will want to influence and convince people as well as fight them.

Ask Questions First: Your gamemaster should tell you everything significant that your character sees, but you may have ideas about what you want to know. Don't be afraid to ask for information: is the swordsman looking confident? Is the merchant wearing much gold jewelry? Are the timbers of the ship bright and well kempt, or spotted with age and brine? Is this spaceship well-polished and kept in peak shape, or is it a rust-bucket barely to achieve light speed?

Don't Get Angry Until You Know the Opposition: Skills and characteristics can be extremely high, powers can be almost invisible, and any well-dressed individual may have an army of allies who can raise a whole city to the alarm. Picking a fight with the wrong person is foolish. Wait for good reason, and then fight when it's necessary or unavoidable.

Know Who Your Friends Are, and Keep Them: At times, the adventuring group will seem composed of as many different goals as it has members. If so, at some point your paths may diverge. Despite different alliances, try to roleplay toward

friendship. If your character's personality actively prevents it, then he or she may need new companions.

Have a Believable Ransom: If all else fails, an enemy who has your character at his or her mercy may be diverted from murder by the promise of payment. The key here is believable: the amount promised has to be significant enough to warrant the trouble. If that's done, your character has to have thought of a way to reliably deliver the cash, get out of the clutches of his or her captor, and has to convince the captor that pretty much everything being said is true.

Death is Sometimes Unavoidable: The death of a player character is a sorrowful occasion. It calls for commiseration during play and sympathy when play is done. It happens, however, and play should continue despite the loss. Generally, if your character is killed during the course of play, you should begin choosing and rolling up a new character while play continues, though the gamemaster may call for a break while you get to work on your new adventurer. Alternately, this can be done between sessions, and you can wait on the sidelines and see how the adventure session turns out before starting on a new character. The gamemaster may request that your new character have some connection to the other characters, or even be related to the deceased character, to ease the transition back into the player group. In some cases, the situation where a new character is introduced might affect the choices you can make about a new character, especially if the characters are in another dimension, on a near-deserted island, marooned on a remote space station, or somewhere similarly isolated.

Technician

Specialized in maintaining, repairing, and utilizing complex machinery, computers, or other electronics, you are highly capable at dealing with engineered systems. You do not design these machines, though you possibly know them better than their creators did.

Wealth: Average or Affluent.

Skills: Fine Manipulation, Heavy Machine, Listen, Repair (any), Science (Physics), Research, Spot, Technical (Computer Use), and two other skills from the following list as a specialty, as appropriate to setting and concept: Craft (any), Drive, Pilot (any).

Thief

You take what you want, either to survive or because it appeals to you. You could be a lowly pickpocket, a infamous brigand, or a glamorous international jewel thief. You flaunt the law to steal, either armed, through clever deception, stealth, or some combination of all three.

Wealth: Any, subject to gamemaster's approval.

Skills: Appraise, Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Stealth, and five other skills from the following list, as appropriate to setting and concept: Bargain, Brawl, Climb, Disguise, Fine Manipulation, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Shotgun), Grapple, Insight, Listen, Jump, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Repair (Mechanical), or Spot.

Tribesman

Hailing from a primitive culture, you are an accepted member of a tribe, and are unfamiliar with most of the elements of civilization. You survive through hunting or foraging, and your world is a small one: your village and the surrounding environment.

Wealth: Destitute to Poor, at a tribal-level existence.

Skills: Craft (any), Dodge, Grapple, Hide, Knowledge (Natural History), Spot, Throw, Track, and two of the following skills, as appropriate to setting: Brawl, Climb, First Aid, Listen, Jump, Knowledge (Occult), Melee Weapon (usually Spear or Club), Missile Weapon (Bow), Language (Other), Ride, Stealth, or Swim.

Warrior

You specialize in individual combat, surviving by your reflexes and your weapon-skills. Perhaps you have been instilled with a code of honor like knightly chivalry or *bushido*, or you are a mercenary or barbaric adventurer. Soldiers fight in groups or squads, while warriors look only to their own prowess.

Wealth: Destitute to Average, usually Poor.

Skills: Brawl, Dodge, Grapple, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), and five other skills from the following list as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept: Climb, Firearm (any), Hide, Listen, Jump, Language (Other), Martial Arts, Ride, Spot, Stealth, Swim, Throw, Track.



The warrior-maiden Heija proves that superior technology is no match for a good sword, a skilled swordswoman, and the Fury spell.

Wizard

You understand and can use magic. The secrets of wizardry are at your fingertips after many years of study. Through chant and gesture, you can produce limited or dramatic magical effects, and your life is spent learning additional means of increasing your repertoire of spells and your personal access to power points.

Wealth: Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.

Skills: Craft (any), Insight, Knowledge (Occult), two other Knowledge (any) skills, Language (Other), Listen, Perform (Rituals), Persuade, Research.

Creating New Professions

If this list of professions does not offer an example of a profession you would like your character to follow, with the gamemaster's approval, you can create your own. Gamemasters also might want to devise new professions as part of their world, campaign or game session.

First, you should describe the new profession to the gamemaster. Determine if this new profession is similar to another provided in this book. If the new profession is nearly identical to an existing one, then you can, with the gamemaster's approval, alter a few of the required skills until the new profession matches what your concept. You can vary the Wealth level according to the new profession.

For example, you decide that 'taxi driver' is a new profession. The gamemaster recognizes that this is basically a land-bound version of the Pilot profession. From here, you and the gamemaster choose to modify your character's wealth level from Poor to Average, and amend the skills list to: Bargain, Drive (Automobile), Knowledge (Accounting), Knowledge (Region: the City), Listen, Navigate, Language (Other), Repair (Mechanical), and Spot. Voila, a taxi driver profession!

If you wish to create an entirely new profession:

- ❖ Decide on a title of the profession.
- ❖ Describe (verbally or in writing) the profession to the gamemaster, including they spend their time doing, what training they might have, and maybe an indicator of their position in society.
- ❖ Decide an appropriate wealth level or range of wealth levels.
- ❖ Choose ten skills that are essential or most used by a member of this profession. This can also include a "pick one (or more) from the following" allowance, just as long as the total number of skills is equal to ten.

For example, you might want to play a completely new profession: a professional translator. The gamemaster agrees that this is a unique enough profession to warrant a new write-up. First, you both decide that a translator's wealth level is generally Average. Secondly, for the initial skills, you choose: Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Anthropology), Knowledge (Linguistics), Language (Own), Language (Other), Listen, Persuade, Research, and Teach. The new profession is finished and ready for use.

Special: You are able to use magic, the nature of which should be determined with the gamemaster, using the system set forth in **Chapter Four: Powers**.

Writer

You are a wordsmith, skilled at writing prose, poetry, scripts, or some other medium. You are most comfortable communicating in writing, and your words have the power to entertain, inform, or persuade those who read them.

Wealth: Poor to Wealthy, usually Average.

Skills: Art (writing), Insight, Language (Own), Persuade, Research, and five other skills from the following list as specialties, as appropriate to the setting: Fast Talk, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Listen, Status, or Technical (Computer Use).

Finishing Touches

At this point you're finished with character creation, assuming your gamemaster hasn't allowed magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super powers in the campaign. If there are these sorts of powers, you should turn to **Chapter Four: Powers** and begin selecting those with your gamemaster's assistance.

Background is often an important part of a character, but this is the least quantifiable in game rules. You should try to come up with some elements of experience or identity that drive your character, asking some simple questions such as any of the following:

'Is he or she in love? Who are his or her family? Are they still alive? Is he or she married? Children? What tragedies and successes have he or she experienced? Where did he or she grow up? Is he or she happy in life? Was he or she in the military? Does he or she have many friends? How about enemies? What does your character want to do in the future? Is he or she heroic? Cowardly?'



Demonstrating the use of multiple skills and characteristics, Marie relies on her DEX while dispatching a few goons on the escalator.

You can examine your character sheet and reflect on the choices you've made during character creation. Perhaps some of the skills indicate a personality type, such as studious, eclectic, violent, or some other such adjective. You might try to find the character's 'voice', or some other means of expression that makes them come alive at the gaming table. Not everyone wants to be a method actor, though, and don't feel that you need to come to the table with an in-depth personality and back-story for your character. Some of that will come during the roleplaying experience, and some of it will come naturally as your character is faced with adventure and adversity. The hard part is over—now the fun can begin!



A band of adventurers succeeds through teamwork. The old healing-woman is as important as the skilled warrior outfitted with spear and shield. Leonardo, of the lionfolk, must resist the impulse to eat pesky Cheeto, the ape warrior.

CHAPTER THREE

SKILLS



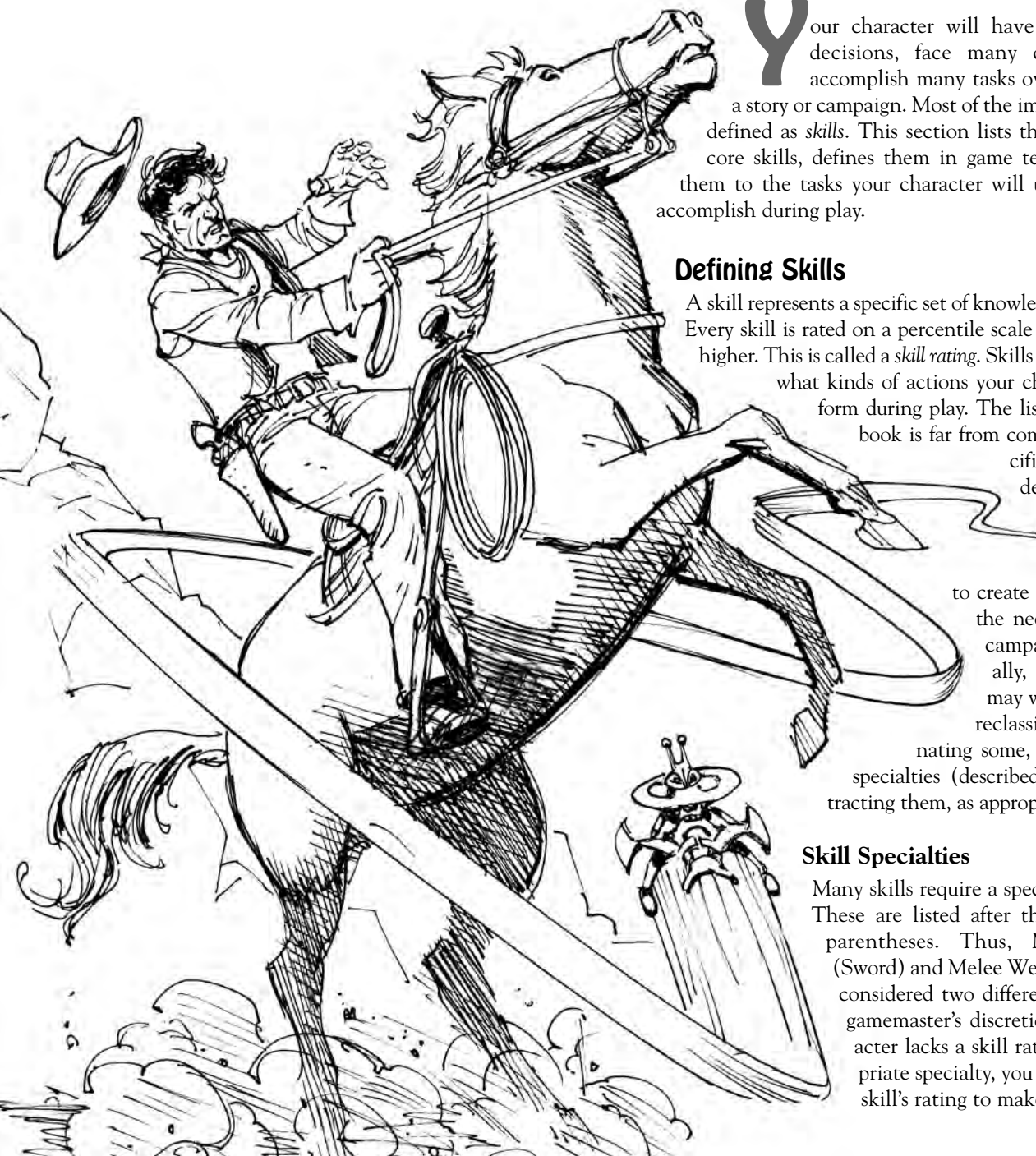
Your character will have to make many decisions, face many challenges, and accomplish many tasks over the course of a story or campaign. Most of the important tasks are defined as *skills*. This section lists the most common core skills, defines them in game terms, and relates them to the tasks your character will use each skill to accomplish during play.

Defining Skills

A skill represents a specific set of knowledge and aptitude. Every skill is rated on a percentile scale from 0 to 100 or higher. This is called a *skill rating*. Skills essentially define what kinds of actions your character can perform during play. The list of skills in this book is far from comprehensive: specific campaigns will demand additional skills, and the gamemaster is encouraged to create new skills to suit the needs of his or her campaign. Additionally, the gamemaster may wish to rename or reclassify skills, eliminating some, and adding new specialties (described below) or subtracting them, as appropriate.

Skill Specialties

Many skills require a specialty be defined. These are listed after the skill name in parentheses. Thus, *Melee Weapon (Sword)* and *Melee Weapon (Spear)* are considered two different skills. At the gamemaster's discretion, if your character lacks a skill rating in an appropriate specialty, you can use a related skill's rating to make skill rolls.



For example, your character can use half of his or her skill rating in Science (Astronomy) to make skill rolls that would normally require Science (Physics) or Science (Mathematics).

However, this astronomical acumen is useless if the gamemaster calls for a Science (Biology) or Knowledge (History) skill roll.

Using Skills

Whenever your character wishes to take an action or accomplish a task where the outcome is in doubt, you must declare the desired action, and the gamemaster will call for a D100 roll against the appropriate skill rating. In general terms, a D100 roll under the modified skill rating grants success at the task, while a roll higher than the rating fails.

The difficulty of the task or other circumstantial modifiers can adjust a skill's rating up or down. The difficulty modifiers are *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (the skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to the skill), *Difficult* (the skill is halved), and *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the gamemaster's discretion). See "Modifying Action Rolls" on page 175 for more information. If no modifier is indicated, assume the roll is at *Average* difficulty.

In most cases, the appropriate skill for a given action will be obvious. Unforeseen circumstances, however, can lead to new uses of a skill. You are encouraged to find alternative applications of your character's skills, but all such skill uses must meet with the gamemaster's approval.

While many skills are oriented towards actions, they could also indicate general knowledge of the kinds of tasks governed by that skill, at the gamemaster's discretion. *For example, if your character is a warrior in a medieval setting, he or she might use the Melee Weapon (Sword) skill instead of Appraise to judge a sword's quality, or to recognize another warrior by reputation.*

Secret or Concealed Skill Rolls

The gamemaster may also make skill rolls for your character, in cases where the gamemaster either does not want you to know the outcome of the skill roll or that a skill roll is being made at all. The gamemaster may wish to keep a copy of your character sheet on hand, or may ask you for a list of your character's current values of relevant skills (particularly Perception skills) so secret rolls can be made without alerting you and the other players that your characters might be missing something when the skill rolls fail. This method allows the gamemaster to use failed rolls to potentially mislead or misdirect you, which is a useful tactic for Perception or Mental-based rolls.

Some of the more obvious skill rolls that may be performed in secret, or without you being aware of the outcome, are as follows: Appraise, Art, Bargain, Command, Craft, Disguise, Etiquette, Fast Talk,

Gaming, Hide, Insight, Knowledge, Language, Listen, Literacy, Medicine, Navigate, Perform, Persuade, Psychotherapy, Research, Science, Sense, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Status, Stealth, Strategy, Teach, Technical Skill, and Track. Other skills may also be performed secretly, depending on the circumstances.

These rolls do not have to be altogether secretive, and the gamemaster may tell you that a roll is being made against a particular skill. Depending on play styles, you and the gamemaster may choose to make hidden rolls where you roll the dice in an area where you cannot see how they land, such as behind a gamemaster screen or other concealing object.

If the skill is successfully made, the gamemaster should tell you that your character has successfully used the appropriate skill and allow an experience check, if applicable. If the skill roll is failed, the gamemaster should inform, misinform, or refrain from informing you (and your character) of the relevant information, as appropriate.

Skill Categories

All skills are divided into six skill categories:

- ❖ **Combat Skills** measure proficiency with specific weapons and combat maneuvers.
- ❖ **Communication Skills** govern conversation, reading, and interpersonal exchanges.
- ❖ **Manipulation Skills** define tasks that require precise hand-eye coordination.
- ❖ **Mental Skills** measure specific knowledge and individual judgment.
- ❖ **Perception Skills** gather and interpret information from the environment.
- ❖ **Physical Skills** govern feats of strength, agility, and athletics.

Skill categories serve as general guides to the kinds of tasks a skill can accomplish, as well as offering a framework for you and the gamemaster to create new skills. Skill categories tie your character's skill ratings to their most influential characteristic scores through category bonuses, an optional system.

New Skills

There are some blank lines for additional skills on the character sheet. These are for new skills the gamemaster may choose to introduce into the game. *For example, Chapter Four: Powers introduces an optional new skill called Projection, used in conjunction with many powers.* You can suggest new skills, but only the gamemaster

OPTION

Skill Category Bonuses

As described in “Skill Category Bonuses” on page 31, at the gamemaster’s option, your character receives a bonus or penalty to skill categories based upon his or her characteristic scores. Apply the category bonus to every skill in that category, in addition to the listed base chance, if any, as listed in the skill description. See the Skill Category Bonus Table on page 31 for the formulas used to calculate skill category bonuses.

should be allowed to define the skill and authorize its use in the campaign.

Changing the Skill List

Just as easily as you and the gamemaster can create new skills, your gamemaster can rename skills to suit a setting more accurately. *For example, Fine Manipulation may be renamed Devise or Pick Lock for a medieval or fantasy environment.* Your gamemaster may also choose to eliminate certain skills altogether, if they do not fit his or her style of gaming. It is highly recommended that any such changes be performed before character creation and the changes made readily available, so you do not inadvertently select skills that may be phased out or changed by the gamemaster.

Base Chances

Any reasonably healthy and normal person can swing a club, climb a tree, or speak his or her native tongue. Every skill, therefore, has a base chance associated with it: your character is assumed to have this basic rating in the skill before any additional skill points are added. If skill category bonuses (see above) are being used, add (or subtract) them from a skill’s base chance.

A skill’s base chance depends greatly upon the era of a campaign: characters in a campaign set in medieval Europe have higher base ratings in Knowledge (Religion) than modern U.S. citizens, while U.S. citizens might have an advantage in Medical skills due to rudimentary first aid training in public schools and the workplace. Each skill description lists several base chances for different eras, as appropriate. The gamemaster should feel free to alter the base chances for skills to suit different campaigns.

Measuring Skill Ratings

Your character’s skill ratings define his or her capabilities during play. But what does a given skill rating mean in more general terms? You and the gamemaster should use the following guidelines to gauge your

character’s proficiency. Additionally, guidelines are provided as to when rolls would be required—under routine conditions, characters at a certain level of competence can regularly perform these skills without needing to roll for success.

05% or less: Novice. A character with a skill rating this low is a complete amateur, and has little hope of succeeding even at *Easy* tasks. At this low level of competency, you should roll each time you wish for your character to attempt this skill, regardless of whether in a stress-filled situation or routine under ideal circumstances.

06–25%: Neophyte: A character with ratings in this range is either a beginner or has a small amount of knowledge of the subject at hand. The phrase ‘knows enough to be dangerous’ applies well here, your char-

Skill List by Category

A complete list of skills divided by category follows. Each entry also lists the page of that skill’s full description.

CombatPage	MentalPage
Artillery (various)52	Appraise50
Brawl52	First Aid58
Energy Weapon (various) ..56	Gaming60
Firearm (various)58	Knowledge (various)64
Grapple60	Literacy (optional)67
Heavy Weapon (various) ..62	Medicine69
Martial Arts68	Psychotherapy72
Melee Weapon (various) ..69	Science (various)75
Missile Weapon (various) ..70	Strategy80
Parry (various)70	Technical Skill (various) ..82
Shield78	
CommunicationPage	PerceptionPage
Bargain52	Insight63
Command53	Listen67
Disguise55	Navigate70
Etiquette (various)56	Research74
Fast Talk57	Sense77
Language (specific)66	Spot78
Perform71	Track83
Persuade71	
Status79	PhysicalPage
Teach82	Climb52
	Dodge55
	Drive (various)55
	Fly59
ManipulationPage	Hide62
Art (various)50	Jump63
Craft (various)54	Pilot (various)72
Demolition54	Projection72
Fine Manipulation57	Ride (various)75
Heavy Machine (various) ..62	Stealth80
Repair (various)73	Swim81
Sleight of Hand78	Throw83

acter will get lucky enough to succeed once in a while, and may become overconfident as a result. You should have to roll whenever your character attempts this skill, even if the task is *Easy*.

26–50%: Amateur. Ratings in this range indicate a little talent, some rudimentary training, or hobby-level dabbling in a skill. Your character is barely qualified, and is usually entrusted with *Automatic* or *Easy* tasks. A high school education could impart ratings at the low end of this range. At this level of competency, in non-stressful situations your character can perform routine activities relating to the skill without needing to roll.

51–75%: Professional. A 50% rating in a skill allows your character to make a living using that skill. At the professional skill rating, your character does not need to worry about failing *Easy* tasks, and is experienced or proficient enough to serve as a leader or manager of others. A 50% rating is roughly equal to a bachelor's degree in a specific discipline. Most skills cannot be raised above 75% through education or training alone: your character must advance further through practical use. At this skill rating, most of the time your character can perform routine or even complex activities relating to the skill and you are only required to roll when there is an element of risk, or when the chance of failure is dramatic.

76–90%: Expert. Skills in this range indicate advanced expertise in a given field: your character has

a reasonable chance to succeed even at *Difficult* tasks. Few people ever attain such mastery of a given skill, and those that do are respected and relied upon for their expertise. Skills in this range correspond to an advanced degree (Masters or Ph.D.), or many years of experience. Most average characters cannot begin play with any skill higher than 75%. With this skill rating, your character should be able to perform complex and difficult actions relating to this skill under routine circumstances.

91% or higher: Master. Only a handful of true geniuses attain this level of mastery. Only the most difficult tasks are beyond their abilities, and their expertise has likely made these masters famous or legendary, either within their field or in the world at large. When your character has this rating in the skill, in routine situations he or she is able to perform miracles, and you will rarely need to roll the dice except at most difficult of tasks or in dire situations. If the optional Sanity rules are being used in a campaign, attaining a 90% rating in a skill restores 2D6 SAN points, representing the self-confidence and discipline associated with mastering a skill. If your character begins with this skill rating or higher, there is no corresponding SAN gain.

Skill Ratings Above 100%

Your character's experience bonus (described on page 30) makes it possible (if unlikely) to raise his or her skill ratings above 100%. Skills higher than 100% use the standard systems to compute the chances of special or critical successes, as well as offering better odds of success at *Difficult* tasks or in the face of negative circumstantial modifiers. Additionally, if your character has a combat skill higher than 100%, he or she can take multiple attacks in a combat round, as described in "Attacks and Parries Over 100%" on page 198.

OPTION

Acting Without Skill

Sometimes your character will need to attempt an action even though he or she lacks any skill rating in the skill, and when the skill's base chance is 0%. If the gamemaster deems that the task is not simply impossible, he or she may allow a roll with any of the following conditions:

Category Bonus: If the gamemaster is using the optional skill category system, simply use the category bonus of that skill's category.

Wild Chance: The gamemaster could allow a D100 roll with a 1% chance of success, or a straight roll of POW x 1 as a chance of success if luck is more a deciding factor than inspired improvisation.

Wits and Talent: If the gamemaster is willing to give your character a fighting chance, he or she can allow an INT x 1 roll. If that roll is successful, your character may make a second roll based on his or her primary characteristic of that skill's category: use DEX x 1 for Combat, Manipulation, or Physical skills, and INT x 1 for Communication, Mental, and Perception skills.

Skill Descriptions

A comprehensive, alphabetical list of skills follows. Each entry on the list contains the following information:

Skill Name: The name of the skill.

Base Chance: The skill rating all characters have in the skill, specialized by era if applicable.

Category: The skill category the skill falls into, for purposes of general classification and optional category bonuses.

Description: A brief description of the kinds of tasks that can be accomplished using the skill.

Specialties: A listing of the skill's distinct specialties, if any. Not all skills with specialties have them elaborated upon in a bulleted list—only those that are more mechanical in nature, such as Combat skills, are detailed in this manner.

Effects: The results of a skill roll, for each degree of success. In brief, a skill result is a *fumble* (the worst possible result, usually a roll of 99 or 00), a *failure* (a roll above your skill rating), a *success* (below your skill rating), a *special success* (1/5 or less of your skill rating), or a *critical success* (1/20 of your skill rating).

Chapter Five: System explains this in detail.

System Notes: Specific rules or systems that pertain to the skill, if any. In some cases, one skill may provide a temporary bonus to another skill, usually in the amount of 1/5 of the skill rating. Such addition is only on a temporary skill roll basis, and is not a permanent increase of the skill. Any successful use of the skill should only gain an experience check for the primary skill being used, not the one providing the bonus.

Setting Notes: Additional information about how the skill is handled in different settings.

OPTION

Complementary Skills

Some skills are closely related to other skills, and expertise in one area often yields benefits in another. With the gamemaster's permission, your character may temporarily add 1/5 of your rating in a complementary skill to your rating in another skill for skill rolls. Many complementary uses are noted in the skill descriptions that follow. Players will doubtless devise more.

Only one skill may be complementary to another for any given roll. If multiple skills may be applicable for this bonus, these temporary skill rating bonuses do not stack—the player and gamemaster should choose the highest bonus to use, or whichever is most appropriate to the situation at hand.

For example, your character has a Medicine skill of 65% and a Science (Pharmacy) of 40%. He or she is attempting to treat a diseased patient. As long as your character has sufficient medical supplies and medications available, he or she can add 8% (1/5 of his or her Science (Pharmacy) rating) to the Medicine skill rating, for a modified rating of 73%. Your character cannot add 1/5 of his First Aid or Science (Biology) skill on top of the Pharmacy bonus. In this case, the gamemaster rules that the Science (Pharmacy) skill is the most appropriate for the bonus.

Appraise

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Mental

Successful use of this skill allows your character to estimate an object's worth, be it an old painting, a gemstone, a weapon, or a riding horse.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character reaches a patently false conclusion: he or she will sell priceless art as junk, or pay top price for fool's gold.

FAILURE: Your character cannot discern the value of the appraised object, and can only guess within the broadest range.

SUCCESS: Your character gains a good idea of the object's worth (within 20%).

SPECIAL: Your character knows exactly how much the object is worth.

CRITICAL: Your character knows exactly how much the object is worth, and learns one important fact about the object (who made it, where it was made, etc.).

Setting Notes: This skill is prevalent in almost any setting or era.

System Notes: Your character's expertise in other fields has a direct bearing on his or her ability to Appraise: if your character's rating in a skill related to the object is 75% or higher, he or she can add 1/5 of that skill's rating as a temporary bonus to the Appraisal skill rating. The gamemaster should determine when this bonus applies.

For example, if your character has Science (Astronomy) 80%, and is called on to evaluate the worth of an ancient astrolabe or jewel-encrusted orrery, he or she would be able to apply this bonus.

Art (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

This skill measures aptitude in the visual or literary arts. Use it to create a work of art in paint or sculpture, or to compose a story, poem, or musical work. Use the Perform skill for acting, dancing, singing, or playing a musical instrument.

Specialties: Architecture, Calligraphy, Conceptual Art, Fresco, Oil Painting, Photography, Sculpture, Sketch, Stained Glass, and others.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: The finished work is severely flawed, and will damage your character's reputation as an artist if the work circulates or becomes known. Your character suffers

Alphabetical Skill List

For ease of reference, an alphabetized list of all skills in this section follows. Each entry lists the category of the skill, its base chance, as well as a page reference.

Skill	Category	Base %	Page
Appraise	Mental	15%	50
Art (various)	Manipulation	05%	50
Artillery (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	52
Bargain	Communication	05%	52
Brawl	Combat	25%	52
Climb	Physical	40%	52
Command	Communication	05%	53
Craft (various)	Manipulation	05%	54
Demolition	Manipulation	01%	54
Disguise	Communication	01%	55
Dodge	Physical	DEX x 2	55
Drive (various)	Physical	20% or 01%	55
Energy Weapon (var.)	Combat	per weapon specialty	56
Etiquette (various)	Communication	05%	56
Fast Talk	Communication	05%	57
Fine Manipulation	Manipulation	05%	57
Firearm (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	58
First Aid	Mental	30% or INT x 1	58
Fly	Physical	1/2 DEX or DEX x 4	59
Gaming	Mental	INT + POW	60
Grapple	Combat	25%	60
Heavy Machine (var.)	Manipulation	01%	62
Heavy Weapon (var.)	Combat	per weapon specialty	62
Hide	Physical	10%	62
Insight	Perception	05%	63
Jump	Physical	25%	63

Knowledge (various)	Mental	05% or 01%	64
Language (specific)	Communication	Own INT (or EDU) x 5	66
		Other 00%	
Listen	Perception	25%	66
Literacy (optional)	Mental	00%	67
Martial Arts	Combat	01%	68
Medicine	Mental	05% or 00%	69
Melee Weapon (var.)	Combat	per weapon specialty	69
Missile Weapon (var.)	Combat	per weapon specialty	70
Navigate	Perception	10%	70
Parry (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty	70
Perform	Communication	05%	71
Persuade	Communication	15%	71
Pilot (various)	Physical	01%	72
Projection	Physical	DEX x 2	72
Psychotherapy	Mental	01% or 00%	72
Repair (various)	Manipulation	15%	73
Research	Perception	25%	74
Ride (various)	Physical	05%	75
Science (various)	Mental	01%	75
Sense	Perception	10%	77
Shield	Combat	per shield	78
Sleight of Hand	Manipulation	05%	78
Spot	Perception	25%	78
Status	Communication	15% or various	79
Stealth	Physical	10%	80
Strategy	Mental	01%	80
Swim	Physical	25%	81
Teach	Communication	10%	82
Technical Skill (various)	Mental	00%, 01%, or 05%	82
Throw	Physical	25%	83
Track	Perception	10%	83

a -10% penalty to all Communications skills used among his or her intended audience for 1D6 months. If the work was intended to draw an emotional response from its audience, the work evokes the opposite response.

FAILURE: The finished work is flawed, displays no talent, and cannot be sold for money.

SUCCESS: The finished work provides an accurate depiction of what the artist intended to represent. Such a work could be sold for a modest price.

SPECIAL: The finished work is regarded as extraordinary. It accomplishes exactly what your character intended. It draws a high price and wins your character the respect of peers and authorities in the field.

CRITICAL: The created work is considered a masterpiece, and not only provides an exact representation of what your character intended to depict, but also evokes an intense emotional response from its audience; awe, wonder, sadness, or whatever else your character intends. Such works can command exorbitant prices, and can win public fame for your character. Your character gains a

bonus equal to POW on all Communication rolls with his or her intended audience for 1D6 months.

Setting Notes: The Art skill is universal to all settings, though some specialties (Cave Painting, 3D Graphics) are specific to appropriate times or settings.

System Notes: Each specialty of the Art skill requires specific tools and materials, which your character must have before he or she can attempt to create a work of art. The amount of time it takes to use this skill is widely variable, from minutes (a pencil sketch) to weeks or even years (for an epic novel or massive work of paint or sculpture). You and the gamemaster should determine cost and time requirements for the Art skill on a case-by-case basis. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character may use 1/5 his or her Art skill rating as a temporary bonus to an appropriate Craft skill.

For example, if your character is a sculptor who works in bronze, he or she should know a lot about ordinary metallurgy and would gain this skill bonus.

Artillery (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty (see “Weapon Classes” on page 268)

Category: Combat

Any weapon too large for a single person to move or use falls under the purview of this skill. Use the Artillery skill to fire massive field pieces and heavy vehicular weapons.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon types. See page 265 in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for a list of Artillery weapon types.

Effects: See the “Attack and Defense Matrix” on page 193 and the “Missile Weapon Fumble Table” on page 194 for specific effects. The type of artillery round being used will determine what the appropriate special effect is, though bleeding, crushing, impaling, and knockback are all possible. See page 268 for details.

Setting Notes: This skill is suitable for many settings, ranging from siege engines of historical or fantasy settings to modern or futuristic artillery and vehicular weapons. In most settings, a military background is required to learn this skill.

System Notes: Many large weapons require a crew to operate; attempting to man one alone is a *Difficult* action, or may be impossible at the gamemaster’s discretion. It may take multiple rounds or even turns to load and prepare a weapon system between shots. Many large weapons employ automatic fire, or shoot explosive ordnance. See the “Autofire” spot rules on page 214, and “Explosions” on page 222. All shots go somewhere; the gamemaster should decide where missed explosive or energy shots impact.

Bargain

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

This skill governs negotiation and compromise. Bargain is often (but not always) used to haggle over prices, but can be used whenever opposing opinions meet in negotiation. Use opposed skill rolls to decide important negotiations, and simple skill rolls for trivial attempts (saving money on equipment or lodgings, for example). Bargaining is about compromise: use Fast Talk or Persuade to resolve arguments that are absolutely won or lost.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character gets nothing out of the bargain, and blunders so badly that he or she suffers an additional complication—being thrown out of a store or arrested, or earning the enmity of the other party. Items are bought or

sold at up to 50% loss (50% cost if the seller fumbles, 150% cost if the buyer fumbles).

FAILURE: Your character gets very little out of the bargain, and is forced to yield most of his or her desired points. Items are bought or sold at up to 25% loss (75% cost if the seller fails, 125% cost if the buyer fails).

SUCCESS: Your character gets everything he or she wants from the bargain, without having to give up anything he or she wasn’t prepared to part with. Items are bought or sold at the standard price.

SPECIAL: Your character gets everything he or she wants from the bargain, without having to give up anything at all. Items are bought or sold at up to 25% profit (75% cost if the buyer wins, 125% cost if the seller wins).

CRITICAL: Your character gets more than what he or she wanted or expected from the bargain, and gains some other unexpected benefit; perhaps a close friendship with the other party or a recurring discount. Items are bought or sold at up to 50% profit (50% cost if the buyer wins, 150% cost if the seller wins).

Setting Notes: This skill is universal to all settings, though bargaining may be inappropriate in some cultures or circumstances. Note that in most modern settings, prices are strictly set and bargaining is not possible: getting a refund or discount after the fact requires the Fast Talk or Persuade skill.

Brawl

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Combat

Use this skill for unarmed combat: kicks, punches, head butts, etc.

Effects: See the “Attack and Defense Matrix” on page 193 and the “Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumble Table” on page 195 for specific effects.

Setting Notes: This skill is prevalent in almost any setting or era.

System Notes: Brawling can be used to parry (see “Parry” on page 191 for more information), but a successful parry inflicts minimum weapon damage on the parrying arm or leg, as appropriate. Using Brawl against a foe that has grappled your character (see the Grapple skill on page 60) is an *Easy* action. This skill is also used in conjunction with the Martial Arts skill on page 68 and can be used in with the Natural Weapon and Unarmed Combat powers from **Chapter Four: Powers**.

Climb

Base Chance: 40%

Category: Physical

Your character will use this skill to climb up or down walls, trees, cliffs, or any other surface. Ample hand and



*Complex problems often have simple solutions:
use Bargain, Fast Talk, or Brawl.*

footholds are assumed to be present: gamemasters can modify the difficulty of the skill roll based on the surface being climbed, or conditions.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character falls, taking damage based on the distance fallen as described in "Falling" on page 223.

FAILURE: Your character is unable to find sufficient hand or footholds. He or she keeps the current position, but can climb no further this round.

SUCCESS: Your character climbs two meters upwards this round. Your character can climb faster, taking a -10% penalty to his or her skill rating for each additional meter climbed, to a maximum of 1/3 SIZ in meters. Climbing costs 5 DEX ranks.

SPECIAL: Your character climbs three meters in the combat round. Your next Climb roll is at +10%.

CRITICAL: Your character climbs three meters in the combat round. If your character continues climbing next round, he or she receives a +25% bonus to his or her next Climb roll.

Setting Notes: This skill is prevalent in almost any setting or era.

System Notes: Climbing ladders or trees with many branches is an *Easy* action. Climbing without using your character's feet is a *Difficult* action. Characters or beings whose SIZ are greater than 20 are able to climb

an additional meter per round. For extended climbs, the gamemaster should call for a skill roll once every minute, or 10 meters of climbing. Your character can take no other action while climbing, and all actions taken while clinging to a climbed surface (a cliff face, tree, etc.) are *Difficult* actions, with any fumble causing a fall.

Command

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

Leaders use this skill to inspire, direct, and coordinate subordinates, guiding them in complex tasks and improving the effectiveness of the group as a whole. Military officers, noblemen, politicians, and business executives are made or broken based on their ability to manage and lead. Personality, a strong voice, and an iron will are invaluable tools of command.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Gaffes or social blunders completely demoralize subordinates. If they do not mutiny or rebel, the subordinates' efforts are hampered by jangled nerves or conflicting directives. All of your subordinates' appropriate tasks become *Difficult* until you can make a successful Command roll, or for 1D6+1 combat rounds.

FAILURE: Instructions are unclear, or your character's demeanor is uninspiring. Subordinates hamper each other's work, and make skill checks at a -5% penalty per subordinate (for example, five subordinates are at a -25% penalty) for the first 1D4 combat rounds of the conflict.

SUCCESS: The subordinates are able to function as a team, using their skills to accomplish the task at hand. All skill checks are made normally.

SPECIAL: A rousing speech brings out the best in your character's subordinates. All skill checks are made with a percentage bonus equal to your character's POW for the first 1D4 combat rounds of the conflict.

CRITICAL: Your character's iron will or sterling example truly inspires his or her subordinates. All appropriate tasks performed by your character's subordinates become *Easy* for 1D4 the first combat rounds of the conflict. Further successes with this skill in a particular combat engagement do not gain this bonus again.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings.

System Notes: This skill is used in dealing with non-player characters, not player characters. Player characters will not receive this bonus. Your character can attempt to command a number of non-player subordinates equal to his or her POW. Directly commanding an additional POW multiple of subordinates (or a fraction thereof) incurs a -5% skill penalty.

For example, a leader with a POW of 12 could command up to 36 troops at a -10% penalty (-5% x 2 multiples of 12).

Commanding subordinates who are not in your character's direct presence (via phone or radio, for example) is a *Difficult* action. This skill can also be used as an aid in making aura attacks (see "Aura Attacks" on page 214). The gamemaster should determine what tasks are affected by this skill, with Artillery, Heavy Weapon, Melee Weapon, Missile Weapon, and Strategy are the most appropriate skills to receive this benefit.

Craft (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

Constructing or making anything, from a chair to a meal to a house, requires use of a specific Craft skill. Specialized tools are often required to use this skill, and making things takes time and raw materials. The Craft skill deals with function and practicality: fashioning objects that are aesthetically pleasing falls under the Art skill. This skill can also be used to identify how an object was made, and possibly identify the craftsman who made it.

Specialties: Blacksmithing, Carpentry, Ceramics, Cooking, Leatherworking, Locksmithing, Metallurgy, Stonemasonry, and others as appropriate.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: The crafted item seems to be well-made, but breaks or fails the first time it is used. Fumbled cooking attempts make the diners sick unless they make successful Stamina rolls.

FAILURE: The object being made is obviously flawed. Your character must start over.

SUCCESS: The object is constructed well, and will function or sell for full price.

SPECIAL: The object is well made, receiving one of the following (gamemaster discretion): a bonus equal to +1 to damage or one of the item's characteristics; a +5% to a single skill possessed by the item; or +5% to an appropriate skill chance when the item is used, as if it were a piece of good equipment. The object's base cost increases by +50%.

CRITICAL: The object is a masterpiece: one of its characteristics receives one of the following (gamemaster discretion): a bonus equal to +3 to damage or to one of the item's characteristics; +15% to a single skill possessed by the item; or +15% to an appropriate skill chance when the item is used, as if it were a piece of superior equipment. The object's base cost is doubled.

Setting Notes: This skill is available in all eras, though specific specialties will vary based on setting. Blacksmiths, though common in historic or fantasy settings,

are extremely rare in modern games, and nonexistent in future settings.

System Notes: Using Craft without the proper tools is a *Difficult* action. Consult **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more information about making, modifying, or repairing equipment.

Demolition

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Manipulation

The purview of engineers, commandos, mad bombers, and safe crackers, this skill governs the storage, transport, and detonation of explosives, from kegs of gunpowder to dynamite, Molotov cocktails, advanced plastic explosives, and anti-matter bombs. Anyone can simply set off a bomb: this skill allows your character to achieve a specific effect with the explosion; collapse a building safely; destroy a bridge; open a safe without harming the contents. Demolition also covers knowledge of appropriate accessories for explosives, including primer cord, fuses, and detonators. Use Science (Chemistry) to produce explosive compounds.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Something goes terribly wrong: a detonator explodes in your character's hand (2D6 damage to the appropriate arm), or the charge goes off too early (normal explosion damage to all within the radius).

FAILURE: Either the charge fails to detonate, the explosion fails to destroy the target, or too much damage is done and the desired effect is lost.

SUCCESS: The explosion goes off as planned, doing normal damage. Your character must make a Luck roll to see if any special desired effect (harmless building collapse, door opening, etc.) happens.

SPECIAL: The explosion goes off as planned. Special desired effects happen automatically (probably the knock-back special success, see page 197 for more detail).

CRITICAL: The explosion goes off as planned, ignoring any of the target's armor protection.

Setting Notes: Any setting more advanced than the Stone Age can use this skill, although the particular explosives available will vary from setting to setting.

System Notes: Most normal uses of this skill automatically succeed if the character attempting the demolition has a skill of 60% or higher. If your character is using unstable explosives (sweaty dynamite or the like), gamemasters can call for a Demolition (or DEX x 1%, whichever is higher) roll any time your character even handles them, with fumbles having disastrous results. Demolishing a massive structure (bridge, dam, bunker, or building) is a *Difficult* task unless your character has

access to blueprints or plans of the target. Trying to use this skill without appropriate tools (fuses, etc.), or using explosives outside your character's normal field of expertise may be *Difficult* or even *Impossible*, at the gamemaster's discretion.

For example, a character skilled in black powder explosives may be at a disadvantage with advanced plastique explosives.

Some types of explosives such as grenades might be used without this skill. See **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for explosives and their effects.

Disguise

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Communication

By using this skill, your character employs posture, costume, voice, and other tricks to seem like a different person, or a different kind of person. Dim light, theatrical makeup, and significant facial alterations (a haircut or wig, false beards or a quick shave) can add up to a +25% bonus, at the gamemaster's discretion. Onlookers who scrutinize your disguised character or engage him or her in conversation can make and opposed Spot or Insight skill check against your character's Disguise to see through the ruse. Your disguised character can use his or her Fast Talk skill for the opposed check if he or she engages the onlooker in conversation.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: The disguise fails miserably. Your character fools no-one with the ruse. Even worse, casual onlookers are convinced that your character is suspicious and up to no good, and will immediately investigate, confront the character, or call in authorities.

FAILURE: The disguise has significant flaws. Onlookers will not believe your disguised character is who or what he or she claims to be, though they may not act on their suspicions.

SUCCESS: The disguise holds, and your character passes for the person or type of person being impersonated.

SPECIAL: Your character does such a good job with the impersonation that he or she gains a +10% bonus on any opposed checks to pierce the disguise.

CRITICAL: As above, but any attempt to pierce the disguise is considered a *Difficult* action. The bonus to opposed checks increases to +25%.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings. In modern or futuristic settings advanced tools and

make-up may provide a bonus to the skill rating, at the gamemaster's discretion.

System Notes: Using this skill to impersonate a particular kind of person (soldier, policeman, etc.) is a standard action. Impersonating someone vastly different (different species, someone much taller or shorter, member of the opposite gender) or a specific person (the King, the President, etc.), or attempting a disguise without appropriate clothing or props is a *Difficult* action. Gamemasters may assign additional penalties to your character's skill if he or she must overcome cultural or language barriers, or if multiple *Difficult* conditions apply.

Dodge

Base Chance: DEX x 2

Category: Physical

The best defense in combat, as any combatant knows, is to not be there. Dodge allows your character to evade incoming attacks, using agility to avoid or minimize injury.

Effects: A successful Dodge roll modifies the result of a successful attack, turning it into a failure. A special result for a Dodge roll modifies an attack two steps (a special success becomes a failure), and a critical success on a Dodge roll modifies a successful attack three steps (a critical attack becomes a failure). See the Attack and Defense Matrix on page 193 and the "Natural Weapons Attack and Parry Fumble Table" on page 195 for specific effects. A successful Dodge roll cannot reduce an incoming attack's success lower than "failure".

Setting Notes: This skill is universal.

System Notes: As described in "Dodge" on page 191, your character may either Dodge or Parry in a combat round, but cannot do both. If your character is beset by many foes, he or she may make multiple Dodge attempts in a round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative -30% penalty to the skill rating. Some types of missile attacks are *Difficult* or *Impossible* to dodge: see "Dodging Missile Weapons" on page 198 for more information.

Drive (various)

Base Chance: 20% (common vehicles), 01% (uncommon)

Category: Manipulation

Drive allows your character to steer, maneuver, and control a ground vehi-



Your character can either Parry or Dodge each round, in addition to performing one Action. Lacking armor, Dodge seems the better choice.

cle, whether pulled by animals or powered by some kind of internal engine.

Specialties: Automobile, Carriage or Cart, Chariot, Dog Sled, Truck, Sleigh, and other vehicles as appropriate to setting.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character loses control of the vehicle, going into a spin or swerve. Your character must make a successful Luck roll to avoid hitting an obstacle, bystander, or another vehicle. See “Chases” on pages 216-217 for details of collisions. Even if your character does not crash, his or her next Drive check is made at -20%, and he or she may draw additional complications; pursuit by police, the wrath of another driver, etc.

FAILURE: Your character fails to make the desired maneuver, or runs into some other kind of trouble. Consult the Trouble Table in “Chases” on page 217 for possible mishaps.

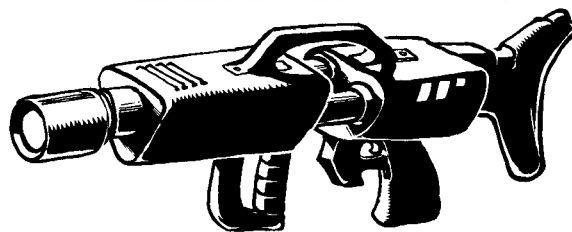
SUCCESS: Your character completes the desired maneuver, or holds his or her position in a chase. See “Chases” on pages 216-217 for more information about maneuvers.

SPECIAL: Your character easily completes the desired maneuver, and gains a bonus of +10% to his or her next Drive roll.

CRITICAL: Steely nerves and expert reflexes push the vehicle to the limits of its performance. Your character completes the desired maneuver, and gains a bonus of +25% to his or her next Drive roll.

Setting Notes: In any setting before the modern era, animal-drawn vehicles were the norm, and such vehicles have a base 20% Drive rating. A character from an earlier era attempting to drive a modern automobile finds the task baffling, and has only a 01% base chance. Conversely, drivers used to self-powered vehicles (with a base 20% for cars or trucks) are bewildered by motivating an animal, and have only a 01% base chance for carriages and carts. This supercedes the normal rules, as described in “Skill Specialties” on page 46.

System Notes: Most day to day driving is an automatic task—the gamemaster should call for a Drive roll only under adverse conditions or for extraordinary driving (speeding through a busy downtown area, chasing another vehicle, etc.). To tail another vehicle without being noticed, use an opposed Drive check, perhaps with the opposed characters’ skills modified by their Spot or Stealth ratings as appropriate. Adverse conditions can impose penalties of up to -25% to a Drive check. To resolve vehicle chases, consult “Chases” on pages 216-217.



Energy Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty (see “Weapon Classes” starting on page 257).

Category: Combat

This skill measures your character’s accuracy with any kind of directed energy or beam weapon (lasers, blasters, disruptors, etc.).

Specialties: Energy Pistol, Energy Rifle. Specialties are equivalent to weapon types. See page 256 in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for a list of energy weapon types.

Effects: See the “Attack and Defense Matrix” on page 193 and the “Missile Weapon Fumble Table” on page 194 for specific effects. Energy weapons usually do impaling special effects (see page 196 for more detail).

Setting Notes: Energy weapons only appear in futuristic settings. Any character from a culture too primitive to have developed energy weapons must make a *Difficult* Idea roll to figure out how to use the weapon. Failures or fumbles can be disastrous, to the weapon or the user! In most settings, a military background is required to learn this skill.

System Notes: Some energy weapons have a minimum STR and DEX requirement to use the weapon, as displayed in the weapons tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. Energy weapons never grant your character’s damage bonus to damage. Your characters can use energy weapons to employ aimed shots, as described in “Aimed Attacks” on page 212. Energy weapons cannot be dodged, though target movement and orientation can impose penalties to the shot, as described in “Dodging Missile Weapons” on page 198. Blocking energy shots is a *Difficult* action using the Shield skill.

Etiquette (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

All social castes or special groups have their own codes of conduct, defining what is or isn’t acceptable behavior. Use this skill whenever your character needs to behave appropriately, whether he or she is attending a Victorian dinner party, an important job interview, or joining a mafia family. Proper dress, modes of speech, specific behaviors, and even eye contact or trials by combat can all play a part in a group’s etiquette. Etiquette rolls might be required to gain an audience

with an important non-player character, and should accompany any requests made of that character.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character commits major gaffes, and manages to offend most people present. He or she is probably ejected from the current gathering, and suffers a -10% penalty to all Communication skill checks made among that group or circle for 1D6 months.

FAILURE: Your character commits minor blunders, damaging his or her reputation. He or she suffers a -10% penalty to all Communication skill tests made among that group or circle for the rest of the scene.

SUCCESS: Your character comports him- or herself well, and acts perfectly acceptably, if ordinary. Communications skills are not affected.

SPECIAL: Extraordinary manners make a good impression. Your character gets a +10% bonus to all Communication skills made among the group or circle for the rest of the scene.

CRITICAL: An exemplary display of etiquette boosts your character's reputation. Your character gets a +25% bonus to all Communication skills made among the group or circle for 1D6 months.

Setting Notes: This skill can be used in all settings, though some settings and eras will make much more use of the skill than others.

System Notes: Each specialty in this skill applies to a single social class or group. If your character wants to learn the manners of a second group, he or she may need to learn a second Etiquette skill. Gamemasters should only call for Etiquette rolls in important circumstances: *for example, the first time your character interacts with an important group or any time he or she is trying to advance personal status within a group.*

Fast Talk

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

The preferred weapon of salesmen, spies, or confidence men, this skill convinces a target that what your character is telling them is true, or that he or she agrees with whatever your character is telling them. The target will sign the paper, let your character in without a ticket or proper ID, ignore something suspicious, pass off faulty goods as valuable, take false facts on faith, or run to get help against invading Martians. Fast Talk is quick to use, and almost always temporary: a few minutes and a successful Idea roll will generally allow the target come to his senses. To truly change someone's mind, your character should use the Bargain or Persuade skills.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character's hustle is laughably transparent. The target doesn't believe a word of it, and is convinced that your character is up to no good. The target will immediately confront your character, and may become hostile or immediately summon the authorities.

FAILURE: The story isn't believable. The target refuses your character's request. *'Tell me another one, wise guy. . .'*

SUCCESS: The target takes the bait, granting your character's request or believing his or her story. The deception lasts for one turn (5 minutes).

SPECIAL: Moved by an eloquent story, the target grants your character's request, and gains a favorable impression of him or her. The deception lasts for a number of minutes equal to your character's POW + 5.

CRITICAL: The target is utterly convinced. Unless circumstances demand it, he or she will never question your character's story. If the target fails an Idea roll, he or she can only be convinced the story was false by use of the Persuade skill.

Setting Notes: This skill can be used in all settings.

System Notes: Gamemasters may reward effective arguments or good roleplaying with a circumstantial modifier bonus to the skill check, or even penalize a flimsy argument and poor roleplaying with a circumstantial modifier penalty. This is best determined by the gamemaster based on the style of interaction the players are used to—groups that do not emphasize the conversational aspects of roleplaying may not merit this bonus or penalty. Trying a second Fast Talk attempt on a target after the first attempt fails is a *Difficult* action.

Fine Manipulation

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

A measure of steadiness and hand-eye coordination, this skill covers any careful use of the hands and fingers. Picking locks, typing, trap disarming, tying or untying knots, and disassembling mechanical devices are all valid uses of this skill.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character bumbles the attempt, making things worse. The knot to be untied becomes a *Difficult* action to untie, a tied knot will fail, the device he or she wanted to disassemble is broken, or the lock is jammed.

FAILURE: Clumsiness or distraction prevents the desired result.

SUCCESS: Your character's deft hands accomplish the desired task.

SPECIAL: Your character completes the desired task in half the normal time.

CRITICAL: Your character completes the desired task in half the normal time, with an additional benefit: a disassembled device might be *Easy* to Repair or reassemble, a picked lock shows no sign of tampering, or a knot holds fast but is an *Easy* action to untie.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Using this skill without appropriate tools (lock picks, for instance, or a screwdriver) is a *Difficult* action. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character may add 1/5 of his or her Fine Manipulation skill rating as a temporary bonus to other appropriate skill ratings: Craft, Demolition, Operate, Repair, Sleight of Hand, and even some Science and Technical skills could all benefit from steady hands and deft fingers.

Firearm (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty (see "Weapon Classes" on page 257)

Category: Combat

This skill measures your character's accuracy with any kind of firearm.

Specialties: Machine Gun, Pistol, Revolver, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine Gun. Specialties are equivalent to weapon types. See page 257 in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for a list of firearm types.

Effects: See the "Attack and Defense Matrix" on page 193 and the "Missile Weapon Fumble Table" on page 194 for specific effects. Firearms usually do impaling special effects (see the weapons charts in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for details).

Setting Notes: Firearms appear almost exclusively in modern and near-modern settings. Any character from a culture too primitive to have developed firearms must make a *Difficult* Idea roll to figure out how to use the weapon. Failures or fumbles can be disastrous, to the weapon or the user!

System Notes: Some firearms have a minimum STR and DEX requirement, as listed in the weapons tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. Firearms never grant your character his or her damage bonus to damage. If your character is using a firearm, he or she can employ "Aimed Attacks", described on page 212.

First Aid

Base Chance: 30% (present day or futuristic settings), INT x 1% (historical or fantasy settings)

Category: Mental

This skill represents knowledge of triage and rudimentary medical care. Use it to stop bleeding, bandage wounds and treat minor burns, set a broken limb, resus-

citate someone who's drowning, or revive an unconscious person. First Aid has no effect on poisons, diseases, or subtle physical ailments: these must be treated with the Medicine skill. This skill takes a full combat round to perform, and cannot normally be undertaken while in the midst of combat. If the character attempting the First Aid attempt is interrupted, the gamemaster may declare that the attempt must be restarted, or that the interrupted attempt inflicts 1 point of damage upon the intended recipient, directly to the wounded hit location if that optional system is being used.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Rough treatment or indelicate probing hurts the patient more: the patient takes 1 general hit point of damage, and his or her condition remains unchanged.

FAILURE: Attempted treatments have no effect. The patient's condition does not change, and your character must wait one full turn before he or she can try to attempt the First Aid skill again.

SUCCESS: The treatment takes hold, with one of the following effects:

- ❖ A single wound or injury heals 1D3 hit points.
- ❖ If the treated character reached 0 or negative hit points in this or the previous round, he or she can be restored to life if a successful First Aid roll brings his or her hit point total to 1 or higher.
- ❖ An unconscious character is revived.
- ❖ Bleeding damage from a bleeding special success can be stopped, as can any ongoing damage from extreme damage to a hit location (see "Hit Points per Hit Location", page 29).

SPECIAL: As above, but a wound or injury heals 2D3 hit points.

CRITICAL: As above, but a wound or injury heals 3+1D3 hit points.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings, though specific techniques and knowledge will vary from era to era. Historical or fantasy characters must often have a specialized background (monk, midwife, scholar, physik) to learn this skill at all.

System Notes: Each application of First Aid applies to a single wound: once that injury has been treated, additional First Aid rolls have no effect. Other wounds however, can be treated. Hazardous or unsanitary conditions may be *Difficult* actions, at the gamemaster's discretion. Your character may add 1/2 of his or her Medicine skill rating and 1/5 of his or her Science (Pharmacy) skill rating as a temporary bonus to First Aid rolls. Special equipment (pain killers, bandages, or medicine) may add up to a +15% bonus to skill ratings, while futuristic medical technology (artificial

spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) can make all First Aid rolls *Easy*.

Fly

Base Chance: DEX x4 for winged creatures; 1/2 DEX for all others who have some means of aerial movement (the Fly power, special equipment, etc.).

Category: Physical

This skill allows beings with wings, appropriate gear (antigravity belt, rocket boots, etc.), or powers, to maneuver in the air without a vehicle. Use a Fly check to perform aerial maneuvers or acrobatics without losing control, outmaneuver a foe in aerial combat, or fly

in poor weather conditions. The spot rules on “Aerial Combat” on page 212 cover use of this skill in combat conditions.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Aerial turbulence and poor judgment result in a disastrous stall; if winged, your character must make a successful Stamina roll or suffer 1D3–1 points of damage from a sprain or strain. If flying using a device, it either stalls or fails, and cannot keep your character aloft. The flyer is in free fall; he or she will fall one round per altitude level above the ground (see “Chases” on pages 216–217 for more information). Your character must make a *Difficult* Fly roll to stay aloft—if the roll fails, he or she crashes hard. See “Falling” on page 223 for information about falling damage.

FAILURE: Your character misjudges an updraft or is too slow to react. He or she fails to make the desired maneuver, and runs into some kind of trouble. See “Chases” on pages 216–217 for more information.

SUCCESS: Your character completes the desired maneuver, or holds his or her position in a chase. See “Chases” on pages 216–217 for more information about maneuvers.

SPECIAL: Your character easily completes the desired maneuver, and gains a bonus of +10% to the next Fly roll or attack roll made in aerial combat, if still aloft.

CRITICAL: Steely nerves and expert reflexes push wind and wing to their limits. Your character completes the desired maneuver with dazzling grace, and gains a bonus of +25% to the next Fly roll or attack roll made in aerial combat, if still aloft.

Setting Notes: Winged beings are usually only found in fantastic or futuristic settings, or super hero adventures. Actual device-assisted flight is rare in modern era settings, but is a staple of pulp adventure, super hero, and science fiction settings. For jet packs, hang-gliders, etc. use the Pilot skill on page 72.



Each wound suffered in a combat can individually be treated using First Aid (successful skill use restores 1D3 hit points). Additionally, each may also be treated with the Medicine skill and a Heal spell. The gamemaster might judge that each claw of the critter above does four wounds.

System Notes: Short, uneventful flights under normal or moderate conditions are Automatic tasks and do not require skill rolls. The “Weather Conditions” spot rules on page 181 contain information about penalties that may affect flight. Normal flight does not expend fatigue points, while maneuvering or stressful flight is a strenuous activity. Flying while wearing armor or heavy gear incurs a penalty equal to your character’s current ENC total. See “Encumbrance” on page 180 for more information.

Stamina rolls are required for long-range flights, with the characteristic multiplier decreasing by one every four hours or fraction thereof spent in the air.

For example, A four-hour flight would require a CON x 5 roll, while the next four hours would require a successful CON x 4 roll, then four hours later, a CON x 3 roll, etc.

A flying character carrying a heavy object must match his or her STR against the SIZ of the carried object on the resistance table to stay aloft. See “Aerial Combat” on page 212 and “Chases” on pages 216-217 for more information.

Gaming

Base Chance: INT + POW as a %

Category: Knowledge

This skill covers all manner of games and diversions, from ordinary contests of chess or backgammon to gambling contests involving cards, dice, or other games. Quick wits and decision-making are essential, and knowledge of the rules of the game and the odds involved is vital. Gamblers make their living using this skill, but to most others it is merely a source of entertainment. At the gamemaster’s discretion, you may add 1/5 of your Strategy skill as a temporary bonus to your Gaming skill if you are playing a game where strategy and tactical decision-making are a component.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character performs horribly, making gaffes and losing the game in dismal fashion. If the game is a gambling contest, he or she loses the entire stake, and ends up owing additional debts equal to 1D6 x 10% of his or her stake if failing a Luck roll.

FAILURE: Your character performs badly, losing the game. If the game is a gambling contest, he or she loses half of their original stake, and loses an additional 1D4 x 10% of his or her stake if a Luck roll is failed.

SUCCESS: Your character performs well, winning the game if his or her roll beats all other characters’ rolls. If the game is a gambling contest, your character breaks even, and wins an additional 1D4 x 10% of the original stake if succeeding at a Luck roll.

SPECIAL: Your character performs exceptionally well, winning the game if his or her roll beats all other characters’ rolls. If the game is a gambling contest, your character breaks even, and wins an additional 1D6 x 10% of his or her original stake if succeeding at a Luck roll.

CRITICAL: Your character dazzles other characters with his or her skill and panache. Your character wins the game if his or her roll beats all other characters’ rolls. If the game is a gambling contest, your character wins an amount equal to double his or her original stake, and wins an additional 1D4 x 10% of the original stake if he or she succeeds at a Luck roll.

Setting Notes: Games can be found in all but the most primitive settings, and so this skill is appropriate to most settings and eras.

System Notes: To resolve games of chance or skill, all players involved will roll Gaming. The highest roll within the best degree of success wins. If the game involves betting or bluffing, your character may add 1/5 of his or her Insight or Fast Talk skill (whichever is higher) to his or her Gaming skill temporarily. To cheat, use Sleight of Hand or Fast Talk skill, opposed by Observe or Insight. To resolve betting on other things, use opposed Luck rolls.

Grapple

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Combat

This unarmed weapon skill covers any special attack used for wrestling, from Greco-Roman holds and pins, sumo-style pushing and unbalancing, to judo throws or even brute strangulation. Grapples are usually used to subdue a target without causing harm. If your character wants to cause harm, however, brutal wrestling moves, throws, and strangle holds can be lethal.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character slips, stumbles, or misjudges his or her opponent. Roll on the “Natural Weapons Fumble Table” on page 195 for results.

FAILURE: The target eludes your character’s hold, or your character loses his or her hold. Grapple attack misses, or a hold ends.

SUCCESS: Your character grabs the target and can apply one grapple effect next round if he or she can keep the hold.

SPECIAL: Your character manages to grab a pressure point, or seize a special advantage over the target. Your character automatically succeeds in his or her next Grapple roll to maintain the hold, and gains a +3 characteristic bonus on any resistance rolls for grapple effects made this round.

Grapple Effects

If your character has a hold on the opponent, he or she can attempt any of the following effects, one per round, beginning the round after the Grapple takes hold. Some effects can only be used if your character has grabbed a specific body part, as detailed below. As some of these options involve specific hit locations, the gamemaster should reinterpret them for a game not using hit locations, or disallow the effects.

CHANGE HOLD (any): Your character matches his or her DEX against the defender's DEX on the resistance table. If your character succeeds, he or she shifts the hold to a different hit location of choice. If the defender wins, he or she can take an action, though your character still has a hold on the original grabbed location.

IMMOBILIZE LIMB (arm or leg): Match your character's STR against the defender's STR on the resistance table. If your character wins, no action can be taken with that limb until the hold is broken. If the defender wins, he or she can take an action, though your character still has a hold on the limb.

GRAB A SECOND LOCATION (any immobilized limb): Your character tries to grab and hold another hit location of his or her choice. Match your character's DEX against the defender's DEX + SIZ on the resistance table. If your character wins, he or she manages to grab the second location and keep the immobilized limb trapped. If the defender wins, he or she immediately matches STR against your character's STR on the resistance table to break all holds. Your character can hold as many locations as he or she has hands.

IMMOBILIZE TARGET (head, chest, or abdomen): Match your character's STR against the defender's STR on the resistance table. If your character wins, the defender can take no action at all until the hold is broken. If the defender wins, he or she can still take actions, though your character still has a hold.

THROW TARGET (any except head): Match your character's STR + DEX against the defender's SIZ + DEX on the resistance table. If your character wins, the defender is thrown: he or she flies 1D6 meters, is automatically knocked down, and must make an Agility roll or suffer 1D6 points of general damage (or to a random hit location). Throwing a target releases a hold. If the defender wins, he or she is not thrown and may take an action, though your character retains a hold.

KNOCKDOWN TARGET (head, chest, abdomen): Your character automatically overbears the target, dragging both characters prone. The target must make an Agility roll or suffer 1 point of general damage (or to a random hit location).

DISARM TARGET (any immobilized arm): Your character matches STR + SIZ against the target's STR on the resistance table. If your character succeeds, the target drops any weapon, item, or shield held by the immobilized limb, and the limb remains immobilized. If the defender wins, he or she hangs on to the held item(s), though the limb remains immobilized and your character retains the hold.

INJURE THE TARGET (head, chest, or abdomen): Your character elbows, gouges, or squeezes, inflicting 1D3 points of damage plus his or her damage bonus to the target (general or to the held hit location). The defender may immediately match his or her STR against your character's STR on the resistance table to break the hold.

STRANGLE THE TARGET (head): The target must make a CON x 1% roll each round or suffer 1D3 hit points of damage to his or her general hit points. The defender may immediately match his or her STR against your character's STR on the resistance table to break the hold. Once your character begins strangling, he or she does not need to make further Grapple rolls each round to maintain the hold. The target must attempt to break free. Consult the rules for "Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation" on page 218 for additional detail.

CRITICAL: Your character pinches a nerve, finds a pressure point, or otherwise completely overpowers the target. The attacker automatically succeeds in his or her next Grapple roll to maintain the hold, and the target's characteristics are halved in any resistance rolls for grapple effects during the remainder of that combat round.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras. Some races might be better at this skill than others, having higher base chances.

System Notes: Your character must make a successful Grapple roll to establish a hold on his or her foe. Successful Grapple attacks grab a random hit location (if that system is used). Grapple attacks can be parried using the Grapple skill: if the defender parries with a weapon or shield, your character automatically grabs

the weapon arm or shield arm if the Grapple roll is successful. Once a hold is established, your character must make a successful Grapple check each round to maintain the hold. Taking any action other than one of the grappling effects below breaks a hold.

Once held, a defender can attack your character if he or she has any free limbs, using Brawl (punches or head butts only) or any small weapon (knives or handguns). If two hands are free, the target can attempt to Grapple back.

Multiple attackers can attempt to grapple a single target, though no more than two attackers can hold any one location. Combine the STR ratings of both attackers in all contested tests.

Heavy Machine (various)

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Manipulation

Any machine larger than a person and any wheeled vehicle heavier than a moving van fall under the purview of this skill. Use it to drive a forklift or a tank, dig a trench with a bulldozer, swing a wrecking ball on a crane, start and drive a locomotive, or keep a ship's steam boilers burning. For aircraft, see Pilot. Heavy Machine also covers basic care and preventative maintenance, though once a heavy machine fails, a Repair skill is required to fix it.

Specialties: By vehicle type (Armored Vehicles, Boilers, Bulldozers, Cranes, Engines, Turbines, etc.).

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Clumsiness or distraction leads to disaster. The machine is broken or crashed, and requires Repair skill rolls to make it operable again. Cranes or lifts drop their loads, ruining them. Vehicles crash into other vehicles, buildings, or ditches. The operator of the machine or other bystanders may have been injured at the gamemaster's discretion (a Luck roll may prevent this).

FAILURE: Your character can't make the machine work properly: an engine doesn't start, or a vehicle can't maneuver properly to perform the desired task. While frustrating, the failure brings no additional ill effects.

SUCCESS: The machine does what your character wants it to do. Attacks using this skill (ramming with a vehicle, or swinging a wrecking ball) hit, and do normal damage.

SPECIAL: Adroit operation allows your character to finish the desired task in half the time. Attacks using this skill (ramming with a vehicle, or swinging a wrecking ball) do maximum damage and may have a special success result (probably crushing, see page 195 for details).

CRITICAL: The task is finished in half the time. No additional effects. Attacks using this skill (ramming with a vehicle, or swinging a wrecking ball) ignore the target's armor, if any.

Setting Notes: This skill is usually limited to modern or futuristic settings.

System Notes: Your character can use this skill as a Combat skill with certain kinds of machines, with a standard damage of 3D6 to 6D6, based on the size of the device. Using this skill to operate machines outside your character's normal field of experience (a bulldozer operator trying to start a ship's engines) is a *Difficult* action. Operating and maintaining a heavy machine in extreme conditions (stormy seas, arctic cold, or windy deserts) is a *Difficult* action. At a skill rating of 60%, your character becomes proficient at maintaining and operating the specific type of machines in extreme conditions, and rolls normally even in adverse weather.

Your character may add 1/5 of his or her skill in Heavy Machine as a temporary bonus to appropriate Repair rolls.

Heavy Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty (see "Weapon Classes" on page 248).

Category: Combat

The skill governs the use of explosive weapons, or large weapons that push the limits of portability. This category includes bazookas, rocket launchers, heavy machine guns, tripod-mounted laser cannons, and others. The Artillery skill is required for use of heavier weapons than these, such as cannons, siege engines, or vehicle- or pintle-mounted weapons.

Specialties: Heavy weapons fall somewhere between traditional weapons and artillery, and are often used to deliver explosives. Suggested specialties include Bazooka, Flamethrower, Mini Gun, Rocket Launcher, etc. See the sections on Artillery and Explosives in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more details.

Effects: See the "Attack and Defense Matrix" on page 193 and the "Missile Weapon Fumble Table" on page 194 for specific effects. Heavy weapons usually do impaling or knockback special effects, depending on their nature (see pages 196-impaling or 197-knockback for details).

Setting Notes: Fantasy and historical settings usually lack heavy weapons. Modern and future settings are replete with heavy weapons, though some specific weapons may not be available in specific eras. In most settings, a military background is required to learn this skill.

System Notes: Most heavy weapons employ automatic fire, or shoot explosive ordinance. See "Autofire" on page 214 and "Explosions" on page 222. All missed shots go somewhere; the gamemaster should decide where missed explosive shots impact.

Hide

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Physical

The art of concealing an object or oneself from view. Your character should use this skill to escape during pursuit, keep an object from easy detection, or avoid surveillance.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character draws attention to him- or herself, making any opposed Spot attempts *Easy*. A hidden object is so clumsily concealed that all attempts to Spot it are *Easy* actions.

FAILURE: A poor choice of cover does little to conceal your character: opposed Spot checks are unmodified. A concealed object is poorly hidden, offering a +15% bonus to attempts to Spot it.

SUCCESS: Good cover and ample shadow leaves your character harder to detect; requiring a successful Spot roll to be seen (your character will not be automatically seen). A concealed object is adequately hidden, requiring an average Spot check to find.

SPECIAL: Excellent cover and complete stillness make your concealed character very difficult to detect; he or she can only be noticed with a critical Spot roll. A concealed object is well hidden, imposing a -15% penalty on Spot checks to find it.

CRITICAL: Perfect concealment and discipline render your character undetectable by normal means: even a critical Spot roll cannot locate him or her. A concealed object is cunningly hidden, and can only be found with a *Difficult* Spot check.

Setting Notes: This skill can be found in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Most Hide checks are resolved as opposed skill rolls against the Spot of a guard or pursuer. Adequate cover is essential to Hide; Hiding in scant cover is a *Difficult* task, while Hiding in a total lack of cover (wide open, broad daylight) is impossible. Special clothing or gear (face paint, camouflaged clothing, etc.) can add a bonus of 5-15% to Hide rating, depending on its quality. Environmental conditions may offer additional bonuses. If hiding, your character should keep as still as possible; moving while using Hide is a *Difficult* action, and moving more than a meter requires an additional check, made against both Hide and Stealth.

Hide is only effective against visual and aural detection; advanced sensors may find a hiding character by body heat, or a keen nose might find him or her using the Sense skill.

Insight

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Perception

Your character will use this skill to evaluate another person's character, emotional state, and motives based on body language, speech patterns, and other intangible factors. Insight allows a gambler to sense a bluff, or a detective to sniff out a lie.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Bad assumptions and poor perceptions lead your character to precisely the wrong conclusion: virtuous targets seem suspicious, or callous killers are deemed trustworthy. Your character falls for any deception, and suffers a -15% penalty to all communication skills with the target for a scene.

FAILURE: The emotions and motivations of the target remain inscrutable; no special insight is gained.

SUCCESS: The target's general emotional state or motivations are revealed to your character. In cases of deception, your character gets a hint that the target is withholding something.

SPECIAL: Genuine insight offers a thoughtful look into the psyche and motivations of the target, gaining a precise picture. In cases of deception, your character is sure that the target is lying or truthful. He or she gains a +10% bonus on all further Communication skill rolls against this target for the remainder of the day.

CRITICAL: Your character reads the targeted character like an open book, discerning his or her exact emotional state, and even getting a very good idea of why the target feels the way he or she does. Your character gains a +25% bonus to all Communication checks used with the target for one scene. Your character gains deep insight into the psyche and/or motivations of the target. In cases of deception, your character is certain the target is lying, and even has a good idea why.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Willful deceit can be difficult to penetrate: in such cases, your character should make an opposed Insight check against the target's Fast Talk or even Etiquette skill. Using Insight on a member of a different culture or species is a *Difficult* action. Using this skill on close friends, family members, or spouses is an *Easy* action. If the gamemaster is using the optional "Personality Traits" system, a successful use of the Insight skill can be used to determine the relative strength of one of a non-player character's personality traits, such as where they fit on the scale.

Jump

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

This skill measures your character's ability to leap for height or distance, or to jump over obstacles. Jump is also the skill of falling (or landing) well, and can be used to mitigate falling damage. Under normal circumstances, a reasonably fit human can jump his or her height horizontally and half his or her height vertically from a standing position, and roughly three meters horizontally with a running start.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character does not jump the desired distance, and suffers the damage of a 3-meter fall (1D6).

FAILURE: Your character does not jump the desired distance.

Knowledge Specialties

The following list of potential knowledge skills is based on a modern setting, with a few additional skills thrown in. It is by no means comprehensive. Gamemasters are encouraged to devise new Knowledge specialties to suit the needs of their settings. For specialties with subspecialties, write them like this "Knowledge (Group [Templars])" or "Knowledge (Templars)" on your character sheet.

ACADEMIC LORE (fantasy/historical settings only): In eras when the whole of knowledge can be contained in a single library, this skill represents how "learned" your character is. Use it like a Knowledge roll (see page 28), applied to nearly any area of expertise.

ACCOUNTING: The knowledge of bookkeeping practices. Use it to analyze a person or institution's general financial situation (debt, bankruptcy, wealth, net worth), or to identify financial irregularities (strange spending, embezzlement, or odd windfalls).

ANTHROPOLOGY: The study of cultures, including customs, art, and behavior. Using this skill, your character can identify a person or artifact's native culture, or after a week of observation can predict a culture's social mores and behaviors.

ARCHAEOLOGY: The study of ancient and vanished cultures. This skill allows your character to identify an artifact from a dead culture, spot a fake, or conduct an excavation and make reasonable inferences about the ancient inhabitants of a site or region.

ART HISTORY: The study of art from various eras and places, including style, famous artists, and specific works. Your character can use this skill to identify the ori-

gin of a piece of art, spot a fake, or attribute a work to a known master.

BLASPHEMOUS LORE: The study of horrific occult secrets and ancient evils. A field of knowledge gleaned from the grimoires of madmen, scribbled on the walls of madhouses, and whispered in the uttermost dark of the night. The more of this peculiar knowledge your character has, the less his or her grasp on sanity. See the optional "Sanity" rules on page 315 for more information. The Blasphemous Lore skill begins at 0%, not 05%, and cannot be increased with experience.

BUSINESS: The study of entrepreneurial practices, guild regulations, corporate laws, and management techniques required to start or manage a commercial business. This skill allows your character to identify major players in a field or market, predict economic trends, and turn a profit.

ESPIONAGE: This represents the field of espionage; spy organizations, famous or notorious spies and agents; methodology, notable figures, organizations, tactics, etc. Code breaking is handled with the Science (Cryptography) skill on page 76.

FOLKLORE: Knowledge of the customs, stories, lyrics, tall tales, and legends of a particular people or region. Your character can use this skill to identify or remember elements of a story, which might come in handy when trying to impress rural folk or dealing with the supernatural.

GROUP [specific]: General information about a particular culture, nationality, group, club, or social class. Your character can use this skill to identify a member of that group, know 'who's who' within that group, and remember social customs and mores of the group.

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SUCCESS: With a running start, your character jumps up to 3 meters horizontally or 1 meter vertically. A standing start halves the distance. If falling, your character chooses which location takes the falling damage.

SPECIAL: Your character jumps half again the standard distance (4.5 meters horizontally, 1.5 meters vertically). If falling, your character chooses which location takes the falling damage, and reduces falling damage by 1D6.

CRITICAL: Your character jumps double the normal distance. If falling, your character chooses which location takes the falling damage, reduces falling damage by 1D6, and halves any remaining falling damage.

Setting Notes: This skill is universal.

System Notes: A standing jump requires 1 DEX rank. A running jump uses the same DEX rank as normal running movement. Performing flashy or showy jumps (somersaults, flips, etc.) is a *Difficult* action.

Knowledge (various)

Base Chance: 05% (present day or futuristic), 01% (historical or fantasy). The gamemaster may modify the base chance for different specialties, as appropriate to the setting.

Category: Mental

This skill represents experience or academic study of one branch of knowledge. Knowledge allows your character to remember pertinent facts within the purview of the specialty. Use a Knowledge skill to analyze or identify clues, make logical suppositions, and recall impressive trivia.

Specialties: Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Law, Occult, Religion, and others as dictated by the campaign (see nearby list)

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Bad recollections and errors of judgment lead to very wrong conclusions. Your character gains one piece

(... continued from the previous page)

HISTORY: The study of past events and eras. Your character can use this skill to remember the significance of any place, person, event, or object, or to correctly guess when an object or document was made.

LAW: The study of legal practice and precedent. Your character can use this skill to judge the legality of a proposed action, find legal precedents, free him- or herself from trouble with the authorities, or build a case for or against a criminal.

LINGUISTICS: The study of language itself, from the foundations of grammar and vocabulary to the means by which societies shape languages, and how they evolve and differ. Your character may use this Knowledge skill to identify unknown languages, and at the gamemaster's discretion, puzzle out a few words or grasp a basic meaning, though this skill is no substitute for the appropriate Language skill.

LITERATURE: The study of significant prose, poetry, and essays, usually from a single culture. Your character could use this skill to properly identify a quote or allusion to a specific work, identify when and where an unknown fragment might have been written, attribute a mysterious work to a known author, spot a literary fake, or quote ominously appropriate passages from famous works of literature.

OCCULT: Knowledge of magic, obscure legends, and so-called 'secret history' that covers everything from arcane philosophies to modern conspiracy theories. Your character can use this skill to realize the significance of alchemical or astrological symbols, identify which magical tradition created a ritual workspace, know the names

of powerful spirits, or identify the secret factions conspiring to manipulate a situation.

PHILOSOPHY: The study of existence and its meaning, from basic logic to existentialism, nihilism, and beyond. Your character can use this skill to remember the precepts of a particular philosophy, identify the philosophical leanings of an author or speaker's argument, and to engage in philosophical debate.

POLITICS: The study and knowledge of political systems or other means of governance imposed upon or elected by the citizenry. Your character could use this skill to understand the major power blocs in an area, how to influence the political structure, and how citizens will react to political change or influence.

REGION [specific]: General information about a specific city, region, or nation, including important people, local landmarks, and regional history. Your character would use this skill to find cheap lodgings in a bustling city, remember the best roadside inn in the province, remember the name of the local mayor, and find specific merchants or tradesmen.

RELIGION [specific]: Details of the mythos, liturgy, and practices of a specific religion. Your character can use this skill to avoid violating taboos, recall the laws and obligations of a faith, successfully debate points of theology, identify regalia or religious texts, sort orthodoxy from heresy, or properly lead a religious ceremony.

STREETWISE: Knowledge of the shadier segments of a society, from the protocols of the poor to the ways of the criminal underworld. Your character can use this skill to find a safe house, identify a fence for stolen goods, or know who to ask for other semi-legal or illegal favors.

of patently false information, but fully believes that he or she is correct.

FAILURE: After much thought and recollection, your character is still stumped. No information is gained.

SUCCESS: Your character's knowledge is equal to the task: one pertinent piece of information is realized or recalled.

SPECIAL: Quick wits and ample education bring many details to mind; your character gains up to three pieces of information, even realizing obscure or trivial details.

CRITICAL: A burst of insight leads to a wealth of conclusions; your character gains all appropriate information, recalling even the most obscure details.

Setting Notes: In many fantasy or historical settings, many of the specialties described nearby will not exist: Academic Lore, History, Group, Natural History, Philosophy (Religion), and Region will be the only options. As settings grow more modern, the number of Knowledge specialties increase. Gamemasters should

devise specific Knowledge skills to flesh out their setting as needed. Based on the setting, the gamemaster may choose to classify some Knowledge skills as Science skills, or vice versa. The gamemaster may also choose to make a generic Knowledge skill to represent a catch-all skill (representing all knowledge types) for a dramatically-simplified skill list.

System Notes: Many knowledge skills have broad definitions, and some overlap exists between the specialties described below. To remember one detail of a town's history, your character might use Knowledge (History) or Knowledge (Region). The gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether a given Knowledge skill applies to a given situation. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can add temporarily 1/5 of an appropriate Knowledge skill as a bonus to another skill rating.

For example, If your character is haggling in a distant market, he or she can add one fifth of his or her Knowledge (Anthropology) to his or her Bargain skill temporarily. Or a

hunter might boost his or her Track rating with 1/5 of his or her Knowledge (Natural History) skill rating.

The optional EDU stat and associated Knowledge roll (see **Characters**, page 27) are intended to cover the minutiae of common knowledge—specialized information can only be gleaned by an appropriate specialty of a Knowledge skill. A gamemaster might allow a desperate character without appropriate Knowledge skills a base chance equal to EDU x 1.

Language (various)

Base Chance: INT x5 (own), 00% (other). If EDU option is used, players can choose the higher of INT or EDU to multiply by 5 for this skill's base chance.

Category: Communication

The ability to communicate verbally in a language, either the character's native language (Own) or another (Other). The gamemaster will determine what the native language is based on the culture or country of origin if it is not immediately apparent. Other languages can be learned in the home, at school, on the streets, or

through alternate educational methods, depending on the culture the character grows up in. Most characters begin knowing one language. Players wishing for bilingual characters must spend skill points on another language skill. This skill is exclusively concerned with verbal communication—if you wish for your character to read and write, he or she must have the Literacy skill (below) in the appropriate language. Day-to-day conversation in your character's Own Language is *Automatic* and does not require a skill roll. Skill rolls are required when communicating difficult concepts or in difficult and unusual situations, such as translating.

Specialties: One language: either your character's native language, or other languages as dictated by the campaign.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character gets things entirely wrong; if listening or reading, he or she gains completely false understandings of what is said or written. If speaking, his or her requests make no sense, and may even offend listeners.

FAILURE: Your character does not understand what he or she is hearing or reading. If talking, listeners cannot understand him or her.

SUCCESS: Your character understands what he or she is hearing or reading, and can in turn make him- or herself understood.

SPECIAL: If reading, your character understands even subtle drifts and innuendoes within the text. If speaking, no additional effect.

CRITICAL: Outstanding use of eloquence and idioms particular to the language being spoken, or a deep and rich understanding of materials being read.

Setting Notes: Languages exist in all settings, and the specifics of the campaign world define which languages are available. In modern or futuristic settings, skill in a language assumes that your character can read the language as well. Ancient or fantastic settings require Literacy to be taken as a separate skill.

System Notes: Each specialty applies to a single language; if you wish for your character to learn an additional language, he or she must build up an additional Language skill. Understanding obscure dialects or ancient varieties of a language is a *Difficult* action. At the gamemaster's discretion, complex documents or conversations with several salient points might require multiple language rolls to understand, one for each point. To know how skill rating impacts communication and fluency, refer to the table to the right.



Through the mastery of languages a sorceress can discover, or re-discover, new spells and sources of power.

Language Fluency Table

Rating	Fluency
1-5	Knows only a few dozen words, can count to 10. May only communicate simple ideas. Complex communication (Bargain, Persuade, etc.) is impossible. <i>For example, "Food. Sell me."</i>
6-25	Gets across simple requests, enough to be understood and survive day to day. Complex communications (Bargain, Persuade, etc.) are <i>Difficult</i> actions. <i>For example, "How much moneys for this leg of lamb?"</i>
26-50	Assured communication. One can speak better than a stupid native, getting most ideas across. Communication skills are not restricted, but certain actions may still be <i>Difficult</i> . <i>For example, "How much? But this lamb was much cheaper yesterday!"</i>
51-75	Allows speaker to tell stories, sagas, songs, etc. Idioms and jokes become accessible. Your character can pass for native. Complex communications are now rolled at the speaker's full skill. <i>For example, "Look at this cut! The lamb was rotten before it was butchered, and is clearly not even worth the sweat of the laborer who carried it here."</i>
76-00	The language of poets, philosophers, scientists, and diplomats. Not only can your character pass for native, he or she can mimic one or more local dialects. Jargon and obscure forms of speech come easily. <i>For example, "Surely the assessment of this specimen of provender could be reevaluated in light of its advanced state of decomposition."</i>

Listen

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

A product of keen ears and quick wits, this skill allows your character to hear, interpret, and understand sounds. Murmurs behind a closed door, furtive whispers, stealthy footfalls, and snapped twigs are all the kinds of things a successful Listen roll can notice and identify. Use this skill to see if a noise wakes a sleeping character, or to see if your character can recognize a specific sound or voice. The normal range for hearing a human voice speaking at a polite volume is 15 meters—louder voices will carry farther and quieter ones will have a shorter range.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character is oblivious to reality: he or she misses even distinct, loud sounds, or finds him- or herself hearing things, jumping at sounds that aren't there. Garbled or muffled conversations are misinterpreted, with your character clearly hearing the wrong thing.

FAILURE: Lapses in hearing or concentration lets your character miss sounds. Garbled or muffled conversations remain unintelligible.

SUCCESS: Your character hears a noise, or can make out a few words of a whispered or muffled conversation.

SPECIAL: Even faint noises are clearly heard, and your character gains a clear memory of the sound: enough to identify a voice or sound. Listeners make out every word of a whispered or muffled conversation.

CRITICAL: Pin drops and hummingbird wings can be clearly heard. Even the faintest conversations can be heard and understood.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Listen is both an active and a passive skill: your character can attempt to Listen for suspicious noises, or the gamemaster can call for Listen rolls if events warrant it. Oppose Listen to Stealth to resolve attempts to sneak past a wary or unwary listener. The gamemaster may choose to make Listen rolls secretly and inform you of the result, to avoid giving anything away if the roll is failed.

Literacy (various)

Base Chance: 00% where education is not commonplace. Identical to starting Language (Own) or (Other) in a present day or future setting, as appropriate.

Category: Mental

The ability to read is only taken for granted in the modern era: in previous ages, reading and writing were products of elite education and signs of distinction or status.

Specialties: Own language, other languages as dictated by the campaign

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character gets things entirely wrong, gaining a completely false understanding of what is written. If writing, his or her prose is either illegible or offensive.

FAILURE: Your character does not understand what he or she is reading. If writing, any readers will have a *Difficult* time following the prose.

SUCCESS: Your character understands what he or she is reading. If writing, the resulting prose is competent and serviceable.

SPECIAL: If reading, your character understands even subtle drifts and innuendoes within the text. If writing, the resulting prose is engaging and effective.

CRITICAL: If reading, your character gains a complete understanding of the text, and even spots hidden codes or inconsistencies. If writing, the prose is considered masterful, worthy of praise and publication.

Setting Notes: This skill is inappropriate for modern or futuristic games. In such settings, if you choose for your character to be illiterate, he or she gains a number of personal interest skill points equal to half of his or her



Judicious use of martial arts, and a naginata, keeps peace in the countryside. In the encounter above, the samurai was able to strike before the masquerading monster was able to cast its spell. If not dead, the monster must succeed in an Idea roll (INT x5%) to complete its spell casting.

Own Language skill rating. These can be spent on other skills, at the gamemaster's discretion.

System Notes: Each specialty applies to single written language; if your character wishes to read an additional language, he or she must build up an additional Literacy skill. Understanding obscure dialects or ancient varieties of a written language is a *Difficult* action. At the gamemaster's discretion, complex documents with several salient points might require multiple Literacy rolls to understand, one for each point. In a setting where this skill is used, Literacy skill rolls are capped at the associated Language skill: with rare exceptions, your character cannot express him- or herself through literacy at a higher skill level than his or her regular spoken skill in the language.

Martial Arts

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Combat

This skill represents study and mastery of a specific fighting style, from modern boxing to *kenjutsu* (Japanese swordplay) or Shaolin-style *kung fu*. Martial artists are trained to make specific moves and strikes that cause maximum damage to their opponents. Always use Martial Arts in combination with another skill: Brawl, Melee Weapons, or Grapple, as appropriate. This skill is not necessary to make those attacks—it represents a greater level of training that allows greater effectiveness.

Specialties: Capioera, kenjutsu, kung fu, pugilism, etc. Gamemasters are encouraged to think beyond the limits of kung fu when devising new martial arts: fencing schools, Victorian pugilism, and Thai-style kick-boxing are all valid martial arts.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Use the fumble result for the appropriate combat skill (see the appropriate attack and fumble tables in Chapter Six: Combat).

FAILURE: If the rolled result is above the Martial Arts skill rating but still below the combat skill, the attack hits normally. Attacks rolled above the combat skill miss, regardless of the Martial Arts skill rating.

SUCCESS: If the rolled result is less than the skill rating in both Martial Arts and the appropriate combat skill, roll for base damage twice and total the result. Your character's damage bonus is never doubled.

SPECIAL: As above. If the combat roll is a special success, the additional base damage roll is added to the effects of the special hit, if any.

CRITICAL: As above. If the combat roll is a critical success, any armor possessed by the target is ignored, and damage is rolled normally.

Setting Notes: Martial arts exist in all eras, though some schools or orders are very secretive, and will not teach the secrets of their art to just anyone.

System Notes: The Martial Arts skill works in conjunction with one other combat skill, and usually with a narrow range of specialties for that skill. Kung fu, for example, would be used in conjunction with Brawl, and then only with kicks and punches. Each specialty in Martial Arts applies to that one style only: to learn another style, your character must learn a second Martial Arts skill. This power can be used in conjunction with the Natural Weaponry mutation on page 108 and the Unarmed Combat power on page 167.

If multiple attacks are made in a round, the attacker must allocate the Martial Arts skill accordingly,

dividing it as desired between the multiple attacks, or applying it only to a single attack. *For example, if your character has Brawl 120% and Martial Arts at 46%, and is making two attacks at 60% in around, you must choose to divide the Martial Arts skill between these two attacks (23% each, or some combination equaling 46%), or choose to have it apply to only one of the attacks.*

Due to its relative power, the gamemaster may rule that the initial skill rating in this skill be limited, that increases to this skill may be limited to training rather than normal experience, that training may be incredibly difficult to obtain, or all three of these conditions.

Medicine

Base Chance: 05% (present day or futuristic), 00% (historical or fantasy)

Category: Mental

A broader skill than First Aid, this skill is used to diagnose and treat injuries, diseases, poisonings, and make general health recommendations. This skill is used for long-term medical care

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Rough treatment or indelicate probing leads to an inaccurate diagnosis or hurts the patient more: the patient takes 1 general hit point (for injuries) or characteristic point (for poisons or illness) of damage, and their condition remains unchanged.

FAILURE: Attempted treatments have no effect. The patient's condition does not change, and your character must wait one day before he or she can try attempting the Medicine skill again.

SUCCESS: The treatment takes hold, with one of the following effects:

- ❖ Any effect of a successful First Aid roll (see above).
- ❖ A recovering patient's healing rate doubles from 1D3 to 2D3 hit points per week.
- ❖ A character suffering ongoing characteristic or hit point damage from poison or disease stabilizes. No additional damage is taken.
- ❖ A poisoned or diseased character that has been stabilized recovers 1D3–1 hit points or characteristic points. Only one such recovery can occur per week of treatment.

SPECIAL: As above, but a wound or injury heals 2D3 hit points, or 1D3 characteristic points are recovered.

CRITICAL: As above, but a wound or injury heals 1D3+3 hit points, or 1D3+1 characteristic points are recovered.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings, though specific techniques and knowledge will vary from era to era. Historical or fantasy characters must often have a spe-

cialized background (monk, midwife, scholar, physiker) to learn this skill at all.

System Notes: Each application of Medicine applies to a single malady: once it has been treated, additional successful Medicine rolls have no effect. Other wounds or maladies, however, can be treated. Unsafe or unsanitary conditions may make Medicine rolls *Difficult* actions, at the gamemaster's discretion. Your character may add 1/5 of his or her Science (Pharmacy) skill rating as a temporary bonus to Medicine rolls. Special equipment (pain killers, bandages, or medicine) may add up to a 15% bonus to skill ratings, while futuristic medical technology (artificial spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) make all Medicine rolls *Easy* actions.

Melee Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty (see "Weapon Classes" on page 257)

Category: Combat

The lifeblood of soldiers, warriors, and thugs, this skill measures a character's aptitude while using a specific kind of weapon in hand-to-hand combat. If might makes right, this skill provides the mighty with their legitimacy.

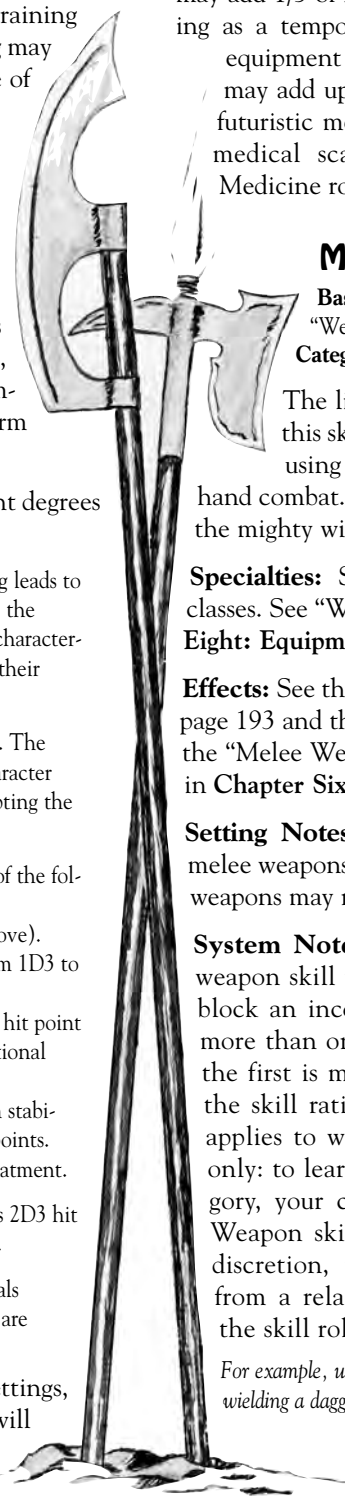
Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See "Weapon Classes" on page 257 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Effects: See the "Attack and Defense Matrix" table on page 193 and the "Melee Weapon Attack Fumble" and the "Melee Weapon Parry Fumble" tables on page 194 in **Chapter Six: Combat** for specific effects.

Setting Notes: From crude clubs to energy swords, melee weapons are found in every era or setting. Some weapons may not be available in some settings.

System Notes: Your character can use his or her weapon skill to parry attacks, making a skill roll to block an incoming attack. He or she can attempt more than one parry per round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative –30% penalty to the skill rating. Each specialty in Melee Weapon applies to weapons from that category of weapon only: to learn how to use a different weapon category, your character must learn a second Melee Weapon skill and specialty. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can wield a weapon from a related or similar weapon category, with the skill roll being *Difficult*.

For example, using the Melee Weapon (Sword) skill while wielding a dagger may be Difficult.



Missile Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As As per weapon specialty (see “Weapon Classes” on page 257)

Category: Combat

This skill measures your character’s accuracy with any self-propelled missile weapon, ranging from throwing axes, blowguns, or even boomerangs. For grenades, use the Throw skill.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See “Weapon Classes” on page 257 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Effects: See the “Attack and Defense Matrix” on page 193 and the “Missile Weapon Fumble Table” on page 194 for specific effects. Arrows and pointed weapons usually cause the impaling special effect (see page 196). Gamemasters wishing for more detail about where a missile ends up when launched from a missile weapon may wish to consult the Throw skill (page 83).

Setting Notes: Missile weapons dominate in fantasy or medieval settings, and have continued to be used in commando-style military activity. Modern compound bows, slings, and crossbows can still be found in present day or futuristic settings, though they are rare.

System Notes: All missile weapons have a minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon, as listed in the weapons tables. Typically, only 1/2 of your character’s damage bonus is applied to missile weapon attacks, and for some weapons (such as a blowgun or crossbow), the damage bonus is not applied. With the Missile Weapon skill, your character can employ aimed shots, as described in “Aimed Attacks” on page 212. At the gamemaster’s discretion, you can apply 1/5 of your character’s Throw skill as a temporary bonus for missile weapons (assumed that they are thrown).

Navigate

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

Whether using a map, a compass, sea charts, or simply following one’s nose, Navigate allows your character to find the way to a destination. Some types of navigation require specialized tools but anyone can look around and try to estimate the best path to go, using perception, memory, and intuition to find their way.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character becomes hopelessly lost. He or she makes no effective progress toward the intended destination, either wandering in circles or reaching some different destination. Your character cannot resume the journey until successfully making a *Difficult* Navigate roll.

FAILURE: Missed landmarks and wrong turns lead your character astray. He or she progresses at half normal speed for the next four hours. Subsequent failures result in cumulative speed penalties.

SUCCESS: Your character finds the way competently, making normal speed for the next four hours.

SPECIAL: Sharp eyes and good hunches let your character proceed with confidence and assurance. For the next four hours he or she proceeds at 110% normal speed.

CRITICAL: Brilliant navigation lets your character find shortcuts and unexpected routes; for the next four hours, he or she proceeds at 125% normal speed.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras. The gamemaster may cap this skill at 75% in ancient eras when proper instruments (compass, sextant, etc.) had not yet been devised. Advanced navigational aids only appear in present day or futuristic settings.

System Notes: The gamemaster should call for a Navigate skill roll every four hours during an ongoing journey. If your character is navigating under ordinary conditions using a map or compass, he or she gains a bonus of 5-20% to skill rating, based on the quality of the instruments or resources. Navigating in a featureless landscape (at sea, in darkness or bad weather, in a desert, or in dense jungle) without instruments or maps is a *Difficult* action; proper instruments or resources raise this difficulty to average. Using advanced navigational aids (global position service technology, for example) make all Navigate attempts *Easy* tasks. If your character is engaged in navigating a vessel of some kind, he or she can add 1/5 of his or her Science (Mathematics), Science (Astronomy), or Technical (Computer Use) skill ratings as a temporary bonus to his or her Navigate rating, as appropriate to the vessel and setting. Additionally, at the gamemaster’s discretion, you can add 1/5 of your character’s Knowledge (Region) skill rating as a temporary bonus to navigation attempts while in that region. Choose the higher of these bonuses—they do not stack.

Parry

Base Chance: varies by weapon or shield

Category: Combat

The skill of interposing a shield or weapon between you and a damage-causing agent. This skill is covered in detail on page 191. Refer to the Attack and Defense Matrix on page 193 for more information. The gamemaster may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender’s SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack.

Perform (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

This skill is used for various aspects of the performing arts, whether musical, acting, dance, or other forms of artistic expression.

Specialties: Act, Conduct Orchestra, Dance, Juggle, Orate, Play (Instrument), Recite, Ritual, Sing, and others.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: The performance goes horribly awry. A street or pub performer earns no money, and is rousted to go perform elsewhere. A publicly known performer is humiliated, and may suffer a damaged reputation (a -10% penalty to all Communications skills used among his or her intended audience for 1D6 months). If your character intended to draw an emotional response from the audience, he or she evokes the opposite response.

FAILURE: The performance is flawed, and will earn your character neither money nor garner any praise.

SUCCESS: The performance is competent, achieving your character's basic goals and earning mild praise and a modest sum.

SPECIAL: The performance is regarded as extraordinary. It accomplishes exactly what your character intended, earning +50% more than normal wages and winning him or her the respect of peers and audience alike.

CRITICAL: The performance is a masterpiece, and evokes an intense emotional response from its audience; awe, wonder, sadness, or whatever else your character intends. Your character earns double normal wages, and wins some fame. Your character gains a +25% bonus on all Communication rolls with his or her intended audience for 1D6 months. This bonus does not stack if further critical results are rolled, though it can extend the duration of the bonus by a number of months rolled minus the remaining months of the previous critical, with any results of less than 0 treated as 0.

Setting Notes: Perform can be used in any setting. Specific performing arts will vary from era to era.

System Notes: Each specialty of the Perform skill pertains to only one type of performance. Some require specific tools and materials, from instruments to make-up or costumes—that your character must have before he or she can attempt to create a work of art. The amount of time it takes to use Perform is widely variable, from minutes (a quick song or extemporaneous speech) to weeks (to learn, memorize, and rehearse a symphony, opera, or play).

At the gamemaster's discretion, your character may use 1/5 of his or her skill rating in Perform as a temporary bonus to another appropriate Perform skill (for

musical skills), Fast Talk or Persuade (for actors), or even some physical skills (for dancers, tumblers, or acrobats).

The gamemaster may also require the successful use of the Perform (Ritual) skill for a character to use a power, or may gain a bonus in the use of a power. It is recommended that this bonus not exceed +10% to the effects or power's skill chance for a special success or +25% for a critical success. Other benefits (longer duration, increased potency, lowered power point cost, etc.) are at the gamemaster's discretion.

Persuade

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Communication

The tool of priests, lawyers, and politicians, this skill convinces a target that a particular idea or belief is right, correct, or otherwise acceptable. It can be used to make reluctant listeners take action or grant a request. Persuade attempts can employ Socratic logic, structured debate, fiery oratory, empathy, or brute intimidation. Like Fast Talk, the truth of the matter has no bearing on the use of this skill. Unlike Fast Talk, the effects of successful persuasion last indefinitely, until a second Persuade attempt or undeniable circumstances batter down the target's convictions.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character's argument is utterly unconvincing. The target doesn't believe a word of it and is, furthermore, offended by the notion. The target embraces the opposite view, and may become hostile or summon the authorities.

FAILURE: The argument isn't believable enough to sway the target. The target clings to their original position on the matter.

SUCCESS: The target is convinced, granting your character's request or adopting his or her suggested position.

SPECIAL: Moved by an eloquent argument, the target grants your character's request, and gains a favorable impression of him or her. The target will be moved to take action to aid his or her newfound cause, so long as the action does not risk health, livelihood, or well-being.

CRITICAL: The target is utterly convinced, to the point of fanaticism. He or she will take even extreme action, like abandoning his or her job for a new cause or stepping into harm's way, to support your character and cause.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Trying to use Persuade across a language barrier (if both speakers do not have a 50% or higher in the Language) is a *Difficult* action, as is convincing someone of something that runs counter to his

or her personality or core beliefs. The gamemaster may reward effective arguments or good roleplaying with a bonus to the skill check. Depending on the difficulty of the attempt, use of this skill could take minutes, hours, or even days, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Pilot (various)

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Physical

Pilot allows your character to steer, maneuver, and control a vehicle through or across a medium other than the ground. Boats, aircraft, and spacecraft all use different specialties of the Pilot skill.

Specialties: Airplanes, Balloons, Boats, Helicopters, Hovercraft, Jet Aircraft, Starships, and others, as appropriate to the setting.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character loses control of the vehicle. He or she must make a Luck roll to avoid crashing into an obstacle, another vehicle, or stalling out the vehicle. See "Chases" (pages 216-217) for details of crashes. Even if the vehicle does not crash, your character's next Pilot check is made at -20%, and he or she may suffer additional complications; vehicle damage, a fuel leak, etc.

FAILURE: Your character fails to make the desired maneuver, or runs into some other kind of trouble. Consult the Pilot Trouble Table in "Chases" (pages 216-217) for possible mishaps.

SUCCESS: Your character completes the desired maneuver, or holds his or her position in a chase. See "Chases" (pages 216-217) for more information about maneuvers.

SPECIAL: Your character easily completes the desired maneuver, and gains a bonus of +10% to his or her next Pilot roll or attack roll made in aerial combat.

CRITICAL: Steely nerves and expert reflexes push the vehicle to the limits of its performance. Your character completes the desired maneuver, and gains a bonus of +25% to his or her next Pilot roll or attack roll made in aerial combat.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all but the most primitive settings. Specific specialties will vary from era to era, depending on the technology available.

System Notes: Each separate type of vehicle (rowboats, sail boats, prop planes, jet planes) has its own Pilot specialty. Your character may only use 1/2 of his or her skill rating in a different specialty for another specialty, if the original type of vehicle is more advanced. This is at the gamemaster's discretion.

For example, a jet fighter pilot could use one half of his or her Pilot (Jet Aircraft) rating to fly a biplane, but a prop pilot would have a base 01% chance of flying a jet fighter.

This supercedes the normal rules, provided in "Skill Specialties" described on page 46.

Most day-to-day piloting is an automatic task—the gamemaster should only call for a Pilot roll under adverse conditions or for extraordinary maneuvers (combat, vehicular chases, etc.). To resolve vehicle chases, consult the spot rules for "Chases" on pages 216-217.

Projection

Base Chance: DEX x2%

Category: Physical

This optional skill is listed in **Chapter Four: Powers** on page 145 and is used for power-using characters to target power-based attacks. It has no other purpose and is only used if powers are a part of the campaign.

Psychotherapy

Base Chance: 01% (modern or future), 00% (fantasy or medieval)

Category: Mental

In the game, a purely mental form of medicine for First Aid emergencies. More broadly, this skill incorporates the "talking cures" of psychoanalysis but also the medical and pharmaceutical expertise of modern psychiatry. Such care-givers are fully qualified doctors of medicine. They can prescribe drugs and medications among thousands which over time can suspend, treat, and even reverse debilitating psychoses or mental illnesses. As members of hospitals they have access to the equipment and resources of the modern hospital and can informally consult with their peers. Medication and intensive questioning can probe the depths of a damaged psyche, and bring back hope from terror and despair.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: An improper diagnosis or faulty treatment regimen does more harm than good: the patient suffers one of the following effects:

- ❖ The patient must make a Sanity check, for a loss of 1/1D3.
- ❖ The POW rating of one of the patient's indefinite insanities increases by +1.
- ❖ The patient trades one indefinite insanity for another: a patient's phobia might lessen, but at the cost of an addiction to mood stabilizing drugs.

FAILURE: The treatment has no effect. The patient remains the same.

SUCCESS: The treatment takes hold, with one of the following effects:

- ❖ After one month of treatment, the patient regains 1D3-1 points of SAN. The patient's SAN levels cannot be raised above his or her POW x 5 using this skill, minus any

appropriate penalties for knowledge of blasphemous or unspeakable horror. See “Maximum Sanity” on page 315 for details.

❖ Your character is able to properly diagnose the source of an indefinite insanity.

❖ Once the source of an indefinite insanity has been diagnosed, your character can reduce the POW rating of the indefinite insanity by -1 after one month of treatment. Separate rolls must be made for each mental illness treated.

SPECIAL: As above, but the SAN gain is 1D3 or POW reduction is -2.

CRITICAL: As above, but the SAN gain is 1D3+1 or POW reduction is -1D3+1.

Setting Notes: This skill only appears in settings equivalent to the early modern era (19th century earth) and later. At the gamemaster’s discretion, this skill may be available to some types of priests, who have been traditionally known as counselors, confessors, and otherwise tenders of the ill and unwell.

System Notes: This skill is only useful in games that use the optional “Sanity” system (see page 318). Treatment requires four to five hours of therapy per month per indefinite insanity. In early modern or modern times, outpatient therapy is a *Difficult* task: patients must be institutionalized for average skill rolls. Your character may add 1/5 of his or her Science (Pharmacy) skill rating as a temporary bonus to Psychotherapy rolls. At the gamemaster’s discretion, the Psychotherapy skill may be used to manipulate a non-player character’s personality trait much as if it were a SAN score, shifting it positively or negatively by the same number of points. See the optional rules for “Personality Traits” on page 294.

Repair (various)

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Manipulation

In the course of game play, equipment and other objects get damaged or stop working. When this happens, your character can use Repair to fix things. The various specialties of this skill cover different types of repairs and are described below.

Specialties: Following are the suggested specialties for the Repair skill:

ELECTRICAL: This covers modern powered devices, and usually involves changing fuses or bypassing faulty wiring.

ELECTRONIC: This covers modern or futuristic devices with chips, circuit boards, and on-board computers. This is the least flexible type of repair, and jury-rigging is rarely possible.

HYDRAULIC: This covers systems that use pressurized liquids and basic physics principles to create energy. This can also cover steam engines.

MECHANICAL: This covers devices and machines with moving parts. Use it to repair damage or jury-rig temporary solutions for failures.

PLUMBING: Though unglamorous, plumbing handles any repairs of pipes, fittings, and waterworks.

STRUCTURAL: This covers objects without moving parts. A house’s roof, a castle wall, and a sword would require structural repairs to fix. Carpentry, construction, or simple splints or patches is usually involved.

QUANTUM: This repair represents state-of-the-art physics for devices that manipulate electromagnetic radiation at sophisticated levels. This level of repair is only attemptable with highly specialized equipment, or theoretical processes beyond current human comprehension.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Inept meddling makes the situation worse by breaking additional parts or misdiagnosing the problem. The object or device remains broken, taking an additional 1D3 points of damage. At the gamemaster’s discretion, any additional attempts to repair it become *Difficult* actions, or mishaps result in 1D3 damage to your character from the repair attempt (from electric shock, falling debris, a hampered thumb, or some other mishap).

FAILURE: Attempted repairs make no difference in the status or durability of the broken object. It remains broken.

SUCCESS: The broken object regains 1 hit point, becoming usable again or returning to working order. Continued use may break the item again, or skill attempts made using the item may suffer a -5% penalty to skill rating.

SPECIAL: The repair offers significant benefit; the broken object regains 1D3+1 hit points, up to its original maximum -2.

CRITICAL: An expert repair makes the object almost as good as new; the broken object is restored to its original maximum hit points and functionality, and only a critical Spot or appropriate diagnostic skill roll will reveal that it has been repaired.

Setting Notes: Repair skills appear in all settings, though Electrical and Electronic Repair are limited to present day or futuristic settings.

System Notes: Attempting Mechanical or Structural repairs without appropriate tools or spare parts is a *Difficult* action, trying an Electrical or Electronic repair without them is *Impossible*. The gamemaster may allow your character to add 1/5 of his or her skill rating in an appropriate Craft or other appropriate skill as a temporary bonus to Repair checks. Many modern devices (like an automobile) might require a combination of Mechanical, Electrical, and Electronic repair, at the gamemaster’s discretion.

Research

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

This skill allows your character to locate and identify potential sources of information, whether in an archive, library, or on a digital network or internet. When searching for information pertinent to a specific topic or subject, successful rolls identify books, documents, articles, or websites of potential interest.

Specialties: A table to the right presents Research specialties.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Wrong turns and faulty assumptions turn up spurious or faulty paper trails. Your character gains no information, and cannot use that particular library (or network) again until he or she succeeds at a *Difficult* Research roll. In some cases, locating a potential information source is not enough: the desired book may be checked out, stolen, or in the hands of another party. Bypassing such barriers will take ingenuity and other skills.

FAILURE: False leads and blind allies yield no results. Try again.

SUCCESS: Your character's inquiry bears fruit: he or she finds a source of information, and is able to glean one clue from it. If there are no clues to be found, your character is reasonably sure he or she didn't miss anything.

SPECIAL: Painstaking research brings good results: your character finds 1D3 pieces of pertinent information.

CRITICAL: Your character hits the mother lode; he or she locates every potential clue available in a single archive or library (or up to his or her INT in useful and valid clues from some data retrieval repository).

Setting Notes: The rarity of books in many ancient and medieval settings precludes the use of Research in all but the rarest of circumstances. Computer searches are a product of the modern era. In modern or future settings, smart search-engines and AI-based helpers might make all Research attempts *Easy*.

System Notes: Each use of this skill takes four hours of game time. Your character should be able to make no more than two Research rolls at a library per day (or four comprehensive internet searches). Searching an archive without any index or organization is a *Difficult* action. Certain types of records may also be *Difficult* to find. Specific libraries may offer a bonus or penalty to Research rolls based on the size and quality of their collections, or the knowledge and expertise of certain personnel. In every case, the gamemaster must decide whether the library or archive contains any pertinent information.

Research Specialties

The Research skill covers all manner of research methods, whether electronic, paper-based, or some other medium. A gamemaster wishing for more detail can add Research specialties, to allow the 18th century legal librarian a different skill set than a modern data retrieval specialist, or a 1940s-era gumshoe detective. Following are suggested specialties for the Research skill:

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS: This includes scrolls, musty tomes, scraps of parchment, clay tablets, papyrus, etc. Any ancient wizard's library would be a good example.

AUDIOVISUAL: Recordings of any sort, visual and audio, in a variety of mediums, from videotapes, 8-track tapes, reel-to-reel film, cassette tapes, albums, etc. A television or radio station's archives are examples.

BOOKS: The mainstay of libraries, whether old leather-bound tomes in dusty little book-dealers, or modern paperbacks found in contemporary bookstores.

ELECTRONIC DATA: This includes internet or other data storage and retrieval systems, where a computerized method of indexing and hyperlinking is available, and data is displayed on a screen, holographically, and must be either printed, sent electronically, or transferred through electronic means.

MUSEUMS: A combination of physical exhibits and research facilities, this specialty assumes that your character has some access to the archives and other resources available at a museum.

NEWSPAPERS: Using this specialty would either involve visiting a library or newspaper's archives, an old bookstore specializing in old newspapers, or extensive use of microfiche or other simple storage method.

RECORDS: This involves rooting through filing cabinets and folders (or their equivalents), ledger books, official records, minutes from meetings, etc. to determine germane bits of information.

STREETWISE: The word on the streets is potentially as valuable as any found from traditional information sources. With this specialty, your character is adept at discovering the truth from those in the know—following leads and sorting gossip, rumor, and hearsay from fact.

At the gamemaster's discretion, if your character has one Research specialty, he or she should be able to use that skill as if it were *Difficult* while utilizing other specialties, limited by common sense.

For example, the 18th century legal librarian referenced above might not be able to seek out electronic data with his or her specialty in books, but a modern data retrieval specialist trained in electronic data finding should be able to make a Difficult Research (Books) skill roll to find relevant data among old newspapers, government records, legal files, etc.

Ride (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

This skill grants knowledge of the care, saddling, and handling of a specific kind of animal. Use this skill to steer a steed through special maneuvers or difficult terrain, drive it to top speed, or to keep control if the mount rears or stumbles. If it's a living creature your character is on, use his or her Ride skill, if it's a machine (or something rudimentarily mechanical, like a chariot or cart), use Drive or Pilot as appropriate.

Specialties: Specific land animals, flying animals, or monsters, as appropriate to the setting.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character loses control of the mount, and is immediately thrown from the saddle. He or she suffers 1D6 hit points of damage to a random hit location. A successful Jump roll will subtract 1D6 from the damage total. The mount, frenzied, gallops away at top speed.

FAILURE: Your character loses control of the mount, and must make an Agility check or be thrown, as above. He or she can regain control of the mount if a successful Ride check is made in a subsequent round. Your character cannot take any other riding action until this succeeds.

SUCCESS: Your character stays in the saddle and keeps control of his or her mount. If in combat, he or she may make a single combat action (see system notes for some modifiers).

SPECIAL: Your character stays in the saddle, expertly maneuvering his or her mount. Your character gains a bonus of +10% to his or her next Ride or equivalent maneuvering roll, and to his or her next attack roll if still mounted.

CRITICAL: Your character spurs his or her mount to uncanny displays of agility and speed. Your character gains a bonus of +25% to his or her next Ride or equivalent maneuvering roll, and to his or her next attack roll if still mounted.

Setting Notes: Horses as mounts are common to almost all settings prior to 1900 or so, then less common after that, though they continue to be used in some parts of the world. Fantasy settings and Wild West adventures prominently feature mounted combat, as do most military games set prior to World War 2. In some fantasy settings, your character may specialize in a flying mount such as a gryphon, winged horse, or even a dragon.

System Notes: Resolve races between the same breeds of animals using opposed Ride checks. Each specialty applies to one specific type of animal. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character may use one half of his or her Ride skill rating when mounted on a different kind

of animal if the two animals are similar. Ride (Horse) would be applicable to Ride (Camel), but not Ride (Giant Eagle). Your character must have Combat and Ride skills of 50% or higher in order to fight normally if engaging in mounted combat. If the Ride skill is less than 50%, he or she must make a Ride check every round to keep control of his or her mount. If the Combat skill is too low, all attacks are *Difficult* actions. Even if both skills are higher than 50%, your character uses the lower of the two skill ratings to attack. If your character's mount falls, collapses, or dies, the gamemaster should treat the rider as if he or she has been thrown. See "Mounted Combat" on page 227 for more information.

Science (various)

Base Chance: 01%. The gamemaster may modify the base chance for different specialties, as appropriate to the setting.

Category: Mental

Science is the process by which researchers observe phenomena and objects, and draw conclusions about their nature and properties based on data gathered from observation and experiment. Reason and deduction are the tools of science, and its ultimate goal is the understanding of every aspect of reality and the universe.

Specialties: Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Meteorology, Natural History, Planetology, Physics, and others (see "Science Specialties" on the following pages).

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Bad recollections, procedures, and errors of judgment lead to very wrong conclusions. Your character gains one patently false conclusion, but fully believes that he or she is correct.

FAILURE: Shoddy thought and experimentation yield minimal or inconclusive results. No information or conclusion is gained.

SUCCESS: Your character's knowledge and expertise is equal to the task: he or she can achieve one of the following results:

- ❖ The correct identification of an object, phenomenon, or other piece of data associated with that science. An astronomer, for instance, could distinguish a flaring star from a planet or comet.
- ❖ Recollection of data or information pertinent to that science. An astronomer could, for example, recall the type and relative age of the flaring star, as well as its name.
- ❖ Conduct a successful laboratory experiment, operation, or field observation pertaining to the science, generating sound data. The astronomer could, after observing the flaring star, analyze spectrographic data from the star, and conclude that the star is collapsing.

Science Specialties

The following list of potential Science skills specialties is by no means comprehensive. You and the gamemaster are encouraged to devise new specialties appropriate to the setting if they are not listed here.

ASTRONOMY: The study of the universe, including the planets, planetary motion, the sun, stellar life cycles, and astronomical phenomena. Use this skill to know which stars and planets will be visible on a given night, predict an eclipse or comet, or analyze the spectrum of a distant star to determine its composition, distance, and intrinsic brightness. The archaic version of this science is Astrology.

BIOLOGY: The study of living organisms, including their internal structure, behavior, and classification. This skill includes the properties and behavior of enzymes and hormones, and is vital to an understanding of diseases, the effects of drugs, and nutrition. Use this skill to identify a natural venom or toxin, find a vaccine for an unknown disease, isolate the hallucinogenic compound in a jungle plant, guess the purpose of an unknown organ or structure, or classify a new organism. Often used in conjunction with Botany, Genetics, and Zoology.

BOTANY: The study and classification of plant life. Use this skill to name or identify a known plant, its habitat and properties (poisonous, nutritious, etc.), and its particular needs and potential uses. The skill can also help classify and predict the behavior of an unknown plant.

CHEMISTRY: The study of the nature of matter; of substances solid, liquid, and gaseous, and the effects of temperature, energy, and pressure on them. Chemistry also deals with the interactions and behaviors of substances and elements. Use this skill to create or extract chemical compounds, including explosives, poisons, poison gasses, and acids. Reagents (possibly expensive or rare) are required. The archaic version of this science is Alchemy.

CRYPTOGRAPHY: A specialized discipline of mathematics, cryptography deals with the codes and ciphers, the ability to encrypt and decrypt information. Use this skill to turn a message into gibberish, identify an existing cipher, or break a code. Many modern or futuristic codes cannot be broken without computers, if at all.

GENETICS: Heredity and elementary Biochemistry serve as the portal to this advanced science, which focuses on the study and manipulation of genes and chromosomes. Use this skill to identify a genetic defect, identify an individual or species from a DNA sample, edit an organism's traits, or design a new organism based on the genomes of other organisms.

GEOLOGY: The study of the origin, history, and structure of planet earth, from volcanism and plate tectonics to rock strata and erosion. Use this skill to identify types of rock, predict if valuable ores, compounds, or fossils might be found in a given area, or try to predict catastrophic behavior like earthquakes and volcanoes.

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❖ Correctly predict the behavior of an object or phenomenon associated with that science. The astronomer could conclude that the star will soon explode in a supernova.

SPECIAL: Quick wits and ample education yield superb results; your character gains several pieces of information, even realizing obscure conclusions.

CRITICAL: A burst of insight leads to a wealth of conclusions; your character gains all appropriate information, accounts for the most contrary data, and notices new trends and principles that may end up advancing the scientific discipline as a whole.

Setting Notes: Ancient, medieval, and most historic or fantastic settings have a very limited understanding of science. In such eras, gamemasters may choose to cap any science skill at 50%, or even 30%. Based on the era, gamemasters may rule that a particular scientific task is impossible. Programming a true artificial intelligence, for example, would be near-impossible in a present day game, but may be commonplace in a science fiction setting. Based on the setting, the gamemaster may choose to classify some Science skills as Knowledge skills, or *vice versa*. The gamemaster may also choose to make a

generic Science skill to represent a generic scientific expertise, if a dramatically-simplified skill list is desired.

System Notes: Each Science skill specialty covers only one scientific discipline: if you wish for your character to learn another specialty, he or she must purchase a separate skill. Many science skills have broad definitions, and some overlap exists between the specialties described below. To calculate an asteroid's orbit, your character might use Science (Physics) or Science (Astronomy). The gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether a given Science skill applies to a given situation. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can use up to 1/2 of his or her normal skill for a related field, if the fields are closely related, such as Physics and Astronomy. Success in a related skill roll does not yield an experience check for either skill.

Most Science skills require specialized equipment, including specialized reagents, instruments, computers, or a laboratory. Science rolls can take anywhere from 30 minutes to weeks or months, at the gamemaster's discretion: four hours for an experiment is a good average.

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MATHEMATICS: The science of numbers and their manipulation, from simple addition through algebra, geometry, and even calculus. Statistics, modeling, and chaos theory form the modern cutting edge of this specialty. Use this skill to quickly and correctly solve math problems and make calculations. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can add 1/5 of this skill rating as a temporary bonus to any other Navigate or Science skill rolls.

METEOROLOGY: The study of atmospheric phenomena; how pressure, temperature, and moisture all conspire to create weather. Use this skill to predict the weather in a local region based on existing climate data, identify the conditions that create specific weather effects like snow, fog, and storms.

NATURAL HISTORY: The study of plant and animal life in its natural environment, and the basis for wilderness survival. Your character could use this skill to identify a species by tracks, spoor, habits, or appearance, predict which fruits and berries are safe to eat, or avoid predators in the wild by knowing their habits. Natural History is a very broad, general skill—the Sciences of Biology, Zoology, and Botany are required for more detailed or specific information.

PHARMACY: The intersection of biology, chemistry, and medicine, this skill governs the effects of specific chemical compounds and substances on living things. Use this skill to synthesize medicines from proper ingredients, identify a drug or poison by its effects, remember the side

effects of a compound, or suggest the best available medicine for a specific sickness or ailment. Often used in conjunction with First Aid, Medicine, or Psychotherapy.

PHYSICS: The study of forces, pressure, materials, motion, magnetism, electricity, optics, light, radioactivity, and other related phenomena. Use this skill to chart an object's orbit or falling arc, predict the breaking point of a material or object, or compute the escape velocity for a space craft. Often used in conjunction with Astronomy.

PLANETOLOGY: The application of geology to other planets. Use this skill to predict the properties, composition, and climate of a planet, as well as the presence of valuable ores or compounds and the potential presence of life. This is a somewhat theoretical science in all but science fiction settings.

PSYCHOLOGY: The study of human thought, personality, and behavior, from child development and learning to deviant behavior and neurosis. Use this skill to predict the behavior of an individual based on their upbringing and background (or vice versa), identify the symptoms of a mental illness, or identify how best to communicate with or teach an individual based on his personality.

ZOOLOGY: The biological study of the behavior, anatomy, and physiology of animal species. Use this skill to identify a known animal based on traces or parts of that animal (including tracks, droppings, hairs, or bite marks), list the habits and qualities of a known animal, or classify and predict the attributes of an unknown animal based on the same data.

Attempting a Science roll without sufficient time or equipment is a *Difficult* action, or may be *Impossible*.

At the gamemaster's discretion, you can add 1/5 of your character's skill rating in one Science skill specialty as a temporary bonus to another Science skill specialty, or to another skill entirely if appropriate.

For example, your character is attempting to make a metallic alloy. He or she could add 1/5 of the Science (Chemistry) skill to the Craft (Metalworking) skill. So, if your character had Science (Chemistry) 70% and Craft (Metalworking) 37%, he or she could temporarily add 14% (1/5 of 70%) to the Craft skill of 37%, for a total of 51%.

Sense

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

Sight and hearing are the most dominant human senses, but it is possible to perceive the world with the other three. The skill measures your character's senses of taste, touch, and smell; his or her ability to notice or identify a given stimulus. A high Sense skill rating gives

your character an almost uncanny awareness of the world around him or her.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Distractions leave your character oblivious to the stimulus, or his or her active imagination starts inventing tastes, seams, or odors that aren't there.

FAILURE: Your character does not notice anything out of the ordinary, or cannot identify a smell or taste.

SUCCESS: Your character notices an appropriate smell, taste, or sensation, and can identify it with a successful Idea roll. Objects can be identified by touch, or your character can find an object in a dark room by feeling around for it.

SPECIAL: Your character notices even faint stimuli, and can identify substances from odor or taste with an *Easy* Idea roll. Your character can find his or her way in a dark place by touch without mishap.

CRITICAL: Your character can detect the faintest odors, tastes, or details: he or she can tell from a tiny taste or brief exposure if food or drink has been tampered with, and can trace invisible hairline cracks by touch. Complex

items can be disassembled in pitch darkness by sense of touch alone.

Setting Notes: This skill exists in almost all settings.

System Notes: Like Listen and Spot, Sense is both an active and a passive skill: you can request your character to make a Sense roll, or the gamemaster can call for a skill roll in appropriate situations. Some strong stimuli require *Easy* rolls to Sense, while noticing fainter ones is a *Difficult* task.

Shield

Base Chance: As per shield (see "Shields" on page 262).

Category: Combat

A shield is, essentially, a piece of armor that your character can aim. Use this skill to block incoming attacks with a shield or other appropriate implement. All shield blocks follow the same rules for parrying (see below and "Parry" on page 191). Your character can attack with a shield, treating this skill as if it were a Melee Weapon skill. Damage ratings are given for shields in the weapons lists on page 263. Shields are considered knockback weapons for purposes of specials (see page 197 for details).

Effects: See the "Attack and Defense Matrix" on page 191 and the "Melee Weapon Parry Fumble Table" on page 194 for specific effects. Shields usually do crushing or knockback special effects (see page 197 for details).

Setting Notes: Shields are usable in all eras, though they are common in historic and fantasy settings. In many modern and futuristic settings, advanced armor and the ubiquity of firearms renders most shields obsolete.

System Notes: Shield blocks count as parries. As with other parry attempts, your character may make more than one shield roll in a round, but each additional roll incurs a -30% penalty to the shield or parry skill rating. Large shields can provide cover against missile or even firearms attacks. See "Shields" on page 262 for more information.

Sleight of Hand

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

The art of manipulating small objects (anything smaller than a hand, like dice, cards, coins, and even wallets or letters) without attracting attention or in a misleading manner. Card sharks, pickpockets, and stage magicians all depend on Sleight of Hand to ply their trades. Your character can use this skill to pull a coin out of someone's ear, make a ball placed under a cup disappear, pull a hidden rabbit out of a hat, take a knife off a table without being noticed, or steal someone's wallet. Once

an object has been palmed or taken, use the Hide skill to hide it from a concerted search.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Clumsy fingers or bad luck ruin the attempt: a magic trick fails in an embarrassing way, or a would-be thief is caught with his or her hand in the target's pocket.

FAILURE: The trick or move is poorly done. Magic tricks fail, as do attempted thefts. An unsuspecting target succeeding in an Idea roll realizes that he or she was about to be robbed.

SUCCESS: The trick or theft succeeds. Audience members or targets are unaware of any trickery unless they can make a Spot roll.

SPECIAL: The trick or theft succeeds. Audience members or targets are unaware of any trickery unless they can make a special success on a Spot roll.

CRITICAL: The trick or theft succeeds. Audience members or targets are unaware of any trickery unless they can make a critical success on a Spot roll.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in most settings and eras.

System Notes: Your character may add 1/5 of his or her Fine Manipulation skill as a temporary bonus to Sleight of Hand skill rolls.

Spot

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

The art of noticing details. Use this skill to search a room for potentially important details, find a hidden compartment, notice a fleeting detail, recognize a disguised foe, or spot enemies lying in ambush. Keen eyes and quick wits are both essential.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character misses even obvious details, or an overactive imagination leaves him seeing things.

FAILURE: A cursory examination reveals nothing interesting. Your character fails to notice a stimulus.

SUCCESS: Your character finds something hidden, or notices an important detail.

SPECIAL: Sharp eyes and keen deductions take in many details. Your character finds up to 1D3 important clues, and can even deduce from a few telltale clues what might have happened at a given place.

CRITICAL: At a glance, your character can read a scene or place like a book, noticing even the tiniest details. Even carefully hidden or concealed objects are found after a thorough search.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Spot is both an active and a passive skill: your character can make a Spot roll to actively search or examine, or the gamemaster can call for a Spot roll to see if your character spontaneously notices a fleeting detail. Hiding or deliberate concealment requires an opposed Spot vs. Hide test to resolve. Spot is also often opposed to Disguise. This skill is useless in darkness: low light or thick fog makes Spot attempts *Difficult*. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can add 1/5 of his or her Spot rating as a temporary bonus to another skill requiring sharp eyesight, like Track.

Status

Base Chance: 15%, or based on social class or other factors.

Category: Communication

Specialties: One social class, profession, social group, or region.

This skill measures your character's reputation, professional credentials, social class, prosperity, fame, and even personal honor. Whenever clout or credentials serve as an advantage, your character can use his or her Status skill to influence others by throwing weight around. A successful Status check might convince a bank to make a cash loan or forgive a debt, intimidate a non-player character to grant a favor, convince a vendor to settle for an I.O.U., pressure authorities into keeping a matter quiet, or grant experts special favors because of their fame.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character manages to offend the target. If the target can legally refuse a request or service, he or she does so. If forced to comply, the target will grumble and do the minimum required. The target takes an active dislike to your character, and may attempt to poison others' opinions of him or her.

FAILURE: Your character's credentials do not impress the target. He or she will not grant any special favors, and politely refuse special requests.

SUCCESS: Your character's credentials are deemed sufficient enough for special treatment. The target will grant a single request or provide a favor, so long as the request is legal, poses no risk to the target, and is not too onerous.

SPECIAL: The target is impressed by your character's connections, and goes beyond the call of duty to help. Even onerous favors or requests are granted, or more than one ordinary favor or request is granted. The target will bend rules and take risks in order to curry favor, perhaps even at some personal risk.

CRITICAL: The target is overawed to meet with your character. No request will be denied, and no favor is too small.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings in one form or another, though some campaigns (Elizabethan-era court intrigue, for example) will make far more use of it than others.

Status Skill, Social Status, & Character Wealth

As described in the sections on "Creating a Character" (page 79) and "Character Professions" (page 80), your character's Status rating can have a huge impact on his or her social standing and wealth. Following are three example tables. These tables assign a social rank and average wealth level based on Status, and places a cap on maximum character wealth. As your character earns Status, his or her position and fortune will likely improve. Your gamemaster should feel free to revise these tables or create his or her own based on the needs of the campaign and setting.

Prehistoric Status

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Wealth Cap
01-15	Slave (Lower Class)	Poor	Poor
16-95	Tribesman (Middle Class)	Poor	Average
96-00	Nobility (Upper Class)	Affluent	Wealthy

Ancient/Dark Age/Medieval/Imperial Status

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Wealth Cap
1-39	Lower Class	Destitute	Destitute
40-43	Lower Middle Class	Poor	Average
44-47	Middle Class	Average	Average
48-49	Upper Middle Class	Average	Average
50-75	Upper Class	Affluent	Affluent
76-95	Nobility	Affluent	Wealthy
96-00	Monarchy	Wealthy	Wealthy

Victorian/Western/Pulp/Modern Status

Status	Social Rank	Wealth Rating	Wealth Cap
1-14	Lower Class	Destitute	Poor
15-29	Lower Class	Poor	Average
30-39	Lower Middle Class	Average	Affluent
40-75	Middle Class	Average	Affluent
76-95	Upper Middle Class	Affluent	Wealthy
96-00	Upper Class	Wealthy	Wealthy

Status may also have an effect upon the initial equipment your character begins with. At the gamemaster's discretion, you may make Status rolls to determine if your character begins with better gear than his or her wealth level and profession would indicate. See "Starting Equipment" in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more details on this. Any Status rolls made to determine initial equipment are not considered to be during the course of adventure and are not eligible for experience checks.

System Notes: Status can be an extremely important skill; gamemasters should place caps on beginning character Status of 50% or even lower, unless specific character concepts require a high Status.

Status only operates within a given area, depending on your character's position: the town doctor in a rural hamlet is practically an official, but has little clout in a distant town or city. A noble or monarch, on the other hand, can exert his or her influence in a much wider arena. Using Status outside your character's area of influence is a *Difficult* action.

If the gamemaster decides that your character's expertise with a particular skill may influence his or her credentials, your character gains a temporary bonus to his or her Status skill equal to the 1/5 of the applicable skill rating.

For example, a scientist has a Status of 45% and a Science (Astronomy) skill rating of 90%. In situations where his or her professional credentials are important, the scientist can add +18% (1/5 of 90%) as a temporary bonus to Status, for a total of 63% when dealing with non-player characters who would be impressed with that expertise in astronomy.

Exactly who will or won't be impressed by your character's exceptional skill is ultimately up to the gamemaster.

Status cannot be improved using normal skill experience and improvement rules. The gamemaster should offer Status as a reward for loyal service, daring deeds, or extraordinary merit between scenarios. A single point per adventure is reasonable, with extraordinary deeds or feats increasing the gain to 1D3, 1D4, or possibly even 1D6 points. What goes up can go down: scandals, misdemeanors, and social improprieties erode your character's Status. Unseemly rumors might result in a 1D3% drop, while conviction of a crime could reduce the skill rating by a much more significant amount, appropriate to the original status.

The gamemaster can also use Status as a way to measure your character's fame, and that of others. When a non-player character first meets your character, the gamemaster may roll against your character's Status to see if the stranger recognizes you. You can do the same thing for prominent non-player characters, to see if your character recognizes them.

Stealth

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Physical

The art of moving without being heard, this skill allows your character to sneak through an area without drawing attention to him- or herself. No cover is required, but a light tread, confidence and discipline are both called for. To avoid being seen while immobile, use the Hide skill.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character draws attention to him- or herself, and is automatically noticed by any nearby non-player characters.

FAILURE: Clumsy attempts at sneaking do little to conceal your character: if your character fails a Luck roll, any nearby non-player characters will notice him or her.

SUCCESS: Light steps make your character harder to detect; a successful Listen check must be made to hear your character.

SPECIAL: A catlike tread makes your character very difficult to detect; he or she can only be noticed with a special success on a Listen roll.

CRITICAL: Perfect stealth and discipline render your character undetectable by normal means: only a critical Listen roll will notice him or her.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Stealth assumes that your character is on the move, though slowly. Moving more than 1/2 your character's normal MOV rate makes using the Stealth skill *Difficult*. Environmental factors (ambient noise, thick carpets, creaky floors) or gear (soft-soled shoes, noisy armor, bulky equipment) can grant bonuses or impose penalties to Stealth rolls.

Strategy

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Mental

This skill incorporates tactical perception and knowledge of basic tactics to guide forces in battle, from a small squad to a massive army or fleet.

Effects: When used at a small-unit level (up to two subordinates per point of your character's POW), this skill has the following effects:

FUMBLE: Bad assumptions or tactical blunders put your character's team at a distinct disadvantage (trapped on the low ground, outflanked, etc.). All combat tasks attempted by your character's subordinates are at -25% for the first 1D4 combat rounds of the encounter.

FAILURE: Your character's perception of the tactical situation is flawed, putting his or her subordinates at a slight disadvantage. Your subordinates suffer a -10% penalty to all combat tasks for the first 1D4 rounds of the fight.

SUCCESS: Your character makes a competent assessment of the tactical situation, and his or her subordinates engage the enemy on even terms. All combat skill checks are made without further modification.

SPECIAL: Your character gains a valuable insight into the situation, and his or her subordinates are able to seize a minor advantage. All his or her subordinates gain a +10%



Through the use of strategy and teamwork, a band of disparate heroes can defeat whatever the gamemaster has in mind.

bonus to all combat skill rolls for the first 1D4 rounds of the fight.

CRITICAL: Your character makes a brilliant decision, placing his or her side at a decisive advantage. For the first 1D4 rounds of combat, all of his or her subordinates' combat actions are at +25%.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all but the most primitive of settings.

System Notes: Massive engagements involving entire armies should be resolved in abstract, with an opposed Strategy roll between the opposing leaders influencing the outcome. Using Strategy in unfavorable conditions (outnumbered more than two to one, poorly equipped, etc.) is a *Difficult* action.

Strategy requires at least five minutes of unimpeded preparation for your character to evaluate the situation, choose optimal positions, etc., and may require longer for larger-scale engagements. Though often used in conjunction with Command, these skills are not complementary. Any bonuses or penalties from a Command skill roll are cumulative with bonuses or penalties from a strategy check.

Swim

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

This skill lets your character keep his or her head above water and propel him- or herself through liquid. Swim

rolls should be used for dangerous or stressful situations. Floating, dog paddling, and treading water are Automatic tasks under normal conditions and do not require skill rolls.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: A cramp or other mishap is disastrous: your character goes under with a mouthful of water, and begins drowning immediately. See "Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation" on page 218. Once your character begins to drown, only a *Difficult* Swim roll or outside assistance can get him or her back to the surface to breathe again.

FAILURE: Your character founders, and cannot make forward progress. If his or her next Swim roll also fails, he or she begins to drown, as above.

SUCCESS: If already swimming, your character can move 5 meters per combat round. If foundering or drowning, your character successfully surfaces and starts treading water. If his or her next Swim roll succeeds, the character begins to move again.

SPECIAL: Your character moves through the water easily, moving 6 meters per round. If the optional fatigue system is used, the fatigue point cost for swimming is reduced by 1/4.

CRITICAL: Your character swims like a fish, moving 8 meters per round. If the optional fatigue system is used, the fatigue cost for swimming is reduced by half.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: In calm waters, Swim rolls are only needed once per turn. Swimming in rough waters requires a Swim check each round. Your character must have at least one hand free to Swim, and swimming with only one hand free is a *Difficult* action. Your character can tow a buoyant object of up to his or her own SIZ+2 indefinitely, assuming a free hand or some means of attaching the object to your character. Carrying something that does not float is much more difficult—your character can carry anything up to his or her STR characteristic in pounds indefinitely without difficulty: above this weight a STR vs. SIZ resistance roll must be attempted each combat round.

Specialized equipment (floats, swim fins, etc.) offers bonuses to Swim attempts of +5 to +15%, depending on their quality. Swimming (as opposed to floating) is very tiring, costing 1 fatigue point per turn. Resolve aquatic races as opposed Swim rolls, costing 1 fatigue point per round. Encumbrance makes swimming very difficult: subtract ENC from your character's Swim rating. If your character's ENC exceeds his or her STR, he or she will sink like a stone, and must shed weight or drown. If your character is armored, the armor has a penalty applied to the Swim skill, described on page 203 in "Armor". Removing armor in water is difficult. For each point of

armor value worn, your character must make a successful Swim check to stay afloat (if required) and a successful Agility roll to remove 1 point of armor value. If random armor values are utilized, the maximum value of the armor is its armor value. Natural armor or armor conferred by a power does not impose this penalty.

Melee combat in or under water is difficult: an attacker uses the lower of his or her Combat or Swim skill ratings to resolve attacks, and using the Dodge skill is *Difficult*. Only impaling weapons are useful—all others do 1D3–1 points of damage per hit. Water resistance also adds 3 points of armor value to any target. See “Underwater Combat” on page 234 for more information.

Teach

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Communication

Use this skill whenever your character attempts to train or teach information or technique to another, using lecture, exercise, or physical sparring.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Faulty examples, poor communication, and shoddy lessons prevent any learning and may set students back. After the allotted time the student must make an Idea roll or lose 1D2 skill points. Skills cannot be reduced below 0%.

FAILURE: Obscure lessons prevent any learning. No skill gain.

SUCCESS: Your character's lessons take hold, offering a chance for improvement. At the end of the teaching interval, the student rolls 1D6–2 for skill gain (minimum 0).

SPECIAL: Especially clear lessons from which the student learns well. At the end of the teaching interval the student rolls 1D6 for skill gain.

CRITICAL: The student gains special insight into the subject, and thrives under your character's guidance. At the end of the teaching interval, the student rolls 1D6+2 for skill gain.

Setting Notes: This skill is available in all settings or eras. In fantasy or medieval settings teaching usually occurs between a mentor and a single student, though modern settings can incorporate classes of hundred, or even correspondence or remote learning. Modern or futuristic settings, with their advances in knowledge, research, and pedagogy, impart a +1 or +2 bonus to skill point increases, at the gamemaster's discretion.

System Notes: To be a successful teacher for a particular skill, your character must have twice the student's skill rating, or a skill rating of 50% (whichever is lower) to teach that skill to others. The system on “Skill

Training” on page 184 describes teaching and skill training in detail.

Technical Skill (various)

Base Chance: 00% (fantasy/historical), 01% (modern), 05% (future)

Category: Mental

This skill covers the use and maintenance of advanced technological devices like computer systems, robots, or the gadgets common to science fiction settings. In a fantasy or historical setting, this could be utilized to make mechanical traps, clockwork contrivances, or even siege engines. Your character can employ this skill to properly use a specific kind of device, program a device, or troubleshoot a problem. A skilled user can modify devices to improve their performance or use them for a new purpose, or bypass security access protocols.

Specialties: Clockworks, Computer Programming, Computer Use, Cybernetics, Electronics, Electronic Security, Robotics, Sensor Systems, Siege Engines, Traps, and others as fitting to the campaign.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character bungles his or her attempt to use the device, erasing data, crashing systems, or scrambling standard settings. His or her attempt to use the device fails, and the device cannot be used properly until brought back on line with a special success.

FAILURE: Your character cannot properly activate or utilize the device. All attempts are clumsy and ineffective.

SUCCESS: Your character can activate and properly use the device. For a computer, this includes utilizing software packages or gaining network access on an open network, or devising a new routine or database. For other devices, your character can make normal use of the device.

SPECIAL: Your character masters the intricacy of the device, and can modify it to improve the function of the device, or use it for a new purpose; improving the range of a sensor system, for example, or setting it to monitor a different kind of input. For computers, your character can overcome simple security protocols and access encrypted data.

CRITICAL: Your character operates the device with flair, extending its capabilities or finishing difficult tasks in less than half the usual time. Computer users can hack into even the most secure systems, write their own spyware, or retrieve lost data from a crashed system.

Setting Notes: Computers are the most common advanced device in modern settings, but future periods can employ dozens of Technical Skill specialties. Fantasy or historical settings can utilize the Technical

skill for a variety of devices such as traps, clockwork or geared devices, siege engines, etc.

System Notes: Each specialty of this skill refers to a single kind of device or system. Some Science, Knowledge, or Repair skills are complimentary skills to Technical, granting your character a temporary bonus of 1/5 the appropriate Technical Skill to those skill rolls.

Throw

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

This skill allows your character to hit a target with a thrown object, or to throw a weapon otherwise not balanced for throwing (such as throwing a greatsword or shield). This covers improvised thrown objects, weapons not balanced for throwing, or non-weapons. Lassos are also covered by this skill. *For example, this can cover a beer mug, lawn darts, a bar stool, a football, ring-toss at a county fair, Frisbee, or throwing a two-handed sword.* It also represents catching items, where appropriate. See “System Notes” below for details. If the weapon is traditionally thrown, use the Missile Weapon skill.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

FUMBLE: Your character drops the object, or strains something in the attempt. In combat, the throw is disastrous: see the Missile Weapon Fumble Table on page 194.

FAILURE: The hurled object misses the target. If hurled from above, roll 1D4 to pick a side if the object falls in front, behind, or to the right or left of the target. If thrown laterally, roll 1D2 to determine if it veered to the right or left, and another to see if the throw was short or long. The object misses by 1D3 times the following, based on the range of the initial throw:

Distance Thrown	1D3 x
1 meter	3 centimeters
1–10 meters	30 centimeters
11–20 meters	1 meter
21–30 meters	2 meters
each additional 10 meters	+1 meter

SUCCESS: The hurled object hits the target or lands where it is intended. If damage is intended, it is rolled normally.

SPECIAL: Your character's throw is dead-on. Improvised weapons strike a vital area on the target. Pointed items score an impaling special effect if appropriate (see page 196), while blunt projectiles (rocks, baseballs, etc.) may inflict a crushing special effect upon the target (see page 195).

CRITICAL: Your character's throw is perfect, and the target's armor is ignored, if appropriate.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras.

System Notes: Your character can usually add 1/2 of his or her damage bonus to an improvised thrown weapon's base damage. Well-balanced objects designed for throwing (including footballs, grenades, darts, etc.) can be thrown normally one meter for every point your character's STR exceeds the SIZ of the object. Unbalanced objects can be thrown one meter for every 3 points of STR over the object's SIZ. Throwing up to twice that range is a *Difficult* action. If the object is within 10 SIZ points of your character's STR, a successful roll on the resistance table must be made to see if the item can be grasped and held aloft to throw properly. Thrown objects can be aimed: see “Aimed Attacks” on page 212. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character can use the 1/2 his or her Throw skill with an actual thrown missile weapon if he or she does not have the relevant Missile Weapon skill, though such use will not grant an experience check in that particular skill, even if successful.

Track

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

This skill allows your character to follow the trail of a person, vehicle, or animal over soft ground, through brush, and across broken ground.

Effects: Following are the results for different degrees of success:

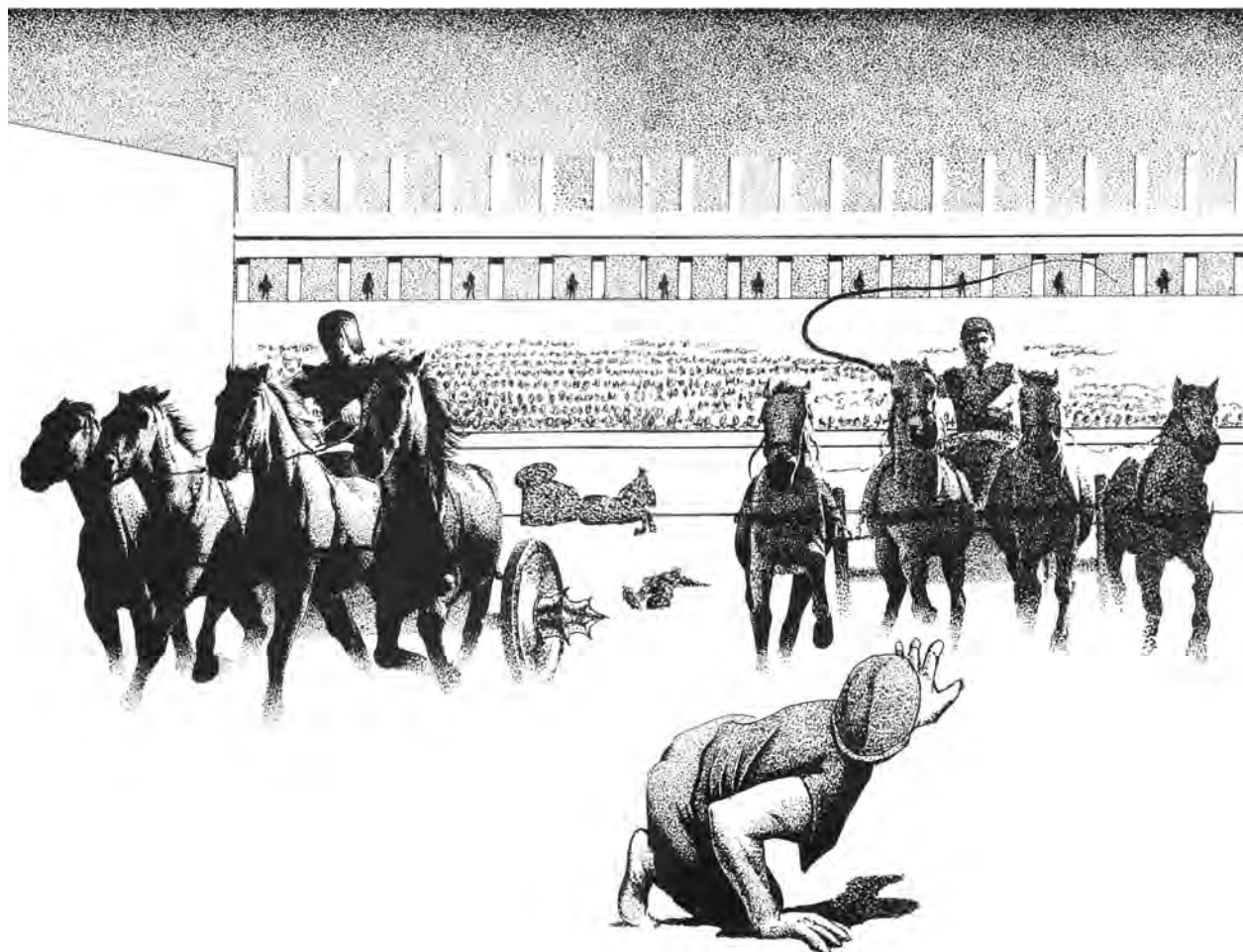
FUMBLE: Inattention and bad luck lead your character astray: he or she picks up a false trail, following it away from the quarry. Your character must double back and succeed at a *Difficult* Track roll.

FAILURE: Your character cannot find sufficient traces to follow. He or she loses the trail, or never finds it.

SUCCESS: Your character finds the trail, and can follow it at 1/2 normal movement speed until a turn or changing condition requires another Track roll. Your character can draw one conclusion about the quarry tracked with a successful Idea roll. *For example, your character might be able to discern that the quarry is wearing military-style boots.*

SPECIAL: Keen eyes lock on to even a faint trail. Your character can follow the trail at 75% normal movement, and the next Track roll is made with an *Easy* difficulty. Your character can draw two conclusions about the quarry tracked with a successful Idea roll. *For example, the quarry is wearing military-issue boots, and walks with a limp.*

CRITICAL: Your character finds even the tiniest or faintest of signs, reading the trail as if it were a map. Your character can follow the trail at normal movement, and all remaining Track rolls for this trail are made with an *Easy* difficulty. Your character can draw up to five conclusions about the quarry with a successful Idea roll. *For example,*



Here is an instance where Dodge is probably a more effective strategy than either trying to Parry or relying on luck.

after careful study of the trail, your character deduces that the quarry is male, approximately two meters tall, wearing military-issue boots, walks with a limp, and is carrying another person over his shoulder.

Setting Notes: This skill appears in all settings and eras. In modern and futuristic settings, advanced equipment (thermal sensors, chemical sniffers, or advanced scanners) can add a bonus of +10% to +20% to Track skill ratings.

System Notes: Making a Track skill roll takes 1D3 minutes. The gamemaster should call for a new Track roll whenever the trail turns, or when conditions change; such as when the trail passes from a field into a forest, or crosses a river. A quarry attempting to hide his or her trail opposes his or her Hide or Track skill against the hunter's Track skill. Moving at anything faster than 1/2 normal movement rate while tracking makes the Track skill *Difficult*.

Some environments and quarries will grant bonuses to Track skill ratings or make Track attempts *Easy*; others impose penalties or render all attempts *Difficult*.

Every day that has passed since the trail was laid down imposes a -20% penalty to the Track skill rating. Bad weather (rain or snow) completely destroys a trail in a matter of hours. Tracking something across water or concrete, or tracking anything at night is usually impossible, unless the quarry is leaving some kind of trail (for example, paint-spattered feet or bleeding wounds). With the gamemaster's permission, your character can add 1/5 of his or her Spot or Knowledge (Natural History) skill rating to his or her Track skill rating as a temporary bonus. If your character is tracking a strong-smelling quarry, a temporary bonus of 1/5 of the Sense skill rating might be more appropriate. These bonuses do not stack—use whichever is higher.



CHAPTER FOUR

POWERS



Characters from wondrous settings may be gifted with extraordinary powers including magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, and super powers. **Chapter Two: Characters** deals with creating normal human characters without exceptional abilities—other than potentially Olympian characteristics and levels of skill. This section of the rules covers characters with powers and abilities greater than those of normal folks.

This chapter presents several powers systems for use in your campaigns. This chapter differs somewhat from previous chapters in that it consists of five relatively different systems, rather than a core set of rules and optional systems. Some of these systems are not immediately compatible with one another, while others are easily used side-by-side.

The gamemaster should become familiar with these power systems and choose the one (or ones) best suited for the campaign he or she wants to run. When this is decided, the gamemaster should tell the players if they are able to purchase powers, what system(s) will be used, and what the guidelines are for purchasing powers.

This section described five types of powers: magic spells, mutations, sorcery, psychic abilities, and super powers. The five classes of powers are described below.

❖ **Magic Powers:** A simple magic system where spells work like skills, with percentile rolls to determine success. These can be increased in level of efficacy, but each spell is equivalent to a unique skill. A character using this magic system usually

The Scope of these Rules

The powers systems here are a sampling of those presented in many Chaosium, Inc. games. The magic system is based on *Magic World* from the *Worlds of Wonder* boxed set. Mutations are loosely based on those from *Hawkmoon*. The psychic abilities are loosely based on the magic system in *Elfquest* and other sources. Sorcery is a generic variant of the system from *Elric!* and the 5th edition of *Stormbringer*. The super powers are an abbreviated version of those from *Super-World* from *Worlds of Wonder* and the successor *Superworld* game. These games are described in the bibliography in **Chapter Twelve: Appendix**.

The powers presented here are not all-encompassing and represent a representative sampling of each power type. Further sourcebooks and games using *Basic Roleplaying* will present expanded powers systems such as super-powers, more magic spells, new magic systems, additional mutations, etc. as well as fleshing out the powers presented in this chapter.

has a small number of spells that he or she utilizes frequently, as if the spells were weapons.

- ❖ **Mutations:** Mutations are often simple additions or special abilities that accentuate or expand your character's capabilities, like an extra limb or a heightened sense of smell. Some mutations add new capabilities, such as production of toxins or other chemicals. Unlike other power sets, some mutations hinder the character that possesses them.
- ❖ **Psychic Abilities:** Your character will manifest these powers through his or her mental strength and force of will. Psychic abilities are almost always resolved as resistance rolls with your character's INT or POW as the acting force, opposing an environmental force or another character's INT or POW characteristic. A character with psychic abilities may have a few abilities he or she is relatively powerful in, or many such abilities.
- ❖ **Sorcery:** This type of magic allows your character to recite a small magical verse and have a magic effect go off. Sorcery spells automatically work, except when they are resisted, and can have different levels of effectiveness. Your character is not limited to the same spells from day-to-day, and can change the spells he or she memorized, picking the desired ones from a large repertoire of spells.
- ❖ **Super Powers:** Super powers are almost always expansions of existing skills, new skills, or simply allow your character to exceed his or her natural limits (characteristics, etc.) by some amazing amount. The use of super powers is often resolved with resistance rolls, though some super powers are automatic.

Though the power types are different in nature, it is possible to integrate them with one another.

Opposed Powers of Different Types

Though the power systems presented here have different mechanics (magic spells don't work like sorcery spells, psychic abilities don't work like super powers, and mutations are their own thing entirely) in many cases they can exist side-by-side. In super hero settings, psychics and sorcerers and costumed mutants all rub shoulders and work together. Rather than provide an enormous series of compatibility descriptions and make each and every sorcery or magic spell, mutation, psychic ability, and super power contain notes as to how it might possibly interact with other power sets the gamemaster is instead given the following set of guiding principles:

What's More Fun? Which is better for game play; having powers that cannot be countered by powers from outside the sphere, such as magic attacks that entirely bypass super defenses, or should they all work as if they obey the same set of natural laws? Choose the better answer if you're using more than one type of power in your campaign, and use the next two principles where required.

Can You Use the Resistance Table? If at all possible can the power be based off one of your character's characteristics as an opposed resistance roll? In most cases it should be obvious which powers are based on what characteristics. POW usually drives magic, sorcery, and psychic powers; CON is frequently the linked characteristic for mutations; and super powers use several characteristics. You may even find that the power's levels are all that you need for a resistance roll.

Can You Find an Equivalent Rule? If it's not a characteristic that the power is based from, can you find an equivalent value in one of the SIZ charts in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**, or a spot rule that may apply from **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**? If so, use one of those.

How Do Characters Get Powers?

The most important question to ask during character creation, if the gamemaster allows powers, is "How did my character get these strange powers?" Other questions naturally follow, such as "How many powers, and what type? How powerful are these powers going to be? Will there be any limitations, and if so, what are they?"

The gamemaster must first answer these questions for his or her campaign, and then convey this information to the players during the character creation process outlined in **Chapter Two: Characters**. Power creation can be done after that section is complete, though decisions made about powers and opportunities for increases to characteristics and skills may necessitate refiguring of those values.

Selecting Powers in Character Creation

Ideally, the decision about whether powers will be allowed will be noted at the beginning of the character creation process, and players can determine their powers immediately after rolling characteristics, right after

Step One in “Creating a Character” in **Chapter Two: Characters**. Following is the process for determining your character’s powers as a part of character creation. This expands and replaces Step Two in “Creating a Character” in **Chapter Two: Characters**.

Step Two (Powers)

The most important issue is what the power level of the game will be. This is usually a decision the gamemaster makes based on the setting and type of campaign, though your input at this time is useful. A shared understanding of the type of game to be run will make for more satisfaction between you, the other players, and the gamemaster. Following are the four default power levels.

- ❖ **Normal:** Characters are without any powers or have only a small handful of powers. Sometimes characters will be defined by a single power, and that power may be nothing more than an extraordinary talent. This is the most suitable power level for horror or modern adventure settings, where technology and wits are often the decisive factor in survival.
- ❖ **Heroic:** Characters will have a few strong powers or a wide range of mid- to low-level powers. This level of power might be useful for a campaign featuring young costumed heroes or apprentice wizards in training, the mutated survivors of a radioactive armageddon, vigilante heroes during World War II, or a high fantasy world of wizards and warriors. Some advanced futuristic settings might be created using this power level, with citizens having many minor powers granted by genetic manipulation.
- ❖ **Epic:** Characters are similar to costumed super heroes, arch-mages, or formidable supernatural beings. Sample campaigns might be full of experienced costumed heroes or villains, or veteran supernatural heroes fighting the forces of darkness in the shadows of the modern world.
- ❖ **Superhuman:** Superhuman characters have immense capabilities, and are primal beings or the mightiest of heroes. Campaigns at this power level might feature

extraordinarily powered costumed super heroes, galactic guardians, or even modern incarnations of great demigods.

Each power type in this section provides information for the number of powers available to a starting character at each of the default power levels (normal, heroic, epic, superhuman) described in these rules.

Mixing Power, Characteristic, and Skill Levels

The suggestions for different power levels in a campaign do not necessarily dictate the starting skill point pools described in Step Six of **Chapter Two: Characters** on page 21. A gamemaster should be prepared to mix and match these to create custom examples. *For example, characters may have tremendous power, but normal starting skill points, or vice versa.* These combinations can add flavor to the campaign, and may skew players to rely on skills over powers, or the opposite.

Powered Characters versus Non-Powered Characters

An important question that may emerge during character creation is whether all characters should have powers, or if only some of the characters should and others be created without powers. This is not an ideal situation—some players may feel cheated if they are not allowed the same opportunities for powers and character building as other players.

These rules assume that if the gamemaster has allowed powers in the campaign, every player should have access to the same resources to create his or her character. Not everyone wants to play a magician or sorcerer, a mutant, a super hero, or a psychic, but it is obviously unfair to award a suite of powers to one player and not another. With this in mind, following are a few options to help balance powered characters with other characters:

- ❖ **Skills vs. Powers:** One option the gamemaster might utilize is to vary the levels of skills versus powers. One good method of doing this is to drop the power-level of the powered character by one step, or to raise the skill levels any non-powered characters up one step, whichever is more appropriate. *For example, the gamemaster might rule that powered characters in a Heroic level campaign will begin at a Normal level of power and skill, while everyone else has Heroic-level skill starting skill pools.* There is no hard-and-fast rule about this, and the ability to begin different power levels for characteristics makes this increasingly complex. With so many variables of setting and play styles, it is impossible to balance all of the different power levels, so the gamemaster is best advised to look at the different power levels and make a best guess—the most important thing to remember is that if the players are happy and things seem relatively fair, all is forgiven.
- ❖ **Obvious versus Intrinsic Powers:** Many of the powers presented here are not flashy and hardly qualify as “powers” as they are commonly understood. These might be

... But Where is (insert power name here)?

You may be wondering where a particular power is or how it could have been overlooked. This list is not all-encompassing. Powers could easily fill this entire book. Future expansions to *Basic Roleplaying* will provide more powers if required and will develop each type of power when appropriate to the setting. The powers presented here provide a framework with which you can create additional powers extrapolated from these or adapted freely from other sources (movies, books, or even other roleplaying games). Hopefully, the examples here will allow you and your gamemaster fill any perceived gaps, and remember, systems from previous Chaosium games can easily be imported.

defined as obvious powers that are clearly paranormal, versus “intrinsic” powers that may just be exceptional levels of ability or training. If you want to play a character who is not using obvious powers (*for example, Energy Projection is flashy, while Defense isn't*), you may choose to invest in powers that can be rationalized as a natural result of heightened training, special capability, intense mastery, or exceptional mental or physical discipline.

- ❖ **Equipment:** One option may also be to substitute physical items for powers. Page 244 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment** covers the creation of weapons, armor, vehicles, and other pieces of gear that may have powers and skills attributed to them, with rules as to how powered or skilled items may be purchased just like powers. With these guidelines, your character may not have the ability to cast magic spells, but he or she has a magic sword, shield, and suit of armor that will serve better than any craven spell casting might. Your gamemaster may allow you to give your character other advantages such as a spaceship, secret base, vast wealth, an army of loyal followers, or other resources. Some guidelines for this have been provided in the equipment section, though it varies so much from setting to setting that it is best handled between you and your gamemaster.

With any one or more of these methods in use, a seemingly non-powered character should be able to be created alongside a character that obviously possesses an array of powers. *For example, a super archer character may personally have few powers, but instead an array of technological trick arrows that simulate super powers.*

Characters With More Than One Type of Power

In some campaigns, more than one power type may be available to characters, whether starting or more experienced. *For example, your character may be a super-powered telepathic mutant, or use both magic and sorcery, or perhaps even utilize all five types of powers presented in this chapter.*

GM CAUTION: Having a character use multiple power types can potentially be an unbalancing feature in a game, and the gamemaster should have the final say as to whether your character can begin with more than one power type.

Following are guidelines for having your character begin with more than one power type, divided by campaign power level.

Normal Campaign Power Level

Your character begins with:

- ❖ One power type at the Normal power level

Heroic Campaign Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- ❖ One power type at the Heroic power level
- ❖ Two power types at the Normal power level

Epic Campaign Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- ❖ One power type at the Epic power level
- ❖ One power type at the Heroic power level and one power type at the Normal power level
- ❖ Three power types at the Normal power level

Superhuman Campaign Power Level

Your character begins with (pick one of the following):

- ❖ One power type at the Superhuman power level
- ❖ One power type at the Epic power level and one power type at the Normal power level
- ❖ One power type at the Heroic power level and two power types at the Normal power level
- ❖ Two power types at the Heroic power level
- ❖ Four power types at the Normal power level

No matter how many of these power types your character may use, they all draw from the same pool of power points—your character does not keep a different power point pool for each power. In some cases, such as an item that stores power points, your character may not even be able to access those power points to use different types of powers. *For example, a technology-based energy battery that provides a reservoir of power points might not work for spells or for psychic powers, at the gamemaster's discretion.*

Please note that the utility of multiple power types may not be as useful as a single power set developed to a higher degree of expertise. The more powers and skills your character uses, means lower power levels and/or slower improvement in his ability in each. This differs from campaign to campaign, and the gamemaster should be the ultimate arbiter as to whether your character can utilize more than a single type of power.

MAGIC

Magic is a quick and easy means of spell casting that uses your characters' POW to perform supernatural acts. It involves using chants and other verbal or gestures to produce immediate magic effects. This is the principal means of spell casting for all manner of magic-using characters and beings. Characters that use magic spells are called *magicians*, and these rules refer to them as such. Future settings for *Basic Roleplaying* may use different terminology to address characters that use magic.

How Magic Works

Magic is treated like any other skill: each magic spell your character knows is a different skill, with a percentage

chance for success. Your character spends power points (based on his or her POW characteristic) to fuel these spells. If you want your character to cast a spell he or she spends the relevant power points and you roll percentile dice. If the roll succeeds, the spell is successful.

If the spell skill roll fails, only one power point is lost and the spell is unsuccessful. In most cases, your character can attempt to cast the spell again on the next round if enough power points remain to attempt to cast it. See "Magic Spell Success Levels" on page 93 for information about the results for each level of success. Like skills, a spell can have an additional effect with a special or critical roll. Magic can be learned from an instructor, and improved through experience. If you are using the optional skill category bonus system, your spells are considered to be Mental skills.

If the optional Skill Category Bonus system is used (see page 31), spells are considered to be Mental.

Costs of Magic

Magic spells can be cast in increments, called levels. Generally, each level costs 1 power point to cast. A few potent magic spells cost more than one power point per level. Your magician can cast several levels of a spell together, in a group, in one casting effort. As described on page 30 of **Chapter Two: Characters**, if your character goes to 0 power points, he or she falls unconscious. The normal rules for power points apply to any power points lost through casting magic spells. Magic spell casting always has a cost. Even if the roll to cast a magic spell is a failure, the spell costs 1 power point. If the magic spell roll is a fumble, the magic spell costs the same amount as it would as if the magic spell was a success (the number of spell levels in the spell). Only one spell can be attempted per combat round. Power points regenerate at the rate described on the Power Point Recovery Rate table on page 30. Usually, the rate is 1 per hour if sleeping and 1 per 2 hours if your character is awake and active.

Casting Time

Spells each cost a single DEX rank to cast per level of the magic spell and are considered to be an attack action for that combat round. *For example, if your character with a DEX 15 wants to cast a magic spell in a combat round, the spell will go off at the DEX rank minus 1 per level of the spell, meaning that the spell goes off at DEX rank 14 (15-1=14).* A magic spell with more levels will go off later in the round. Page 189 of **Chapter Six: Combat** has more information about spell casting times, and the following sections describe magic spell levels in more detail.

Spell Level

As noted above, each magic spell is expressed as a level that determines how powerful it is. By default a magic spell is considered to be level 1, costing 1 or more power

point(s) to cast. A magic spell can be made even more powerful if the caster adds additional levels (and corresponding power points) to it. In game terms, this means that your character is trying harder with this magic spell, putting more juice into it, concentrating his or her spell casting to achieve a greater-than-normal success, or some other means of characterization to describe the extra effort. The effect of each additional level of a magic spell is provided in the spell's description.

Adding more spell levels means it takes a bit more time than simply casting it at level 1. Each level of a magic spell lowers your character's DEX rank by 1 for the combat round. *For example, if your character's DEX is 15, and you wish for him or her to cast a Fire spell at level 2, the spell will go off at DEX rank 13 (15-2=13) rather than the normal DEX rank 14.*

There is a limit to how many levels you can add to a magic spell: the maximum is equal to 1/2 your character's INT (rounded up). *For example, if your character's INT is 15, he or she is limited to spells of levels 1 through 8.* If the additional time to cast lowers your character's DEX rank to below 0, he or she will cast the magic spell in the next round, subtracting the number below 0 from the next round's DEX rank. This is unlikely to occur very often, unless your character's DEX rank is extremely low, or his or her DEX rank has been lowered due to other activities in the combat round.

Overcoming POW

Any time a magic spell affects a living target the caster must overcome the target's POW or power points in a resistance roll. Each spell description will designate which value is used. If it is power points, the value is determined before any points are spent on the magic spell. This is not required if the target of the spell is willing to accept the spell's effects, and beneficial spells such as Heal or Enhancement do not require a resistance roll unless the intended recipient does not wish to be aided. In these cases, use a resistance roll. An unconscious or similarly debilitated target automatically fails a resistance roll utilizing POW or power points.

Combining Spells

Two low-level spells of the same type cannot be combined to make a higher level spell. *For example, you cannot combine two Protection 2 spells to make a Protection 4 spell.* If two spells of unequal levels are applied to the same person, place, or thing at the same time, only the higher level spell will take effect, though the power points spent for the lower level spell are lost. If the durations overlap, the lower level spell will take effect for the remainder of its duration once the higher level spell has expired. At no time do two or more of the same spells apply to the same character at the same time.

The Magician's Familiar

Base Range: a number of meters = magician's POW

Your magician character may wish to have a *familiar*. This is a special animal or other creature that enjoys an extraordinary relationship with the magician. A familiar aids in magic and provides other useful abilities. To gain a familiar, your character must first capture or befriend an appropriate animal. This can be a creature from **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** or you and your gamemaster can devise a new creature using existing ones as guidelines. The creature's SIZ cannot be more than 1/4 your character's POW, rounded up. *For example, if your character has POW 16, he or she is limited to creatures of SIZ 4 or lower.* All magicians are taught the ritual of binding a familiar, though the gamemaster may require an untutored magician to seek the knowledge out in some grimoire or from a mentor.

Once the creature is captured, your character must live in close proximity with it for three months. During this time your character cannot be away from the creature for more than a day at most. Each day is spent in ritual preparation, establishing a supernatural rapport with the creature. At the end of this process, your character must spend a point of permanent POW and defeat the creature in a POW vs. POW resistance roll (using your POW total before the point is spent). This is known as *binding the creature*. When the ritual is completed, all of your character's current power points are expended, but now he or she has an unbreakable magic link with the creature. If the resistance roll fails, the creature can never be taken for a familiar, and the POW point is lost.

A successfully bound familiar is unfailingly loyal to the character, and never willingly betrays him. Your character will always know where his or her familiar is (and vice versa) unless they are somehow shielded from each other.

While the familiar is within range (defined as your character's POW in meters), your character can:

- ❖ Drain the familiar of some or all power points, using them instead of the magician's own. If the creature is reduced to 0 power points, it will go unconscious.
- ❖ Drain the familiar of some or all fatigue points, using them instead of the magician's own. If the creature is reduced to 0 fatigue points, it will go unconscious.
- ❖ See through the familiar's eyes and utilize its other senses for one combat round, including use of any special detection (night vision, etc.) that the familiar possesses. This costs 1 power point per full turn to activate (5 minutes).
- ❖ Substitute his or her INT or POW for the familiar's to defend the familiar against magical attacks against the familiar while it is in range. If the creature is outside the power's range, the creature's natural INT or POW are used instead.
- ❖ Send telepathic messages or commands to the familiar. It will obey these, even if placing itself in danger or certain death. This costs 1 power point per command.

- ❖ Speak through the creature's mouth, if possible. The voice that emerges will sound like your character as if imitating the familiar (*for example, a cat will emit a voice like the familiar's owner speaking in a mewling 'catlike' voice*). This requires your character to make a successful Idea roll to successfully convey information through your familiar in this manner—failure at this means that the familiar is unable to speak that round or make legible sounds. This ability costs 1 power point per sentence expressed (the gamemaster should determine what constitutes a sentence).

The familiar is free to leave the basic range and does not leave the service of your character if it does so—it has simply passed beyond the range your character can take advantage of any of the abilities listed above. When your character wishes, the familiar instinctively returns to his or her side.

Sometimes familiars assume recognizable aspects of their owner's mannerisms and appearance, at the gamemaster's discretion. These can be drawn from distinctive features (from page 34-35), personality traits, or even the results of major wounds. If a magician can make a *Difficult* Idea roll while examining a familiar, and if the owner is known to the magician, he or she can determine to whom the familiar is bound to. *For example, a magician's familiar (a cat) has taken on a slight limp, as the magician was injured with a major wound that never healed. A rival and colleague of the magician, seeing a limping cat, may make a Difficult Idea roll. If successful, the second magician recognizes the animal as the first magician's familiar.*

Your character can only have one familiar active at any one time. If your character attempts to turn one magician's familiar into his or her own, he or she must perform all of the above preparations, and then beat the combined total of the original owner's and the familiar's POW in a POW vs. POW resistance roll to seize command of the familiar creature. If successful, the familiar changes owners. The original owner immediately knows that the familiar is lost.

The owner of a familiar can dismiss it at any time, instantaneously and without any roll required. After this, the animal resorts to its normal intelligence and capabilities, though it will retain memories of what it knew of its previous owner. Another magician can then take the ex-familiar and make it his or her own familiar, potentially learning some of the previous owner's secrets. For this reason, an unfortunate truth is that familiars are rarely dismissed—and if so are immediately imprisoned or killed to prevent any betrayal of knowledge. A familiar that is never released from service, and serves for at least a year, will live as long as the magician who bound it; and will die at the end of its CON in days after it's binder dies.



The Wizard's Staff

Your character may wish to have a staff made for him or her. This is often expensive to make, but a powerful sign of magical prowess. A magician who has a staff made for him- or herself is usually referred to as a wizard. Having a staff isn't essential for magic spell use, but it is a powerful tool and focus that magicians aspire to have—a sign of authority, skill, and experience.

The term *staff* is used to traditionally denote a tall and slender length of wood or some other substance, around two meters high, used by the wizard in one or both hands. However, there is no reason that the staff needs to be traditional in size, shape, or appearance. It can be smaller (like a wand or scepter), or can be shaped like something else entirely (an amulet, ring, or some other piece of jewelry). However, the staff cannot be a living being. It can even be a weapon. A traditional wooden staff is treated as a normal staff (see the weapons tables of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**), though a staff in some other form may have different attributes. You should work with your gamemaster to determine the staff's attributes if it is going to be a physical weapon. The time required to make a staff of any non-wood substance is doubled (see below).

The cost of manufacturing a wizard's staff is usually prohibitively expensive for all but the most experienced and successful of magicians, and the gamemaster should set the physical price accordingly in his or her setting (it is the equivalent of buying a new car, as a point of reference). The process of manufacturing a wizard's staff requires six months, and while it is generally known to most magicians, the gamemaster may require your character to make a successful Research or appropriate Knowledge roll. At the gamemaster's discretion, the staff may require special elements, such as expensive and rare items or substances. Or it may be composed of cheap and relatively common components. All of this depends on the magician's personal style.

While the staff is being constructed by the most skilled artisans, your character cannot do any other task because he or she must oversee each step of the construction process, becoming familiar with every aspect of the staff until it is like an extension of his or her own mind. The

final ritual to be enacted over the staff costs your character a point of permanent POW, subtracted from his or her total. There is no roll to be made, but the POW point does not regenerate.

The staff acts as a reservoir of power points for your character. It can store power points up to your character's current POW at the time of the making of the staff (minus the permanent point of POW sacrificed). *For example, if your character has POW 17 and makes a wizard's staff, the staff can store 16 power points at any time (17-1=16).* The wizard chooses when to use the staff's power points to power a magic spell, but cannot remove power points to replenish his or her own supply, or move any power points into the staff. The staff is essentially a living being in its own right, and regains spent power points at the same rate as a player character of equivalent POW. However, if reduced to 0 power points it will wither and die, and will never store power points again.

Some wizards learn to fight using their staves, while others would never dream of risking these powerful spell casting tools in such dangerous activity. However, in combat, a wizard's staff is a powerful weapon. A wizard's staff has 20 hit points (if it is not a staff, increase its hit point total by 5) and does damage as a normal staff (see **Chapter Eight: Equipment**, or below, for more details). If it strikes a target successfully, it will do an additional 1D6 points of damage if its current power point total successfully overcomes the target's current power points in a resistance roll. This extra damage costs 1 power point whenever this ability is utilized, though the point is subtracted after the resistance roll. This is not an automatic feature, and must be specified by the wizard, but does not require any action or take any additional time to activate. If the staff is broken in combat, it becomes useless and dies, so to speak, and cannot be used for storing power points again.

A staff can be enchanted with magic spells such as Countermagic and Protection if the magician wishes, though at the gamemaster's discretion, it will not allow other powers (psychic abilities, sorcery, etc.) to affect it. A wizard must be in physical contact with his or her staff in order to use it.

A wizard can own and use any number of staves, and will sometimes disguise them cleverly, to avoid announcing their true function to enemies or even allies.

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Staff, Quarter-	Staff	25	1D8+db+1D6*	1	Crushing	All	2H	20	Yes	9/9	—	Cheap	1.5	1

*extra 1D6 damage applies only if staff overcomes target's power points with its own current power points; cost to wielder for extra 1D6 is 1 power point.

Memorization of Magic

If your character wishes to use magic spells, he or she must have them committed to memory. A magic spell caster can only memorize a number of spells at a single time, equal to 1/2 his or her INT (round up). *For example, if your character has an INT 15, he or she can carry eight spells at a time (1/2 of 15 is 7.5, rounded to 8).*

Any other spells your character wishes to carry and have available must be carried in his or her *grimoire*, a type of spell book available to any magician. It will take 1 hour for your character to memorize a magic spell, and if his or her INT is already full, one or more spells currently memorized must be forgotten. Memorizing a magic spell is called *readying* it, while forgetting it is

called *dismissing* it. Dismissing a magic spell also takes 1 hour.

Grimoires

Your character can cast a magic spell directly from his or her grimoire, but this will take 1 combat round per level of spell effect desired. You can use another character's grimoire if you can read it (with a successful relevant Language roll), and can make a successful roll of $\text{INT} \times 1$ on D100% for every spell you attempt to use. If your character fails, he or she cannot understand the other magician's grimoire, with its occult codes, unfamiliar symbology, and idiosyncratic style of organization. After such a failure, your character can get no other knowledge out of the grimoire. If your character's Language skill in the relevant language increases by 5%, he or she can attempt to read the spellbook again.

At the gamemaster's discretion, a magician can be illiterate, though some means of transcribing a spell must be devised, whether pictographic, tattoos, occult symbols on great stone columns, or some other means of portraying information outside of a proper written language.

Initial Spells

A magician automatically knows the techniques of memorizing, readying, and dismissing spells, and can freely add any currently memorized spells to his or her grimoire at any time (or can transcribe any currently memorized spells to a new grimoire if the original has been destroyed, lost, or stolen).

Normal: A starting magician will be taught four spells of his or her choice, with a beginning skill equal to $\text{INT} \times 1$. Your character can spend skill points from Step Three of character creation on page 19, and Step Seven if he or she has a profession that would indicate magic use (Occultist, Priest, Shaman, or Wizard).

Heroic: Your character will begin with six spells known at $\text{INT} \times 1$, and the ability to spend skill points on these spells as above. The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply—all of the spells known are available in the magician's grimoire.

Epic: Your character begins with eight spells known at $\text{INT} \times 1$, and the ability to spend skill points on these spells as above. The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply—all of the spells known are available in the magician's grimoire. If you wish, your character begins with a familiar already summoned (the sacrifice of POW is assumed to have already transpired and has since been regained).

Superhuman: Your character begins with 10 magic spells known at $\text{INT} \times 1$, and the ability to spend skill points on these spells as above. Additionally, your character begins with a wizard's staff already constructed (its

power points are based on your character's current POW score—the sacrifice of POW is assumed to have already occurred in the past and the point since regained) and a familiar of his or her choosing (as above). Effectively, your character is a wizard. The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply—all of the spells known are available in the magician's grimoire.

Gaining POW

Your character needs to have a high POW characteristic to use magic spells, as POW fuels power points for spells and is the strength behind magic spell resistance rolls. Fortunately, a number of ways exist for your character to increase his or her POW.

Any time your character overcomes the magical resistance of a target of equal or greater POW, his or her POW has been exercised successfully and may increase. This also includes situations when your character's defensive (passive) POW resists an attacker's (active) POW in a resistance roll, if that active POW was higher than his or her POW. Overcoming or resisting a target of lower POW does not provide a chance for improvement. Only POW resistance rolls qualify, not those opposing power points vs. power points.

When successful in a POW resistance roll against an equal or higher POW, you should place an experience check next to the POW characteristic. When you check for experience at the end of the adventure (or game session), you can try to increase your character's POW as per the "POW Gain Rolls" rules in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**. Each successful improvement nets your character a bonus of 1D3–1 points of POW, a range of 0-2 points of POW to be added to his or her current POW characteristic. As with other skill or characteristic checks, this only applies once per adventure, not for each spell resisted.

Gaining New Spells

You can get new spells by seeking them out, discovering them, and buying or otherwise attaining physical copies of the spellbooks, scrolls, or some other forms of copies, then transferring the spell into your own grimoire. Alternately, you can take one game month per spell to study the principles of the spell you desire. At the end of this month, a successful roll of $\text{INT} + \text{POW}$ as a percentage means that you have learned the spell and it is now present in your grimoire. You know this spell at $\text{INT} \times 1$ as a starting skill rating. This is the sort of activity best done between adventures, so you might want to tell your gamemaster that you're trying to learn a new spell between adventures, if your campaign allows it.

If you are trying to invent a new spell, you must first discuss it with the gamemaster and see that he or she will allow it. You must then devote six game months to

researching the principles of the spell, and each month you must make a successful roll of INT + POW as a percentage. Failure adds another month to the overall time. In all, you must make six successful rolls over this period of study to learn the new spell. When complete, you will know this new magic spell at INT x 1 as a starting skill rating.

Use of Spells by Non-Magicians

In some settings, the gamemaster may allow non-magicians (characters who have not undertaken formal training in magic) to learn some magic spells. Such a character does not know how to create or read a spell book, does not know how to ready or dismiss spells, and simply knows the spells he or she was taught. The non-magician character can know up to 1/4 his or her INT (rounded down) in spell levels. These spells each begin at an INT x 1 skill rating and take an amount of time equal to 30 minus your character's INT in weeks to learn. Non-magicians cannot research spells.

Becoming a Magician

If your character does not begin play as a magician or lacks access to magic spells and wishes to learn them, he or she must first find a wizard (a highly skilled magician, described above) to teach him or her. The apprenticeship to become a magician is a full-time job, and will take an amount of time equal to 30 minus your character's INT in months of uninterrupted study, during which time he or she learns the initial roster of spells, prepares a grimoire, and increases the number of magic spells he or she can hold in INT from 1/4 INT (the limit for a non-magician) to 1/2 INT. The wizard may charge for his or her services as described in the section on skill improvement on page 182. At the end of this apprenticeship, your character emerges as a magician with skill ratings in four spells equal to INT x 1, knowledge of how to bind a familiar, make a wizard's staff, and will have constructed a grimoire of his or her own.

Magic Spell Success Levels

As each spell uses a percentile roll to determine success or failure, success levels can measure the quality of the magic spell roll. However, unlike skills, magic spells are not as cut-and-dried in how their effects should be applied based on the result of the dice roll. Many magic spells have effects that are either "on" or "off", with no difference between a critical, special success, and a normal success. The gamemaster should consider the spell's nature and potential effects when deciding these outcomes. Though many of these spells are difficult to quantify in exact terms for success levels, following is a guideline to standard success levels and how they might apply to magic spells:

FUMBLE: All of the power points intended to be spent on the magic spell are lost. Additionally, your character cannot attempt use of this magic spell for 1 combat round after the round the spell failed in. If the magic spell involves doing damage, you should make a Luck roll: success indicates that the magic spell just fizzled and does not work, while failure indicates that the magic spell struck an unintended target (an innocent bystander, an ally, valuable equipment, etc.) causing collateral damage and potentially complicating the situation.

FAILURE: The magic spell doesn't work, but doesn't cause any harm or complications other than the expected outcome for failure. One power point is expended but the magic spell has no useful effect.

SUCCESS: The magic spell works as described and the requisite power points are expended.

SPECIAL: The magic spell works with increased effectiveness. If it does damage, the spell does special damage, as if it were an attack (see **Chapter Five: Combat** for more details on this). If one of the special success damage types (crushing, entangling, impaling, knockback, or slashing) is appropriate, the gamemaster should incorporate it into the magic spell's effectiveness. *For example, a special success roll for a Lightning spell might cause knockback.* At the gamemaster's discretion, another aspect of the magic spell (range, influence, etc.) may enjoy 150% effect. Alternately, if the magic spell involves a roll on the resistance table, the gamemaster may increase the magic spell's level by half again for the purpose of the resistance roll.

CRITICAL: The magic spell works perfectly. If the magic spell causes damage, it ignores any armor the target possesses and does the maximum possible damage. If the magic spell does not normally cause damage, the gamemaster should determine an appropriate aspect (or aspects) of the magic spell and double its effectiveness. Alternately, if the magic spell involves a resistance roll, the gamemaster may temporarily double the power's level or your character's relevant characteristic for the purpose of the resistance roll.

Obviously, with the wide array of magic spell and circumstances, these outcomes may require additional interpretation, or the gamemaster is free to simply utilize the results of dice rolls without any adjustment for degrees of success. This should be applied fairly and consistently, however, and the players should be told whether detailed success levels are being used.

Magic Spells

Following are a variety of basic magic spells. These are defined in the following manner:

Name: the common name of the spell, generally indicative of function. Your gamemaster may proffer similar spells during play with names that are different, more descriptive, elaborate, or obfuscating.

Range: Unless otherwise specified, the maximum effective range for any magic spell is 100 meters. If the spell directly affects a target (living or otherwise), the target must be within line of sight.

Duration: Spells usually occur instantly in the Powers Phase of the combat round they are cast in. They usually last for a single combat round, 10 combat rounds, or for 15 minutes, as indicated in each spell description.

Power Point Cost Per Level: The power costs this number of power points to cast per level.

Blast

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

This is a magic beam of energy your character can direct at a single target, as if it were an attack. The target will take 1D6 damage for each level of the spell used. Under most circumstances, armor (non-magical) or the Armor spell will absorb the damage, and the Blast spell can be dodged. If the Blast spell is parried with a shield, the shield will take the damage, with any remainder carrying over to the target.

Countermagic may stop Blast, but Protection will not work because the spell is not a kinetic force. Resistance is also useless against Blast, as the spell's effects are not based on an extreme of heat or cold.

Change

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell allows a character to change the targeted being or object into a variety of shapes from the same relative type (animal to animal, vegetable to vegetable, mineral to mineral). Each level of the spell allows your character to change 3 SIZ points of the target if he or she can overcome the target's POW on a successful resistance roll. If the target is willing (or your character is casting it on him- or herself), no resistance roll is required. If targeting something larger than 3 SIZ, your character must use enough levels of the spell to affect all of the creature or object's SIZ points. This will allow the character to transform the targeted being into a creature or object of that exact SIZ. The new shape will have all the outward attributes of the shape (including some natural abilities, if any), but the characteristics remain those of the character. Any limitations imposed by the creature's new form are also in effect (such as the ability to speak or write). Whenever applicable, the original being's characteristics and skills are used, or the base skill rating in a skill the character does not possess (such as the Fly skill).

For example, if your character transforms into a hawk, he or she will be a hawk of the same SIZ, hit points, etc.,. However, he or she will have the ability to fly (likely very poorly) and some natural weapons in the form of talons and beak.

If the creature is a natural animal, consult **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** for a variety of natural creature types. The player and gamemaster should use the generic versions of any creature the character transforms into, though if the character routinely transforms into a single animal type, a full write-up can be created for ease of play. If the shape taken is not one of these forms and an equivalent is not immediately obvious, assume that large claws do 1D6 plus damage bonus, and a bite or horn will do 1D3 plus damage bonus. Finally, the conditions for life in the new form must be present: the spell cannot be used to change a man to a fish in mid-desert, though the spell may be used to change to a fish in a river or a sea.

If the target of the spell has already taken hit point damage before the Change spell is cast, the new form will appear with a similarly wounded state. Similarly, any power points, fatigue, or appropriate magical conditions already existing on the target are not affected, at the gamemaster's discretion.

In addition to affecting the number of SIZ points this spell can affect, additional levels of this spell can be used to affect more than one object instead of a larger object (*for example, casting one spell to affect two or more beings, provided enough SIZ is covered*), or extending the duration of the spell by 15 minutes instead of increasing the amount of SIZ affected. When the spell is cast, you should specify whether additional levels of the spell are being used to increase the SIZ affected, or to prolong the duration of the spell.

Conjure Elemental

Range: 12 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Conjure Elemental allows your character to conjure a specific type of elemental from the list below. When your character takes this spell, you must specify which sort of elemental this spell applies to. Knowing how to conjure one elemental automatically means that your character knows how to dismiss it, so it is not necessary to know a separate dismissal spell for each elemental type. For the duration of the spell, the elemental must be directed with your character's full attention.

Elementals are described in "Supernatural Creatures" in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**. The traditional elemental types are:

AIR: Air elementals are called sylphs, and they usually appear as beautiful, near-transparent humanoids, either naked or clad in diaphanous clothing. They traditionally have transparent wings, either feathered or like those of an insect. They usually glide aboveground.

Magic Spell Summary

Following are the magic spells presented in this section. Each spell's cost per level is given in parentheses, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell.

BLAST (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of magical damage per level.

CHANGE (1): Transforms 3 SIZ points of an item or being per level.

CONJURE ELEMENTAL (1): Summons or dismisses an elemental of a specific type.

CONTROL (1): Allows control over a target's mind, requires a resistance roll.

COUNTERMAGIC (1): Reflects incoming spells back at the caster.

DARK (1): Fills an area with darkness.

DIMINISH (1): Reduces one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.

DISPEL (1): Eliminates existing spell effects, may banish supernatural beings.

DULL (1): Reduces a weapon's attack chance and damage.

ENHANCE (1): Increases one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.

FLAME (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of fire damage per level.

FROST (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of frost damage per level.

HEAL (3): Heals 1D6 points of damage per level.

ILLUSION (1): Creates 3 SIZ points of an illusion per level.

INVISIBILITY (1): Each level makes 3 SIZ points of an object or person invisible.

LIFT (1): Lifts 3 SIZ points of an object or person per level.

LIGHT (1): Fills an area with light.

LIGHTNING (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of lightning damage per level.

PERCEPTION (1): Allows your character to detect one thing within range.

PROTECTION (1): Adds 1 point of armor value per level against physical attacks.

RESISTANCE (1): Reduces damage from heat and/or cold by 1 point per level.

SEAL (1): Joins two inanimate objects together.

SHARPEN (1): Increases a weapon's attack chance and damage.

SPEAK TO MIND (1): Allows mental communication between your character and a target.

TELEPORT (1): Teleports 3 SIZ points per level anywhere within range.

UNSEAL (1): Separates two connected objects.

VISION (1): Allows your character to see what is happening elsewhere, or in the past.

WALL (1): Creates a barrier to protect your character.

WARD (1): Defines an area protected by Blast and Countermagic.

WOUND (3): Causes 1D6 points of damage per level.

EARTH: Earth elementals are called gnomes, and are usually thick-bodied humanoid beings, frequently male, made of earth and rock, with mossy beards and roots that cross their bodies like veins.

FIRE: Fire elementals are called salamanders, and usually appear as hairless humanoids wreathed in fire, with darkened skin glowing in cracks from within. Of all elementals, they are the most protean, and can also appear as reptiles or serpents.

WATER: Water elementals are called undines, and often appear as beautiful mermaids, half-fish and half-human, pale green and blue. When they appear on land their fish-tails are replaced with human legs.

The above four elementals may appear in entirely different forms. Other types of elementals may exist, at the gamemaster's discretion, possibly based on the setting.

Control

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

To use this spell, your character must succeed in a POW vs. POW resistance roll against the intended target.

Each level of the spell allows your character to control the thoughts and/or actions of one intelligent being. This spell cannot be used on unintelligent animals. Each attack is independent, and the POW vs. POW roll must be successful against each target for the spell to work on that particular being. If you wish to have the target do anything other than collapse, your character must concentrate on the spell, using no other spells or doing anything more than moving slowly and speaking to others in short sentences. The gamemaster may require you to make a successful Idea roll to keep from being distracted, if an appropriate action occurs. This control is total—the target cannot speak or perform any voluntary action other than those specified by your character. If your character wishes, he or she can allow the controlled target to speak freely or have a limited range of free action.

While concentrating, your character may control the movements and speech of the target or targets. Having more than one target do different things requires your character to make an Idea roll each combat round to maintain coordination between different targets. If your character is forced to fight or concentrate on any other

activity, the target(s) collapses into sleep. Once control is lost, a collapsed target will revive from unconsciousness and regain control as soon as he or she makes a roll of CON x 1 on D100. The roll may be attempted once each combat round after the round of collapse.

If the target is commanded to perform an action it would normally find objectionable, it is allowed a *Difficult* Idea roll to resist. Success means that the target balks and does not follow the order for one combat round, standing still or otherwise idling. Failure means the target performs the action as required. The action can be commanded again in the following round, with a new Idea roll. If the action commanded is wholly objectionable, such as murder of an ally, the Idea roll is unmodified. If the command is suicidal, the Idea roll is *Easy*. If the result of the Idea roll is a special success, the target breaks free from the Control spell in an obvious fashion. If the result of the Idea roll is a critical success, the target breaks free unbeknownst to the spell's caster.

When the Control spell has passed, the target may make an Idea roll. If successful, he or she remembers every detail of actions taken during the spell's duration. He or she does not necessarily remember who the spell caster was, unless it was obvious during the spell's duration.

Countermagic

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 5 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell puts up a magical shield around the magician, or on any person or object he or she wishes to keep magic from affecting. Any incoming spell must have its level overcome the level of the Countermagic on the resistance table. If the attacking spell's resistance roll succeeds, the spell penetrates the Countermagic, but must still overcome the POW of the target, if required. If it does not require a resistance roll, it acts as if no Counterspell were cast. If the Countermagic spell succeeds on the resistance table, the incoming spell has rebounded on the original caster. If that caster has Countermagic on him- or herself, the spell must overcome that Countermagic to have an effect. Any spell failing to penetrate two Countermagic spells dissipates and is no more. Countermagic protects the target and anything he or she is carrying, within reason (if in doubt, use the character's STR as a guideline as to how much he or she can carry).

If the character or object to receive the Countermagic already has a Protection spell, the Countermagic will not be effective unless its level overcomes the level(s) of Protection on the resistance table. If successful, both spells will be in effect. Countermagic is effective versus Blast and Lightning, but not against Fire or Frost.

Dark

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell dampens all light within a circle 3 meters in radius. Each additional level adds 3 meters to the radius. This darkness is absolute, and light does not shine through it. The spell must be cast on an object; it does not hang in mid-air. The affected area is in total darkness to anyone seeing in the normal range of visible light, even if a torch or other light source is active within the spell's radius. The Dark can be cast on an object the Light spell has previously been cast upon. Each level of Dark cancels a single level of Light.

Diminish

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Overcoming the target's POW with your character's own, this spell reduces the STR, CON, SIZ or DEX of the target by 1 point for each level of the spell used. You must select which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent casts can reduce the same characteristic, or affect a different characteristic. This spell will affect any other attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Characteristics cannot be reduced below 1, and any points of Diminish in excess of that have no further effect.

Dispel

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Your character can use this power to rid him- or herself (or another target) of detrimental effects of a spell, or to eliminate the positive effects of a spell on a foe. Like Countermagic, it must overcome the level of the spell on the resistance table. Dispel must be directed at a particular spell in effect on the target character. You must first identify the spell's effects to be eliminated (if numerous magic effects are in place, the gamemaster should decide which are affected). If the target is protected by Countermagic, it must get through the Countermagic as usual to have an effect on the target as intended. If the Dispel is intended to be effective against multiple spells, the spell's level is rolled against each of them on the resistance table. In the case of multiple targets, you must either specify whether the Dispel is intended to work against a single spell, or all of them. If multiple spells are to be dispelled, the one with the highest levels is checked first against the Dispel power on the resistance table. Any effects that are not dispelled remain, and any failure

to Dispel a spell means that your Dispel spell ceases working and cannot be pitted against further spells.

Dispel can also be used against a character in the middle of casting another spell, to prevent the spell from being cast. This can be handled in the "Statement of Intent" phase of combat. With a successful Luck roll, a character who is able to act but has not already done so in the round, can abandon his or her intended action and attempt to use Dispel against a spell as it is cast. It is acceptable to use Dispel as a held action in these instances. To interrupt a spell from being cast, your character must cast equal or higher levels in Dispel or he or she cannot attempt to break another spell from being cast. The gamemaster should determine whether Dispel works before working out the effects of the spell it is intended to stop.

Dispel can also be used to banish or destroy lesser summoned creatures, such as elementals or minor demons, or a possessor (*for example, a being that has seized control over a host's body using the Control spell*). In these cases, the Dispel power's levels are compared against the creature's own POW characteristic. If the creature's POW is overcome on the resistance table, it departs the area using the most rapid means it has at its disposal. If it is a possessing being, the creature flees the host body immediately. If multiple appropriate beings are within the range of the spell, you must clarify which one is being targeted, or all of them are targeted, with the highest POW being the one attempted first. If the Dispel succeeds on the first, it then moves to the second, etc. If it fails, it does not have further effect on any remaining beings.



Dull

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of this spell reduces the attack chance of a weapon by 5% and reduces damage by 1 point. If more than one level is used, it can either reduce the attack chance by multiples of 5% (–10%, –15%, etc.) and reduce damage by 2, 3, etc. points, or it can be distributed equally among several weapons up the level of the spell and within range. If a weapon leaves the range, it is no longer affected. Damage cannot be reduced below

1 point, and a roll of 01% will always strike a target, regardless of how badly the weapon has been Dulled.

Enhance

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Overcoming the target's POW with your character's own, this spell adds 1 point to one of the target's STR, CON, SIZ or DEX characteristics of the target for each level used. You must select which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent casts can increase the same characteristic, or affect a different characteristic. This spell will temporarily affect any other attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Hit points and power points above the target's normal range are lost.

Fire

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Each level of this spell does 1D6 fire damage to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. The fire evoked with this spell appears as a pillar rising from the ground. Multiple levels of this spell may be used to set up several fires instead of one large fire, or can combine the effects.

For example, Kallistor needs to block a 3-meter-wide passage, and wants to fry the first group of attacking goblins in the process. He puts 12 power points into Fire 4, putting two Fire 2 spells side-by-side to fill most of the dungeon corridor. The front two goblins take 2D6 damage apiece.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the area affected by a Fire spell. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resist spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only 1 combat round unless something flammable is affected. If something is set alight the blaze will continue, damaging anyone or anything within it at the rate of 1D4 points per combat round. See "Fire and Heat" in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more information.

Levels of the Fire spell can be used to cancel levels of Frost on the resistance table, but the Fire spell has no effect against other forms of supernatural cold.

Frost

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Each level of this spell does 1D6 cold damage to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. The Frost appears

as a pillar of intense cold arising from the ground. Multiple levels may be used to set up several frosted areas instead of one large one, or can combine the effects.

For example, in a remarkable coincidence, Kallistor finds himself needing to block another 3-meter-wide passage and, in the process freeze a group of attacking goblins. He puts 18 power points into Frost 6, putting two Frost 3 spells side-by-side to block the dungeon corridor. The first two goblins take 3D6 damage apiece.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the area affected by a Frost spell. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resist spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only one combat round unless something brittle is frozen. In this case, the brittle item may shatter, at the gamemaster's discretion. See "Cold and Exposure" in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more information.

Levels of the Frost spell can be used to cancel levels of Fire on the resistance table, but the Frost spell has no effect against other forms of supernatural flame.

Heal

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Each level of this spell heals 1D6 HP of damage. It does not work against disease, poison, or radiation. Bringing a character to a positive hit point total with the Heal spell can bring a character back from the "dead" if the Heal spell is successfully cast by the end of the round following that in which the victim suffered the mortal wound (he or she is in the midst of expiring and has not actually died, yet). Any limbs severed or lost through a major wound or use of the hit location system are still severed or lost, though the hit points (based on the adjusted CON characteristic, if it has been affected) are still restored.

Illusion

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of this spell allows your character to create up to 3 SIZ points of an object's appearance. This image is totally visual, with no sound, scent, touch, or taste components. It will remain if touched but will be totally insubstantial and obvious as an illusion. Illusions can be used to mislead or terrify opponents, or entrap them, disguising walls, concealing traps, etc. Unless your character concentrates on the illusion to the exclusion of all else, the illusion is immobile and cannot move. Characters witnessing an illusion may attempt to detect the falsehood in one of several manners, at the gamemaster's discretion based on the circumstances:

- ❖ If the illusion is silent where it should have sound (a giant monster, for example), a successful Idea roll (INT x 5) will reveal its illusory nature.
- ❖ If the illusion is silent and does not need sound (an illusion covering a door, for example), a successful *Difficult* Spot check will be required to see the illusion for what it is.
- ❖ If the illusion has appropriate sound to accompany it, such as through the use of a recording device or some other means, a successful *Difficult* Listen check may be required to notice any discrepancies between the sound and the image, or a successful *Difficult* Sense check may be needed to gain any telltale clues that it is not real.
- ❖ If the viewer suspects it is an illusion and attempts to disbelieve it, make a roll of the magician's POW vs. the character's INT characteristic on the resistance table.

Invisibility

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

For every level of this power, your character can turn 3 SIZ point of an object or another being invisible. Items or living beings cannot be turned partially invisible, though components can if the object consists of more than one "piece". *For example, you cannot turn your character's arm invisible, but you could turn the door of a wall safe invisible, as it is a distinctly separate piece from the rest of the safe.* If you are not sure whether a piece of something can be turned invisible, a quick guideline is to determine if it can be removed from the main object, or if it was a component attached to the rest. If the answer to either of these is yes, then the object can be turned partially invisible. This is at your discretion—you do not have to cast multiple spells to turn your character and his clothing invisible.

Your character must concentrate on the spell and must do no more than walk or speak. Fighting, taking injury, using another power, performing some athletic maneuver, or similar distractions will break the effects and cause the invisible item to become visible once more. Any attacks against an invisible character or object are at 1/4 the normal skill chance. Any parries are equally difficult, requiring a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to even attempt parrying. This power does not stop sound or other sensory information the target may emit, and successful use of a Listen, Sense, or Spot skill to overcome the Invisibility reduces the penalty of attacks to 1/2 instead of 1/4 (making them *Difficult* skill rolls).

There are few limitations to what actions your character can commit while Invisible. He or she can move, attack, flee, or stand still as long as the spell is active. Invisibility can be dispelled by the magician at any time; though starting it again requires another skill roll and power point expenditure.

Lift

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of this spell allows your character to affect 3 SIZ points of an object or being. If the SIZ is appropriate, your character may lift the object and move it through the air. Your character can even target the spell on him- or herself, using the spell to fly. The target of the spell will move at 24 meters per combat round. Each level of the spell above the minimum necessary to move the SIZ will add 6 meters per combat round to this speed. No resistance roll is required for any weight below the number of SIZ points affected by the spell (for example, casting *Lift 4* allows your character to manipulate up to 12 points of SIZ without needing to make a roll on the resistance table). If the target of the spell does not wish to be lifted (or is connected through some fashion), your character must overcome its POW or SIZ with a resistance roll, with the gamemaster determining which characteristic is appropriate.

The spell may also be used to slow a falling object that is otherwise too large for the level of the spell. For each level less than needed, the object is slowed as if it were falling that difference times 3 meters, up to a 12 meter reduction.

For example, if a SIZ 13 object is falling and it has Lift 4 (which affects 12 SIZ points) cast upon it, the object which is falling 10 meters will fall as if falling 3 meters (1-3=3). However, if the SIZ 13 object is faced with only one level of Lift, there is a difference of 4 and the fall would be equivalent to the 10 meters, anyway.

The spell may also move an object such as cart or sledge along the ground. In this case, each level of the spell can affect 6 SIZ of the targeted object or character. Your character can also use this spell as a means of throwing an object that has been lifted at a target, using his or her Throw skill as if it were *Difficult*.

Light

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell illuminates a circle 3 meters in radius. Each additional level of the spell adds 3 meters to the radius. This light is around the brightness of a torch or small light bulb. The spell must be cast on an object; it does



not hang in mid-air. The *Light* spell can be cast on an object that has had the *Dark* spell previously cast upon it, canceling both spells on a level-for-level basis.

Lightning

Range: 60 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Each level of this spell does 1D6 damage directly to the hit points of the closest target of choice (usually a living being). If two targets are equally close to your character, the *Lightning* will strike the target wearing or wielding the most metal. Countermagic will protect against the spell, and some forms of insulation may protect the character (at the gamemaster's discretion). When used on a metallic object, the *Lightning* spell has a POW x 1 chance per level of traveling (and jumping) along any connected or nearby metallic surface to strike any other characters touching the metal surface for 1/2 of the power's damage. Additionally, it has the potential to "fry" any electronic equipment it is directed against, using your character's POW against the item's hit points in a resistance roll. The target can dodge or parry *Lightning* with a shield. Dodging lightning is *Difficult* if wearing metal armor, and if the *Lightning* spell is parried successfully with a non-metallic shield, the shield will take the damage, with any remainder carrying over to the target. Attempting to parry the *Lightning* spell with a metallic shield is ineffective, as the *Lightning* will conduct through the shield and onto the character.

Perception

Range: 60 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

When casting this spell, your character may specify one type of thing he or she is searching for, such as the nearest trap, secret door, gold, magic, stairway, unfamiliar thoughts, etc. This spell will then provide the direction to the nearest such thing within the range of the spell. Additional levels of this spell allow for your character to seek out more than one thing at the same time. *For example, your character may wish to use Perception 2 to determine the closest two traps, or the closest trap and the closest secret door, etc.*

Protection

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell acts as armor. Each level of the spell adds 1 point to your character's armor protection value, or provides 1 point of armor protection if he or she is not wearing any armor. Since this affects the same area as

Protection and Resistance

You may be unclear about how these two spells differ, since they apparently serve the same purpose: keeping your character from taking damage. Here's how they differ:

PROTECTION is like armor and is subtracted from any physical damage your character takes, but it is not effective against environmental extremes.

RESISTANCE lowers the amount of damage environmental extremes (heat, cold) can inflict on your character. It is not effective against attacks or physical damage.

Some attacks, like a flaming sword, may actually allow both spells to be of use, with Protection reducing the points of damage from the blade itself, and Resistance reducing the extra damage from the flames.

Countermagic, any Countermagic cast upon on the target must overcome the Protection spell on the resistance table to work. If successful, both spells remain on the target and provide the different types of protection. At the gamemaster's discretion, this spell can also provide protection against damage types not normally blocked by armor.

Resistance

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of this spell provides 1 point of resistance against damage taken from extremes of temperature or the environment, such as the Fire or Frost spells. If the protected character is hit by more than one such attack, each damage roll is reduced by the level of the effect.

For example, Kallistor has cast Resistance 3 on himself. He is hit in the same combat round by three foes; a fire elemental doing 5 points of damage; a rival magician throwing a Frost spell for 7 points of damage; and a small dragon breathing fire on him for 10 points of damage. Kallistor's Resistance 3 spell is subtracted from each of these damage sources separately. Thus, his total damage in the round is $(5-3=2) + (7-3=4) + (10-3=7) = 13$ points. Fortunately for Kallistor, he is unlikely to face such a combination of forces.

Seal

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell acts to bond the edges of any two inanimate objects which are at rest and fitted to one another. Some examples are a door in a door frame, a lid on a box, or a knife in a sheath. The two objects become

joined as if they were one object, and cannot be separated for the duration of the spell. The objects can, of course, be battered open or destroyed. The items' hit points and other values are combined, wherever applicable. A Seal spell adds 20 hit points to the combined hit point total of the two items.

Each level of spell adds either 15 minutes to the duration of the spell or adds 20 more hit points to the hit points of the object sealed. You can choose to split levels between these two benefits, but you must specify how the benefits will be conferred before casting the spell.

Sharpen

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell adds 5% to the attack chance and 1 point of damage to any weapon (including blunt weapons and missile weapons) it is successfully applied to, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. If more than one level of the spell is used, it can either add multiples of +5% and +1 point of damage to the weapon (+10% and +2 damage, +15% and +3 damage, etc.), or it can be distributed equally among several weapons, up to the level of the spell and within range. *For example, Sharpen 6 can be used to add +5% and +1 damage to all six bullets in a revolver.* The bonus to damage is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the damage bonus (if applicable) applied separately and receiving no bonus.

Speak to Mind

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of this spell allows your character to speak to another mind, intelligent or not. Only surface conversation or feelings are transmitted, and the gamemaster may require the target to make an Idea roll to understand if the being is not traditionally intelligent. Language is not a barrier to this spell, however. The target of this spell cannot communicate to any other target of this spell. Your character may, however, cast Speak to Mind 1 on two other characters to let them communicate.

Teleport

Range: 1,000 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Each level of the Teleport spell allows your character to instantaneously teleport 3 SIZ points from his or her current location to another place within range of the power. Only complete objects can be teleported—it is impossible to teleport a part of a living being away. If an object is not directly affixed to another object, it can be teleported. *For*

example, your character can teleport a gun out of a target's holster, but he or she cannot teleport the engine block out of a car. Additional levels of the spell above and beyond those required for the target's SIZ can be used to increase the range by an additional 1,000 meters. If the target of the spell is affixed to something or is a living being that does not wish to be transported, your character must also successfully overcome the item's hit points (or armor value) versus his or her POW characteristic on the resistance table. For a living target, the target's POW is the opposing force. A willing target (such as your character) does not need to make a resistance roll.

A fumble with this power may send the item or person being teleported into a solid object, perhaps even underground. The gamemaster should ask the caster's player to make a Luck roll (POW x 5). If the roll is successful, no damage or ill effects are taken and the teleported character or object narrowly escapes a grim fate. If the roll fails, the unlucky target immediately takes 3D6 points of damage and the gamemaster should roll on the Major Wound table (page 207) to determine a likely effect for this level of trauma, adapting the result as appropriate.

If your character is willingly attempting to Teleport a foe or item into a solid structure, a living foe is allowed the same chances at escaping this fate (a Luck roll prevents it). It costs 3 power points per level to consciously teleport something or someone into a solid structure or object (plus a Sanity roll, if the Sanity rules are being used). If the subject of the teleportation into a solid substance is another item, the gamemaster is the judge as to what happens. Whether inadvertent or intentional, becoming fused with a solid item is usually traumatic, and the target must find some means of extricating him- or herself from the item or structure. Failure to do so can cause the Major Wound listed above to have permanent effect.

Unseal

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell will open unlocked doors or boxes and cause weapons to fly out of their sheaths and drop to the ground. It will not undo a locked container, or some object that has been fastened shut. It can be cast to cancel the Seal spell if the level of the Unseal spell overcomes the level of the Seal on the resistance table.

Vision

Range: 100/10 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

With this spell, your character may see what is happening in any area within the first given range of the spell

with which he is familiar. This gives full vision and hearing, as if your character were in that area, allowing any mobility normally possessed by him or her within the spell's range.

If your character is physically next to any area within the 10 meter range of the spell he may put the spell into that area, regardless of familiarity.

Each additional level of the spell allows your character to view a place or events that have transpired for up to 1 additional day, to see what has transpired in an area. When viewing an area, your character's perception of time is unaltered—10 combat rounds of this spell take 10 combat rounds to view.

This spell may also be used to touch an item and receive a vision of its previous use or owner. Each additional level used gives another use or another mental image. You should designate how you wish to allocate extra levels of the spell when the spell is cast. Furthermore, each level of this spell allows your character a cumulative 10% chance of learning the activating word for a magical device. Your character may only attempt this spell once for any single object until he or she increases by at least 5 percentiles in skill with the Vision spell.

While using the Vision spell your character may not use any other spell or the benefits of the Vision will disappear.

Wall

Range: 12 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell brings a wall-like barrier out of the ground or forms it from one particular type of available material. This material must be of a material that would normally be able to be sculpted into such a wall—earth, snow, ice, stone, metal, wood, concrete, gravel, sand, etc. are all appropriate materials, while gasses or liquids are not. The wall usually appears immediately before your character, to protect him or her against attacks or attackers, though it can appear anywhere within range. When created, the barrier will be 1 square meter per level of the spell. These square meters can be distributed as your character wishes along the dimensions of width, height, and length. *For example, your character can cast Wall 9, spending 9 power points. He or she can then create a wall that is 3 meters high, 1 meter thick, and 3 meters long or 1 meter high, 1 meter thick, and 9 meters long. This wall can be shaped in whatever simple form your character chooses, such as a straight or curved wall, half-sphere, etc.*

Regardless of the substance it is made of, a Wall has 30 hit points against any attempts to destroy it. Each additional level of the spell added to the Wall (above and beyond those defining its size) adds 30 hit points to its hit point total, though most characters will only

need to destroy one or two 1-meter segments in order to create adequate space to move through the wall. At the end of the spell's duration, the Wall dissolves, crumbles, melts, retracts into the earth, or gradually disappears unless it is formed of a substance that would normally remain. The gamemaster should decide what happens to the wall based on whatever is most appropriate to the substance and the environment.

If desired, the gamemaster can instead substitute the Wall's 30 hit point value for more realistic values derived from the guidelines provided in "Armor Protection" and "SIZ of Common Objects" table on page 277.

Ward

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

The Ward spell forms a protective square around the person or object needing guarding or protection. An area of up to 9 square meters may be so guarded. The ward is defined by four objects (called the wards) enchanted in a preliminary ritual to gain the effect. They do not gain any magical enhancement other than being attuned to one another for the purpose of the spell. Ward acts as combination of Countermagic and Blast. Any power points passing through the region defined by the spell (in either direction) must overcome Countermagic 1. Any object crossing the line from either direction receives Blast 1. Each extra level of the spell adds 3 meters to any dimension of the area defined by the ward, or another level of Countermagic and Blast. The spell must be successfully cast to set up the wards and successfully cast again to take them down without harming your character. The spell's effects last until the wards are moved by your character, or destroyed, or the spell is dispelled.

Only your character may move the ward objects without disturbing the spell. However, someone may attempt to cast Dispel spell upon them. Physically interfering with the objects sets off the spell's Countermagic and Blast capabilities, as if the ward was triggered normally. If some other means of manipulating the objects is attempted, each object is treated as if it has 30 hit points and has the Seal spell cast upon it.

Wounding

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Each level of this spell causes 1D6 points of magic damage directly to the target. At the gamemaster's discretion, it may require a successful Brawl roll to touch the target in combat, or an Agility roll if not in combat. Armor does not protect against this damage, though

any points in Protection will subtract from the spell's damage. The Brawl attack does not do any damage in and of itself, regardless of what powers or weapons are being used, and it may be parried, dodged, or blocked as per a normal Brawl attack.

MUTATIONS

Mutations can be gained in many ways; through exposure to radioactivity; unusual combinations of chemicals; medical experimentation; freakish atmospheric conditions; genetic quirks; a combination of these factors, or any number of other means. They can be present in a character from birth, manifest later in life naturally or due to some unnatural stress, or develop as a result of one of the above causes.

Characters with mutations are usually called *mutants*, a term that will be used throughout this section. Some animals may have mutations: these are addressed in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**.

Unlike other powers described in this chapter, some mutations are actually disadvantages, causing in the mutant an unfortunate and unwelcome condition. Mutations that affect the mutant in a negative way are called *adverse* mutations, while those with positive effects are *beneficial*. In some methods of character generation, mutations are randomly assigned, and are not chosen by the player.

Few of the mutations here are skills in their own right, though they are often assigned a potency (POT) rating to allow for resistance rolls and comparison of intensity. Mutations do not have levels, but are either minor or major. Some mutations have minor and major versions, representing the difference between a less intense mutation and a serious mutation.

Starting Mutations

When determining the number of starting mutations, a major mutation is the equivalent of two minor mutations and two minor mutations are worth one major mutation. Each mutation begins as a minor mutation, and if you pick or randomly roll the same result twice, it becomes a major mutation. Each mutation's description defines the minor and major versions.

❖ **Normal:** Your character rolls D100 twice on the Mutation Chart nearby. Each mutation is minor, unless you get the same result twice—in this case, it is major. Make a Luck roll if the mutation is adverse. If successful, you can roll again for another mutation. If the mutation rolled is adverse once more, repeat the process until you either fail a Luck roll or gain a beneficial mutation. The gamemaster may allow you to pick instead of rolling.

- ❖ **Heroic:** You may pick a number of mutations equal to 1/4 your character's initial CON characteristic (rounded up), with a minimum of 2. Major mutations count as 2, and you can only pick a major mutation twice if your gamemaster allows it. You can take adverse mutations to increase the number of beneficial choices at a rate of 1 to 1 (picking one minor adverse mutation lets you pick one minor beneficial mutation, two minor adverse mutations equal a major beneficial mutation, etc.). Your gamemaster has the right to approve or disapprove of any excessive use of adverse mutations, and you cannot take more adverse mutations than 1/4 your initial CON.
- ❖ **Epic:** You can pick a number of mutations (or pick a mutation twice) up to 1/2 your character's initial CON score (rounded up). The gamemaster should allow you to pick major or minor mutations as you see fit, and the rules for taking adverse mutations (above) are also in effect, limited to 1/2 CON (rounded up).
- ❖ **Superhuman:** Your character begins with his or her initial CON characteristic in mutations, and a limit of up to 1/2 his or her CON (rounded up) in adverse mutations (as above). Picking a mutation twice is highly recommended at this level of play. At the gamemaster's discretion, you can pick a mutation three times, though you and the gamemaster will have to work out the mutation's effects if they are not readily apparent.

Gaining New Mutations

Mutations, unlike skills or magic powers, are not traditionally learned or gained through adventuring. However, the very core of mutation is change, and nature provides plenty of examples of the natural traits of a being increasing or decreasing in effectiveness. Following are means by which mutations can evolve during the course of play:

Mutagenic Exposure: Your character may be exposed to a mutagen, a substance or condition with the ability to cause a mutation (or further mutate your character). This can be radioactivity, chemicals, a disease, medical experimentation, extreme stress, spontaneous mutation, and too many other possibilities to list. At the gamemaster's discretion, the vilest and most diabolic chaos-based magic are able to infect those it comes into contact with, twisting and transforming the caster and his or her victims. The gamemaster should determine if your character has been exposed to enough of a mutagen to cause a minor mutation, and either allow you to pick or roll on the Mutation Summary table (p. 105). Usually it is best to begin with a minor mutation, though if the circumstances warrant it, a major mutation (or more than one mutation) can be created.

Evolution: If some existing mutation is an adverse one and you are exposed to the right set of conditions, you may find one of your mutations has increased or decreased. In this case, you can choose to affect an already-existing mutation, increasing it from minor to

major, or vice versa if desired. Alternately, if you have an adverse minor mutation, you can eliminate it entirely. Usually one step is enough, though if circumstances warrant it, you could go from having a major adverse mutation to no mutation.

Transformation: An unusual case, but not unknown in nature or even some settings, is where a mutation is absolute and total. At a time of extreme stress or some other "perfect storm" of environmental and mutagenic conditions, your character may enter a chrysalis state (a cocoon, like that of a moth or butterfly, or some equivalent) and emerge with all mutations transformed into other mutations. You should do this with your gamemaster's approval only, and it should take a reasonable period of time (perhaps your character's CON in days). In the process, your character can switch any mutations for new ones, using his or her CON as the budget as if during character creation.

Increase in CON: A more humdrum but perhaps more common method is for an increase in the CON characteristic. CON can be increased through a variety of means, some of which are detailed in "Increasing Characteristics" in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**. Based on your campaign's power level (see "Starting Mutations", above), you can pick or randomly determine a new minor mutation, upgrade a mutation, or use a CON point to downgrade an existing mutation, based on starting power budget. For a normal game, a new mutation will only occur at the gamemaster's discretion, while for heroic, epic, and superhuman games, new mutations are granted when your character's CON characteristic has increased enough to increase the number of starting mutations.

Mutations

Following is a basic list of mutations. As noted above, some are adverse while others are beneficial. They are not particularly balanced, and all should be subject to the gamemaster's approval when selected.

Adaptability

This mutation permits your character to instantly adjust him- or herself to particular extreme conditions, chosen when this mutation is selected. Alternately, your character continually has the ability to survive the specific condition and does not actually adapt to it. Sample types of minor adaptability include immunity to radiation, ability to breathe both air and water, and the ability to digest metal and/or stone. Major adaptability types include immunity to extreme heat, cold, or radiation; or survival in a vacuum. If a resistance roll is

required, your character's relevant characteristic is doubled against the potentially harmful condition.

Allergy

This is an adverse mutation. This mutation causes hypersensitivity to a particular substance, plant, or animal. When in contact with this substance, your character has an unpleasant reaction, such as sneezing, a rash, swollen eyes, etc. If your character has this as a minor mutation, subtract 20% from all of your skill ratings for the duration of contact with the allergen, and for 15 minutes afterwards. If this mutation is major, your character takes 1D6 hit points in damage when exposed to the substance (damage is only inflicted once per 15 minutes, but armor does not protect against it) and he or she suffers the loss of 40% from all skills during that time period.

Biped (Quadruped)

This is an adverse mutation. Due to some deformity of your character's musculature or skeletal structure, he or she has a quadrupedal (four-legged) stance rather than a bipedal (two-legged) one. As a minor mutation, your character can stand upright for brief periods equal to his or her CON in combat rounds, before resorting to a more comfortable stance on hands and feet. If the mutation is major, your character must make a successful Agility roll and a successful Stamina roll for each combat he or she is upright, or revert to a quadrupedal stance. Failing the Agility roll means your character falls prone, and failing the Stamina roll means he or she loses one fatigue point for the effort if that optional system is being used. Other characteristics and attributes are unaffected, unless they are rendered impossible by the mutation. The gamemaster should determine if the mutation will affect your character's ability to use some equipment or pilot some types of vehicle.

If the creature is normally a quadruped, it has the musculature structure and skeletal capacity to walk upright. This may be its normal posture, or it may tire the mutant to assume this position for long periods, forcing it to drop to quadrupedal stance periodically as above. For an inappropriate creature (*for example, a chicken or snake*), the gamemaster should exchange this mutation for the Structural Improvement or Structural Weakness mutations.

Camouflage

Your character has an unnatural coloration, exterior form, or an ability to change coloration to help conceal him or her from enemies, or perhaps imitate an object or other type of being. As a minor mutation, this is limited to coloration or some form of unusual skin texture, and as a major mutation it allows for the character to change color

and/or skin texture according to his or her background, as if he or she were a chameleon. *For example, a hairless mutant with stony appearing skin could curl up and resemble a rock, or a very thin human might have bark-like skin and be able to imitate a tree.* The minor version of this mutation provides a +20% bonus to the Hide skill, while the major version confers a +40% bonus.

Coloration

This is a minor mutation only. Your character's skin is a different color or colors from your species' natural color, often strikingly so. It may glisten like gold, be tiger-striped, or be one solid color. If your character's species is covered with scales, carapace, fur, hair, or some other substance, it is similarly an unusual and unnatural color.

Congenital Disease

This is an adverse mutation. Your character suffers from an incurable and possibly painful non-contagious ailment. It may have hemophilia, deformed bones, cancer, or lung trouble. Such mutants generally have shortened life spans. As a minor mutation, one of your character's characteristics (CON) is reduced by 1D6 points, according to the severity of this disease. As a major mutation, two of your characteristics (CON and another of your choice) are reduced by 1D6 points. Any bonuses or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Decreased Characteristic

This is an adverse mutation. For a minor mutation, first determine which characteristic is decreased through mutation, roll a D10 and refer to the following chart:

Characteristic Change

D10 Result	Attribute
1	STR
2	CON
3	SIZ
4	INT
5	POW
6	DEX
7	APP
8	Both STR and SIZ
9	Roll twice, using a D8 instead of a D10
10	Roll three times, using a D8 instead of a D10

Roll another D6 to determine how much the characteristic is altered by:

D6 Result	Reduction
1-3	-1D6
4-5	-2D6
6	-3D6

No characteristic can be reduced to 0 or less, so any decreases in excess are lost and the characteristic's value is

Mutation Summary

This table provides a random means of determining initial mutations for your character using a D100. Adverse conditions are in *italics*, though if a mutation has an adverse and beneficial variety, they are identified as such.

Result	Mutation	Description
01-03	Adaptability	Survival in unusual environments.
04-05	Allergy	Skills reduced by contact to an allergen.
06-09	Biped (<i>Quadruped</i>)	If two-legged, forced to walk four-legged.
10-12	Camouflage	Skin has a concealing texture or color.
13-15	Coloration	Unusual coloration (minor only).
16-19	Congenital Disease	Suffers from a debilitating disease.
20-22	Decreased Characteristic	Characteristic decreased.
23-25	Disease Carrier	Carries (but is immune to) an infectious disease.
26-29	Group Intelligence	Part of a hive mind.
30	Hands	Has extra hands or prehensile limb.
31-33	Hardy	Resistant to damage.
34-36	Hybrid	Has an animalistic trait.
37-44	Increased Characteristic	Characteristic increased.
45-48	Keen Sense	Has one or more sharp senses.
49-50	Luminescence	Emits a light from body.
51-53	Metabolic Improvement	Has a beneficial but unusual metabolism.
54-57	Metabolic Weakness	Has a disadvantageous and unusual metabolism.
58-60	Natural Armor	Has natural armor (scales, horn, hide, etc.).
61-65	Natural Weapon	Has natural weapon (spine, claw, teeth, etc.).
66-67	Pain Sensitivity	Low resistance to pain.
68	Pheromone	Emits chemicals that can affect others.
69-70	Reduced Sense	Impaired or missing primary sense.
71-72	Regeneration	Able to heal rapidly.
73-74	Sensitivity	Has an unusual affinity for a substance.
75-76	Speech (Mimicry)	Can imitate animal noises, or speak clearly.
77-81	Structural Improvement	Has an unusual and beneficial body form.
82-86	Structural Weakness	Has an unusual and disadvantageous body form.
87-89	Venom	Emits a natural poison.
90	Wings	Has wings and can glide or fly.
91-00	gamemaster or player's choice	Pick or roll again.

At the gamemaster's discretion, you can pick your mutations instead of rolling randomly.

set at 1. For a major mutation, the characteristic reduction is doubled. Any bonuses or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Disease Carrier

This is an adverse mutation. Your character carries a disease, though he or she is immune to that disease. The disease has an potency (POT) of 2D10. The disease may be promulgated by touch, or by some specific mode of contact, such as through your character's saliva, blood, or some other appropriate means. Any other character exposed to your character in the appropriate fashion must make a resistance roll with his or her CON vs. the disease's POT or will contract the disease. As a major mutation, the POT is increased to 4D10, or your character carries two separate diseases, each with its own POT and vector of transmission. See "Disease" in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more information.

Group Intelligence

This power is generally not used for human characters, and is suitable only with the gamemaster's approval. If your character has this mutation, he or she is considered to be one of a group of similar creatures, though the only one present in the campaign. It will be up to the gamemaster to determine if your character is able to encounter others of the same group. Creatures with group intelligence often live in colonies and share the same mind. The experience of one of the group's creatures is simultaneously experienced by the other members of its colony. At the minor level, the group intelligence is short distance (CON in meters) and is limited to vague sensations or behavioral imperatives. At the major level, this mutation allows for a strong link (almost telepathic in nature) allowing full communication over an unlimited distance. Often species with the Group Intelligence mutation have ant-like castles, with some individuals specialized for breeding, others for foraging, and yet others for warfare.

Hands

This mutation describes any type of manipulative limb, not just hands. With the minor form of this mutation, your character has one or two extremely mobile, ape-like feet, prehensile lips or a snout, or a long and prehensile tail. The major version of this mutation offers two such manipulative limbs (prehensile feet and a tail), or an extra set of such organs (two tails, two extra arms, etc.). The gamemaster should determine if this allows your character addi-



Using a couple of mutations on a standard creature, the gamemaster can create new and unusual foes with which to challenge the player characters.

tional actions in a combat round, using the guidelines in “Two Weapons” in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more information. If using hit locations, your new limb(s) are the equivalent of an arm or leg, as appropriate.

Hardy

Your character can withstand considerable damage before falling unconscious. As a minor mutation, your character is highly resistant to damage from a particular type of injury, taking only half rolled damage (rounded down). You should work with your gamemaster to determine the type of damage, such as fire, falling, cutting weapons, etc. with the gamemaster’s approval required. As a major mutation, in addition to the resistance to a particular type of damage, your character can be reduced to 0 or negative hit points and will still be able to keep fighting or performing actions unhindered, until he or she reaches a number of negative hit points equal to his or her CON characteristic. At this point, your character will die unless healing is provided in the next five minutes to bring him or her to a positive hit point value.

Hybrid

Your character is a generic hybrid with the traits of two or more different types of animals. He or she might have lobster-like claws, a tiger head, or anything else imaginable. The degree of the crossing is left to the gamemaster and player’s imagination. If this is a minor mutation, your character has a few defining elements clearly marking him as a hybrid, and if the mutation is a major one, he or she is more animal than human, and may find it impossible to blend in amongst humans. Generally, regardless of

the amount of hybridization, characteristics and skills are relatively unaffected, though if your character possesses some animalistic elements that may be used in combat, you should assume that large claws do 1D6 points of damage, a pointed beak or teeth do 1D4 damage. At the gamemaster’s discretion, the major version of this mutation includes a minor version of the Natural Weaponry mutation (below). You can ‘upgrade’ that mutation to a greater mutation at the usual cost.

Imitation

This mutation allows your character to imitate some natural trait of an animal species. This can potentially be an ability the creature has like web spinning, wall-crawling, leaping, egg laying, amphibiousness, etc. This is usually described as a specialty of the mutation, such as “Imitation (Amphibious)”. As a lesser mutation, your character will have the ability to imitate the trait with a successful Luck roll, or the trait will add +20% as a temporary bonus to a relevant skill (or skills) that would apply.

For example, being able to climb walls like a spider would add +20% to the Climb skill as a temporary bonus. Any relevant values for the trait are based on 1/2 your character’s CON score (rounded up), if appropriate.

For example, a character who chooses Imitation (Web-spinning) as a minor mutation and CON 14 would be able to spin webs of STR 7 (1/2 of 14), and could add +20% to any skill where web-spinning might come into effect.

As a greater mutation, the trait is entirely natural and your character is not merely imitating the trait: your character possesses the trait, as well as any biological or anatomical structures required to use it. Any skills

receive a temporary bonus of +40%, and the applicable characteristic is based directly off your character's CON where appropriate.

Increased Characteristic

Use the same chart as "Decreased Characteristic" (page 104) though the result is positive rather than negative. For a minor mutation, use the results from the chart; for a major mutation, the characteristic increases are doubled. Any bonuses or derived attributes using those characteristics are similarly modified.

Keen Sense

With this mutation, one of your character's primary senses (choose one) is heightened, raising any corresponding skills. This mutation may have a physical aspect, at your discretion, such as enlarged or unusually shaped sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, etc.). If you are using the optional rules for "Distinctive Features" on pages 34-35, any visible mutation would count. As a minor mutation, the bonus to each skill is +20%, and as a major mutation, the bonus is +40%. Following are the senses affected:

HEARING: A minor mutation doubles the range at which your character can use the Listen skill effectively, while a major mutation quadruples it. Normal hearing range is 15 meters, assuming there is no intervening obstacle (such as a wall) or noise-making interference. As a minor mutation, the bonus to Listen is +20%, and as a major mutation, the bonus to Listen is +40%.

SMELL/TASTE: Your character can use his or her Sense skill to detect the taste or scent of something a normal human would be unable to detect or discern, such as a tasteless poison. As a minor mutation, the bonus to the Sense skill is +20%, and as a major mutation, the bonus to Sense is +40%.

TOUCH: With this as a minor mutation, your character can use his or her Sense skill to detect subtle changes in texture through fingertips or other body parts. With this as a major mutation, your character can "see" with exposed skin and therefore act in darkness as if in normal daylight, ignoring any penalties from darkness (use the Sense skill to determine the chance of success). As a minor mutation, the bonus to the Sense skill is +20%, and as a major mutation, the bonus to Sense is +40%.

VISION: As a minor mutation, this doubles the distance your character can see detail in, therefore doubling the range at which he or she can use skills such as Spot. It also doubles the distance at which your character is capable of performing skills at, allowing him or her to use skills like Appraise at a 15-meter distance. As a minor mutation, the bonus to the Spot skill is +20%, and as a major mutation, the bonus to Spot is +40%.

This mutation is accompanied by a heightened (harmful) sensitivity as well, linked to each sense. If the mutation is

minor, your character must make an Idea roll to avoid being stunned for a round if exposed to an intense form of the sensation. If the mutation is major, the roll is *Difficult*.

For example, a character with the major mutation Keen Sense (Vision) might be blinded by bright light, and would need to make a Difficult Idea roll to avoid being stunned if someone shines a bright light in his or her eyes, or a light is turned on while the character is in a darkened room.

Luminescence

Your character can generate a type of light from his or her body. The minor form of this mutation allows your character to faintly glow in the dark, or emit a beam of light from his or her eyes or some other organ. The major version of this mutation allows your character to emit a harsh beam of light, able to temporarily blind an opponent if it is shone into his or her eyes. To do this requires a successful Agility roll, and the target can make a similar roll to avoid the light (or can simply close his or her eyes). The light's color, intensity, and any ability to control or alter the light are up to you and the gamemaster to determine. It cannot be overly complex, though some mutated animals may project very simple wisps and faint images to entice prey. Anything more sophisticated than a small ball of light should require an Idea roll to manifest and control properly.

Metabolic Improvement

This mutation confers upon your character an unusual but advantageous metabolic condition. This mutation should be developed with the gamemaster's approval. This metabolic change can be represented in a number of ways, from a greatly extended lifespan, unusual sleep habits (needs little sleep), a minimal or unusual appetite, or abnormal growth (perhaps your character is only a few years old, but has grown at an accelerated rate). He or she could perceive the world at a faster rate than a normal person, or be able to shut down bodily functions and go into a comatose state, perhaps like a bear's ability to hibernate. The minor mutation should give your character some unusual advantage, but not be of considerable significance, while the major version of this mutation is a tremendous asset to your character. Due to the wide range of possibilities, this mutation is best developed between you and the gamemaster.

Metabolic Weakness

This is an adverse mutation. As with the Metabolic Improvement (above) this mutation confers upon your character an unusual metabolic condition, though in this case it ranges from inconvenient to debilitating. This mutation should be developed with the gamemaster's approval. This metabolic change can be represent-

ed in a number of ways, from a shortened lifespan, unusual sleep habits (needs a lot more sleep), a ravenous or unusual appetite (difficult to find foodstuffs), or abnormal growth (perhaps your character is even shrinking slowly, or aging backwards). He or she could perceive the world at a slower rate than a normal person, or be forced to occasionally fall unconscious without control. The minor mutation should make life inconvenient for your character, while the major version of this mutation is a serious hindrance. Due to the wide range of possibilities, this mutation is best developed between you and the gamemaster.

Natural Armor

Your character has an unnaturally tough hide, scales, shell, carapace, or some other thickened outer skin affording some armor protection. The minor mutation offers 3 points of natural armor protection, while the major version of the mutation is worth 6 points of armor. These are in addition to the protection afforded by any armor worn, though the major mutation requires that custom armor be prepared to accommodate your character's mutation. The minor version of the mutation can be disguised, while the major version is obvious and cannot be easily concealed. If random armor values are being used, the values are 1D3 for the minor mutation, and 1D3+3 for the major version of the mutation. It is assumed that this natural armor protects against physical (kinetic) attacks, though it may protect against additional forms of damage at the gamemaster's discretion.

Natural Weaponry

Your character has a type of natural weaponry (claws, teeth, spines, horns, etc.) above and beyond those normal to your species. As a minor mutation, this adds +1D6 damage to your character's normal Brawl damage if the weapon is a part of his or her body, or a straight 1D6 damage if it is a missile weapon (such as firing spines, etc.). The mutation can be a single weapon, like a stinger or teeth, or on multiple places (such as both hands clawed, or even hands and feet). As a missile weapon, the range is equal to your character's DEX in meters. As a major mutation, the damage is +2D6 and the range is doubled.

You and the gamemaster should determine the nature and appearance of the natural weapon(s), whether concealable, and use an equivalent weapon from the weapons tables provided in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for any applicable values, such as special success type, length, etc.

Your character can parry with his or her natural weapon(s), if appropriate. The weapon's hit points (for parrying purposes) are considered to be the equal of your own, though they do not add additional hit points to your total. If you wish for your natural weapons to have greater

armor value or hit points, consult **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for suggested armor and hit points values, and the section "Equipment with Powers" on page for guidance. If the natural weapon is used in melee combat, use your character's Brawl and/or Martial Arts skill to determine base damage and the skill rating. Damage bonuses will usually apply. If the natural weapon is used in missile combat, use your character's Throw skill rating, or the gamemaster may require you to create a new specialization of the Missile Weapon skill. At the gamemaster's discretion, the benefits from this mutation stack with any conferred with the Martial Arts skill.

Pain Sensitivity

This is an adverse mutation. With this mutation, regardless of his or her CON characteristic, your character possesses a particularly delicate construction or is unable to tolerate pain as well as he or she should normally be able to. The reasons for this are varied, such as a weakened epidermis, a low pain threshold, or increased nervous sensitivity. The minor version of this mutation forces your character to make a successful Stamina roll whenever he or she is impacted or jostled in any significant manner in order to avoid being blinded with agony as if stunned (see the rules for stunning on page 232). If your character takes any damage, he or she must make a resistance roll of the points of damage versus his or her CON. If the roll fails, he or she is knocked unconscious from the pain and will remain so for 1D6 combat rounds or until woken up. The major version of this mutation includes that weakness, and makes your character particularly susceptible to a particular form of attack. Choose a type of damage (fire, edged weapons, gunfire, cold, etc.) that your character is particularly vulnerable to, and whenever he or she takes damage from that form of attack, the hit point loss (after armor is deducted from the damage) is doubled.

Pheromone

With this mutation, your character produces complex organic pheromones that can affect the emotions or behavior of other beings. These chemicals may have a distinctive odor (such as cinnamon, ammonia, musk, perfume, flowers, kerosene, or some other strong smell) which your character may or may not be able to shut off at will (you pick). Alternately, there may be no odor at all to the chemicals released. The emotion or emotions produced by this mutation might be rage, fear, sorrow, nausea, or lust. As a minor mutation, your character emits special pheromones that can elicit one type of emotional or behavioral response (your choice), with an intensity of 2D6 (rolled each time the mutation is used). The targeted creature or creatures must succeed on a resistance roll of his or her INT vs. the POT of the pheromone or succumb to the behavior it evokes. With

this as a greater mutation, your character is not limited to a single type of pheromone, and is able to choose which emotion or behavior is to be evoked each full turn (5 minutes). The greater mutation pheromone has an increased potency of 4D6. In either case, the range of this power is your character's CON in meters, though wind and weather conditions may increase or decrease this range as appropriate.

Reduced Sense

This is an adverse mutation. This mutation reduces or eliminates one or more of your character's senses, potentially affecting any skills linked to those senses. For the minor mutation, pick one sense to be affected. See "Heightened Sense" for the skills linked to each sense. At the minor level of this mutation, the sense is impaired seriously, but still functions. Any uses of the skill are considered *Difficult*. For the major level of this mutation, the sense does not exist, and the character is utterly blind, deaf, or cannot feel, smell, or taste. The skills linked to that sense are fixed at 0% and cannot be improved through experience. Other senses (and skills) will have to grow to accommodate and overcome the adverse mutation.

Regeneration

This mutation allows your character to heal extremely rapidly. The minor mutation heals 1 hit point of damage every minute of game time. The major version of the power heals 1 hit point in the powers phase of each combat round. Regeneration will not bring your character back from the dead, but will heal damage that would normally require hospitalization. Regeneration will also heal the effects of any major wound, though the effects of this healing will only take place once all hit points from the injury have been completely restored. The gamemaster should use discretion in determining if severed body parts can be restored. When this mutation is picked, you should determine one type of injury (fire, acid, drowning, etc.) your character cannot heal from, with the gamemaster's approval.

Sensitivity

Your character is attuned to a certain item or substance which it can detect automatically at a distance. This could be something as varied as gold, oil, water, specific prey animals or plants, gems, or power sources. The substance must be natural to the campaign setting (it can't be "magic" in a no-magic setting), and it doesn't work on a specific object or being, just a class of substances or beings. *For example, it can't be "silver coins", but it could be silver.* At the level of a minor mutation, your character can detect these within his or her CON in meters. As a major mutation, he or she can detect the

desired substance within his or her CON in miles. If more than one example of the substance or being is within range, your character must make an Idea roll to distinguish aspects such as the intensity of the substance and its relative distance. If looking for a very specific example, the Idea roll becomes *Difficult*.

Speech (Mimicry)

With this mutation, your character is gifted in some fashion with the ability to communicate. It may be a form of low-grade telepathy, or a simple facility for language learning. He or she may be able to speak animal languages or might have a natural knack for human languages. Alternately, he or she can imitate sounds with great accuracy, including voices, machinery, vehicles, explosions, etc. As a minor mutation, your character can imitate any animal noise he or she tries; gains a +20% to any Speak Language skill attempts, and can use vocal mimicry to add a +20% bonus to Disguise attempts using vocal mimicry. Additionally, he or she has a starting value of INT x 2 (plus the aforementioned bonus) in a particular animal "language", with the gamemaster's approval. As a major mutation, add +40 to Speak Language and Disguise attempts, and your character can imitate a wide variety of mechanical and environmental sounds with facility. He or she also speaks two animal languages at INT x 2 (with the bonus), and can imitate any other at INT x 1 starting skill, assuming he or she is able to spend an hour or so in close proximity with the animal type. The gamemaster should determine what animals would have a rudimentary language and how much cross-species communication is allowed.

Structural Improvement

If your character has this mutation, he or she has an advantageous evolution in his or her skeletal structure. He or she may have an exoskeleton (potentially adding to his or her natural armor), extra legs or heads, larger or smaller body parts, or new parts such as wings, horns, or spines. You should work with your gamemaster to determine the nature of the mutation and what effect the mutation has in game terms. For the minor version of this mutation, roll 2D6 and add those points to any characteristics potentially affected by this mutation, or you can turn those points into armor points or MOV points on a 1 for 1 basis. Only POW cannot be altered by this mutation. Your character must make a successful Disguise roll whenever he or she attempts to hide this mutation from other humans. If the mutation is major, roll 4D6 and distribute the points as you choose (excluding POW, as noted above). However, this mutation is utterly impossible to disguise or hide, and your character may have difficulty purchasing equipment and clothing that he or she can easily use or wear.

Structural Weakness

This is an adverse mutation. If your character has this mutation, he or she suffers from a genetic abnormality in his or her skeletal structure that causes inconvenience or otherwise hinders normal life. This mutation covers a wide variety of alterations. Your character might be deformed, obese, or extremely thin. He or she may even have ridiculous appendages such as ten extra legs that only hinder movement. You should work with your gamemaster to determine the nature of the mutation and what effect the mutation has in game terms. For the minor version of this mutation, roll 2D6 and subtract those points from any characteristics potentially affected by this mutation. You can also lower your character's MOV score on a 1 for 1 basis. Only POW cannot be reduced by this mutation. Your character must make a successful Disguise roll whenever he or she attempts to hide this mutation from other humans. If the mutation is major, roll 4D6 and distribute the points as you choose (excluding POW, as noted above), with the caveat that no characteristic can go below 1 point. This major mutation is utterly impossible to disguise or hide, and your character will have difficulty purchasing equipment and clothing he or she can easily use or wear.

Venom

Your character is able to naturally manufacture a type of venom within his or her body. This venom may be injected with sting, bite, spine, or claw, or it may coat your character's entire body. Alternately, this venom might be a gas your character exudes, projected spittle, or might take effect only if something bites your character. If the venom is projected in some fashion, you must make a successful Throw skill roll to strike the target; if it is dealt hand-to-hand, you should use your character's Brawl skill. The minor mutation version of this poison has a POT of 2D6 (rolled each time the mutation is used), and the major mutation version has a POT of 4D6. This poison may cause paralysis, sleep, attribute reduction, or blindness, or have another effect (your choice, with the gamemaster's approval). A resistance roll determines if the poison has any effect. See "Poison" in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more information. Whether minor or major, a ranged venom attack has range equal to CON in meters.

Wings

With this mutation, your character has functional wings and can fly. These wings can appear however you would like them to appear, batlike, birdlike, insectile, or some other style. The "wings" can even be a gaseous gland within your character, making him bulbous and lighter than air. With the minor mutation, he or she can fly at a rate of equal to his or her full MOV score in meters per combat round, or any speed lower than this,

including a hover. With the major mutation, the speed is doubled. Your character's ability to carry anything else while flying is depending on his or her STR characteristic. This mutation counts as a prerequisite for the Fly skill, giving your character a starting value in the Fly skill of DEX x 2 for the minor mutation, and DEX x 4 for the major mutation.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES

These strange powers allow characters to see into the thoughts of others, to manipulate their minds, to overcome human limitations and use the force of will to affect the physical world, and to see beyond the barriers of time and space. Still others of these psychic abilities are nothing more than intensely focused skills, or unusual knacks that have developed in a part of the brain most people do not exercise.

Characters with psychic abilities are called *psychics*, and this section refers to them as such.

How Psychic Abilities Work

Psychic abilities are just like skills, though not everyone can have them. They are rated like skills, and to use them, you must roll a D100, with a roll of equal to or lower than your skill a success, and higher than your skill a failure. Sometimes, in addition to a success roll on D100, you must also overcome a value on the resistance table. This may be a target's POW if he or she does not want to be influenced, his or her INT if the psychic ability can be "outsmarted", or even the SIZ of an object your character is attempting to lift with the powers of his or her mind. If there is no opposing force, and you succeed in your psychic ability roll, that works without any difficulty as well.

Cost of Psychic Abilities

Almost all psychic abilities use power points. If your character is reduced to 0 power points, he or she is unconscious and cannot use any psychic abilities. If a psychic ability can use more than 1 power point, you must spend 1 power point even if the psychic ability roll fails and has no effect. If the cost of a psychic ability is lower than 1 point per combat round (such as a single power point being spent across several combat rounds), it does not cost anything until the outcome of the psychic ability skill roll is determined. If your character fails to use a psychic ability (but does not fumble), he or she loses 1 power point for the attempt, unless specified otherwise in the psychic ability's description. If the psychic ability roll is a fumble, the full power points to be spent are lost.

Increasing Psychic Abilities

Like skills, psychic abilities increase with experience when used in stressful situations. Whenever you make a successful psychic ability roll in combat or some other critical juncture, you should make a mark next to your psychic ability to attempt an experience check when the gamemaster calls for them. You can also increase your psychic abilities through training and research, using the experience rules provided in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**.

Using Psychic Abilities

To use a psychic ability against an opponent, you must successfully pit either your POW vs. the target's POW, or your current power points vs. his or her power points, in a resistance roll. The psychic ability descriptions will specify which. If the target of the psychic ability is a willing target, there is no need for a resistance roll—the psychic ability succeeds automatically if your skill roll is made and the power points are spent. If the target is unconscious, he or she automatically loses the resistance roll.

Instantaneous psychic abilities can be performed during the powers phase of a combat round, using your character's INT rank to determine who goes first in the powers phase. Abilities that take longer than an instant must be announced and the skill rolled on the regular DEX rank; and the psychic ability itself will “go off” during the powers phase of the next round.

Psychic Ability Success Levels

Though some of the psychic abilities are hard to rate in terms of a success level (they are either successful or unsuccessful), most of them can be measured as skills, with different levels of success. Following is a suggested list of outcomes for each success level:

FUMBLE: The psychic ability fails spectacularly, and costs your character the full amount of power points intended to be spent on the psychic ability use. Your character must make a successful Idea roll to keep from being stunned for the rest of the combat round, at the gamemaster's discretion.

FAILURE: The psychic ability fails and costs your character 1 power point, but has no other consequences.

SUCCESS: The psychic ability succeeds, and costs the requisite number of power points.

SPECIAL SUCCESS: The psychic ability succeeds, with style. The gamemaster should choose one of the following effects, as appropriate: the power point cost is halved (to a minimum of 1 power point); the range is doubled; the duration is doubled; the quality of information provided is exceptional; or your character's characteristic value resistance roll (usually power points) is increased by half again the original value.

CRITICAL SUCCESS: The psychic ability is a resounding, perfect success. The gamemaster should choose one of the following effects, as appropriate: the power point cost is only 1; the range is tripled; the duration is tripled; the quality of information provided exceeds any and all expectations; or your character's characteristic value resistance roll (usually power points) is doubled.

Obviously, the effects for special and critical successes will have to be determined by the gamemaster, based on the power type and what seems fair and appropriate to the story. The gamemaster may allow the player to pick one of the effects, disapproving if it seems out of line.

Starting Psychic Abilities

Characters that use psychic abilities often develop these in secrecy, or with a mentor of some sort. In some settings, there may be an organization devoted to supporting psychic characters, but often the power to see into the minds of others creates difficulties socializing with others, and characters are often forced to go it alone when it comes to learning their powers. Following are guidelines for each campaign power level:

Normal: Your character begins with two psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to his or her POW x 1. You can spend skill points upon these to improve them from your personal skill point pool.

Heroic: Your character begins with four psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to his or her POW x 1. You can spend skill points upon these to improve them from your personal skill point pool.

Epic: Your character begins with six psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to his or her POW x 1. You can spend skill points upon these to improve them from your personal skill point pool.

Superhuman: Your character begins with ten psychic abilities at skill ratings equal to his or her POW x 1. You can spend skill points upon these to improve them from your personal skill point pool.

If the gamemaster allows, skill points can come from the professional skill pool, depending on the setting. If the optional characteristic modifier system is being used, psychic abilities receive the Mental skill category modifier.

Gaining New Psychic Abilities

When your character's POW has increased beyond his or her initial total (upon beginning play), he or she may wish to learn a new psychic ability. There are two primary methods of doing this, through training and involuntary means.

Training: Your character may choose to develop a new psychic ability through intense training, usually schooled by another character who has that psychic

ability of at least 75% skill. The time required for training is equal to your character's POW in weeks. At the end of this time period, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW, make a Luck roll, and if successful, he or she has learned the new power at a skill rating equal to his or her POW x 1.

Involuntary Means: Your character may choose to suddenly develop a new psychic power, perhaps without his or her conscious choice. To simulate this, you (the player) should speak to the gamemaster and describe what power you'd like to learn. If the gamemaster agrees, he or she will provide some instance in an actual adventure where your character is put in a stressful situation where a psychic power might develop. You must then sacrifice 2 permanent points of POW and will receive the new psychic ability at a skill rating equal to your character's POW x 5. This does not have to be a time of stress, however. It could be the result of exposure to some form of mutagen, a psychic character "unlocking" a hidden power in your character's mind, the result of some neurological experimentation, or something else.

Increasing POW

The POW characteristic and power points drive most psychic abilities. These are frequently exercised in POW-based resistance rolls. Whenever your character succeeds in a resistance roll versus a POW higher than his or her own, you should put an experience check next to the POW characteristic. See "Increasing Characteristics" on page 186 for more information.

Psychic Abilities

Astral Projection

Range: POW x 10 kilometers

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active

This psychic ability lets your character mentally leave his or her body and travel in the physical world in an invisible, intangible form—essentially a projection of the soul. The astral body has the same attributes as your character's normal body, though he or she cannot utilize any physical skills to affect the material world. While in astral form, your character can see and interact with other astral characters as if they were each in the real world, and can do battle as normal. In some settings, ghosts and supernatural beings may inhabit astral space. Astral characters can use any magic, psychic, or otherwise mental-based abilities on targets in the physical world, with the gamemaster's discretion. Some forms of

physical protection may protect beings in astral form, depending on the nature of the setting.

While using this psychic ability, your character's astral form moves at his or her normal movement rate, though he or she can drift, float, or walk as desired. Alternately, if he or she is familiar with a location within range, he or she can fly there with blinding speed, quick as thought, and arrive there almost instantaneously. This ability can be stopped at any time, at which point your character's astral form will rocket back to his or her body almost instantaneously. While using astral form, your character's physical body is without a guiding intelligence, almost comatose. If your character runs out of power points while in astral form, he or she begins to lose hit points at a rate of 1 per full turn. If someone attempts to interact (speaking to, trying to wake the character, attacking, moving, etc.) with your character's body while he or she is in astral form and out of sight of the body, a successful Idea roll is required to notice the interference. While in astral form, your character may engage in psychic combat. See "Psychic Combat" on page 114.

Aura Detection

Range: POW in meters

Duration: 1 combat round per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

There is a belief that living beings emit auras, normally naked to the human eye. Auras emanate from living beings and can reveal information about the soul, origin, and current condition of the being. Complex methods of scientific and photographic detection of these auras have been developed. Psychics have described other forms of aura detection. Aura Detection lets your character see the aura of another living being, and interpret that aura. Once an aura has been detected, your character can make an Idea roll to determine any of the following:

- ❖ Whether the being is healthy or diseased, and if so, how severe the disease is.
- ❖ Whether the being is benevolent or evil, and how much so.
- ❖ Whether the being is full of power points, overcharged, low, or depleted.
- ❖ The being's relative power, rated on a scale of "much stronger, stronger, equal to, weaker, much weaker" than your character.

Auras are usually mixes of several different colors, with strong colors indicating extremes. The gamemaster may require a successful Spot roll to detect subtle changes or slight elements of an aura, such as aspects of deep deception. A character possessed by another being (such as by a demon) will display the aura of the supernatural being rather than his or her own aura. At the gamemaster's dis-

Psychic Abilities Summary

Following are the psychic abilities from this section. Each psychic ability costs a minimum of 1 power point to use, with additional power points spent for longer duration. Range is usually a multiple of POW.

ASTRAL PROJECTION: Leave physical body and travel in psychic form.

AURA DETECTION: Perceive the aura emanated by a living being.

CLAIRVOYANCE: Project awareness into another place.

CRYOKENESIS: Create an area of intense cold on an area, object, or target.

DANGER SENSE: Detect danger from other characters or situations.

DEAD CALM: Resist mental shock or delay the effects of sanity loss.

DIVINATION: Ask a higher power for guidance and insight.

EIDETIC MEMORY: Perfect and total recall of previous experiences.

EMOTION CONTROL: Affect the emotional state of a target or targets.

EMPATHY: Detect the inner feelings of a target or targets.

INTUITION: Detect a certain person or class of item.

LEVITATION: Floating movement above the ground.

MIND BLAST: A psychic attack against a target.

MIND CONTROL: Controlling the physical body and will of a target.

MIND SHIELD: A protection against psychic interference and attacks.

PRECOGNITION: A brief glimpse into the future.

PSYCHOMETRY: 'Read' past emotions associated with an object or place.

PYROKINESIS: Heat an area, object, or target to extreme temperatures.

SENSITIVITY: Detect psychic emanations or supernatural beings in an area.

TELEKINESIS: Manipulate and move objects mentally.

TELEPATHY: Read minds or speak mind-to-mind with a target.

cretion, this power can also reveal the presence of any supernatural forces at work on another character, such as curses, blessings, or magic items in his or her possession.

Once Aura Detection has been activated, your character can keep it running as long as he or she wishes, and can end it instantaneously. It can function while using normal perception, and at the gamemaster's discretion, it may provide a +20% temporary bonus to any perception attempts against a living being. Mind Shield will work against Aura Detection.

Clairvoyance

Range: 10 x POW in kilometers

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active

Clairvoyance allows your character to project his or her full awareness into an area other than the one he or she inhabits, experiencing that area as if he or she were actually present physically. The range for this ability is POW x 10 in kilometers. This skill is *Difficult* if your character has never been to the location being spied upon. This awareness is limited to the senses—your character has not physically gone anywhere, nor has his or her soul, such as with Astral Projection (p. 112). The perception gleaned from this psychic ability is current—it does not allow your character to see into the past or the future, or some hypothetical timeline. Your character is absolutely unable to interact with the environment being visited, though he or she can attempt

Communication-, Mental-, and Perception-based skills or some psychic abilities (such as Heightened Perception) to allow greater understanding of what he or she is experiencing. Your character cannot use any other psychic ability while using Clairvoyance or the vision will end. At the end of the vision, your character's senses return to his or her body, or he or she may end the Clairvoyance at any time prior to that.

Cryokinesis

Range: POW in meters

Duration: Instantaneous or 1 full turn

Power Point Cost: 3 power points per 1D6 in damage or per 3 points of SIZ

You can use Cryokinesis to create an intense cold around a single being or object within range, to the point where it will do damage to living beings. You must pit your current power points against the CON of the target on the resistance table. If you are successful, the target takes 1D6 points of damage per 3 power points spent on the power. Additionally, any appropriate environmental effects are also applied, with the gamemaster's discretion. If the target has some protection such as warm clothing, this may serve as armor against the damage, again at the gamemaster's discretion. Cryokinesis can also be used to cover an item or section of floor with ice, to freeze a liquid, or to make an item brittle and easier to shatter. In cases where the target's SIZ is applicable, assume that the power affects 1 SIZ point per power point spent. Where applica-

Psychic Combat

Characters in astral form may attack one another in psychic combat. Psychic combat, like physical combat, is used to injure or incapacitate a foe, though in the astral realm it is more difficult to actually kill a foe. For psychic combat to occur, both combatants must be in the astral plane, making this form of combat less common than normal combat.

To initiate psychic combat, the astral forms of each character must be within POW meters of one another. If these values are different, use the higher POW characteristic as the range. The speed of movement within astral form generally means that each combatant agrees to participate in psychic combat. If they are not, or one chooses to flee, consult the section on "Chases, On Foot" on page 215, using each character's POW as the astral MOV rate. If a question arises regarding whether one character can see another, use each character's normal Perception skills.

Once combat has been initiated, it becomes a series of resistance rolls. The attacking character goes first. Use INT instead of DEX to determine what order the psychic combat will occur in.

To attack in psychic combat, the attacker matches his or her current power points against the defender's current power point total. Both characters make a power point vs. power point resistance roll.

- ❖ *If both succeed, attacker and defender each lose 1D3 power points.*
- ❖ *If only one character succeeds, the other character loses 1D3 power points.*
- ❖ *If neither character succeeds, no result occurs that combat round.*

Once initiated, psychic combat cannot be disengaged until both combatants agree to stop fighting (usually when one character surrenders), or when one combatant has been incapacitated by being reduced to 0 power points, at which point the character is immediately returned to his or her body, unconscious and out of astral form. If the power points lost in a round exceed a character's current power points (taking him or her below 0), the excess points are subtracted from current hit points.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the winner of a psychic combat may immediately continue to attack the loser in an attempt to kill him or her. The attacker must use astral projection to get within POW meters of the unconscious loser of the previous psychic combat, and continue the attack. No break is allowed between the initial combat and this lethal continuation.

In this case, the attacker pits his or her power points against the unconscious character's POW (rather than power points). The procedure is identical to normal psy-

chic combat described above, with the following exceptions:

- ❖ *If both characters succeed, each loses 1D3 hit points.*
- ❖ *If only one character succeeds, the other loses 1D3 hit points.*
- ❖ *If neither character succeeds, no result occurs that combat round.*

The unconscious character has no choice but to continue the combat until the attacker chooses to end it. If either character reaches 0, the psychic combat is over. A character falls unconscious and loses the ability to be in astral form at 0 power points (returning to his or her body), and a character with 0 hit points is dead. If the combat ends with a character losing hit points but not dying, lost hit points return at the normal rate.

A character caught in psychic combat may potentially use powers other than psychic (at the gamemaster's discretion) if he or she can make a successful Idea roll. As with normal astral projection, a character indulged in psychic combat is absent from his or her body. Additionally, the gamemaster may allow some creatures (angels, demons, aliens, etc.) the ability to use psychic combat in alternate planes of existence, or even the normal physical plane.

The passage of time while in psychic combat is equivalent to normal combat rounds in the physical world. If required, such as a situation where combat is ensuing in the physical world simultaneously with the astral plane, any psychic combatants should have their INT ranks added into the normal DEX ranking.

The gamemaster may choose to characterize this psychic combat in whatever way is appropriate to the setting. It may resemble an astral version of a brawl, with two astral forms striking one another in an approximation of physical combat, or it may be two astral forms simply standing still and straining as psychic energy washes back and forth between them. The psychic combat may be abstracted into flashy manifestations of power, with bolts of psychic energy lashing out from forehead or hands, or the gamemaster may even describe the combatants as being clad in fanciful armor and striking one another with weaponry appropriate to their personalities. The hit point damage inflicted can be subtle and almost invisible such as catastrophic neurological damage, or it can even be as spectacularly visceral as bodies being set on fire or heads exploding from immense psychic pressure.

The ability to psychically kill a "defenseless" foe is an extremely powerful ability. The gamemaster may wish to eliminate this aspect of psychic combat entirely, or substitute it with some form of possession or a permanent loss of INT or POW characteristic points.

ble, any ice remaining from this power lasts for 1 full turn; though it only delivers damage directly in the combat round Cryokinesis is utilized.

Danger Sense

Range: POW in meters

Duration: Instantaneous or 1 combat round

Power Point Cost: 0 power points if passive, 1 power point to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

Danger Sense provides your character with an uncanny ability to sense immediate threats from the nearby vicinity, such as a sniper, sneak attack, or trap in an area he or she is ready to pass through. Traditionally, this power is passive, and you do not need to spend any power points to activate it. If the power is passive, your character's chance of detecting danger is equal to a *Difficult* Luck roll. If the gamemaster rolls your Danger Sense passively (where it is not initiated), it does not cost any power points to initiate. However, if you wish to actively scan for danger, you can spend 1 power point to "scan" another character or area to determine if danger is present. Activating Danger Sense costs 1 power point per attempt, and the chance of detecting danger is equivalent to an unmodified Luck roll. Further Danger Sense attempts (whether the initial was passive or active) always cost 1 power point per combat round.

The gamemaster should always perform the die roll secretly to avoid alerting you to the potential threat if the psychic ability fails. If the result of the roll is a special success, your character gains an impression of the exact direction the threat is coming from, and if the roll is a critical success, he or she has a further insight into the nature of the threat, such as the type of trap or identity of the attacker. This psychic ability takes the form of a neck-hairs sort of tingle, or a sudden hunch. If your character succeeds in using the Danger Sense psychic ability in a combat round, he or she cannot be ambushed, surprised, or flanked, and will be able to parry or dodge as appropriate without penalty. This ability lasts for one engagement or combat, or one full turn, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Dead Calm

Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more if used to delay sanity point loss

With this psychic ability, your character is never rattled. Use Dead Calm reflexively, when confronted with a force that would cause your character to be stunned or otherwise incapacitated through mental shock. If successful, he or she is not rattled and can act as normal.

Additionally, Dead Calm delays the effects of panic—such as from sanity point loss. If you wish to

delay the negative effects of sanity point loss, your character must make a roll for the psychic ability. If unsuccessful, your character suffers the effects immediately.

If successful, your character can choose to spend a number of power points and match them on the resistance table versus the sanity points lost. If your roll is successful, the effects of the sanity point loss are delayed for a number of full turns equal to your character's POW characteristic. At the end of this time, the sanity point loss and any effects from it are suffered as normal. Until that time, your character can act coolly and intelligently (or at the limit of his or her ability to do so), even if it means making accommodations for his or her impending sanity point loss. This delayed sanity point loss cannot be avoided or lessened by any means.

For example, Martin Bell, famous cool-headed adventurer, is subjected to a glimpse of maddening horror in an ancient Sumerian tomb. He has Dead Calm and POW 16. In an encounter with horrific forces, he loses 6 sanity points through a single failed SAN roll. He successfully rolls his Dead Calm and chooses to spend 8 power points versus the 6 sanity points lost on the resistance table, giving him a 60% chance of success. He rolls and is successful! He is able to act normally and ignores the penalties from sanity point loss, but in 16 full turns (80 minutes) the horror of what he has seen will come upon him all at once. Until then, he can flee and arrange help before going crazy.

See "Sanity" in **Chapter Ten: Settings** for more information. If the sanity system is not used in the campaign, this aspect of the Dead Calm psychic ability has no function.

Divination

Range: Self

Duration: 10 hours or fewer

Power Point Cost: 10 power points, -1 power point per hour less

Divination allows your character to commune with a higher force, whether a deity or some spiritual essence, to gain insight into a situation or question or to receive information about the course of future events. Divination is an extremely slow process—each attempt at Divination requires 10 hours of meditation and/or prayer in order for your character's mind to be in the proper frame to receive the "message". Depending on the nature of the entity whose guidance is being sought, this meditative period may include ritual preparation, burning of incense, consumption of sacred foods, fasting, flagellation, etc. The Divination skill roll is made at the end of the duration, and the power points are spent regardless of success or failure.

You may spend additional power points on a Divination attempt, with each additional power point above the normal cost lowering the preparation time by 1 hour. *For example, the normal cost is 10 power points, and it takes 10 hours. Spending 15 power points will reduce the time to 5 hours (10-5=5).* The time spent cannot be

reduced below 1 hour, and if your character expends his or her last power point, he or she will immediately collapse and awaken with the information from the Divination in his or her memory, experienced as if in a dream, if the roll was successful.

For example, Sister MacAvoy, with a POW 18, an adventuresome nun in a supernatural horror campaign, decides that she must seek God's wisdom in a troublesome matter. The gamemaster and Sister MacAvoy's player decide that the preparation time is best spent in reading the Bible and in prayer. She decides to attempt a Divination for guidance. She spends an additional 7 points (all she can spare and stay awake) to lower the duration of the Divination attempt to 3 hours (10-7=3), for a total of 17 power points spent. She prays for the 3 hours, spends 17 power points, and is successful with her roll. She still has 1 power point, so she does not collapse into unconsciousness.

When this psychic ability is used successfully, you must announce to the gamemaster what the question or subject of the Divination is. The more explicit, the better, though it is possible to ask for broad guidance rather than the answer to a specific question. Following are the results of the Divination roll:

FUMBLE: Your character misinterprets the signs, gaining a completely inaccurate impression of the information sought, usually the worst possible interpretation.

FAILURE: The Divination is murky and difficult to interpret, possibly even contradictory. Your character is aware that he or she has failed.

SUCCESS: Some detail is provided, an insight that provides one answer, a short hint or suggestion that feels right.

SPECIAL SUCCESS: Your character is given a solid answer, with no vagueness or degree of interpretation required. There is a sense of absolute certainty about the legitimacy of the divinatory insight.

CRITICAL SUCCESS: Your character gains exact and true information about a situation that has already transpired, is transpiring, or the most likely course of events, along with a strong recommendation as to the wisest course of action to pursue his or her immediate goal. This may even be accompanied by a clear vision, or an open and obvious encounter with some manifestation of the deity itself.

You and the gamemaster should decide how the proper spiritual mindset is achieved, based on the campaign and the nature of the entity, and whether some of these ritual preparations may increase the chance (by +5% for a minor offering, up to +20% for a major offering). This psychic ability may have considerable overlap with the optional Allegiance system (page 315), and gamemasters wishing to use Allegiance may wish to integrate the Divination psychic ability with it, requiring your character to focus his or her Divination upon beings worshiped.

Eidetic Memory

Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more

Your character is able to recall information from previous experiences and things he or she has learned, with meticulous attention to detail. With a successful roll, a character with Eidetic Memory can recall all information about anything he or she has witnessed or read, up to his or her POW in years. Additional power points can be spent to increase the number of years in the past the psychic ability can reach. Each additional power point spent is multiplied by POW, to equal the additional years. *For example, a character with POW 17 can spend 1 power point to see 17 years into his or her memory, 2 to see 34 years back, 3 for 51 years, etc.* Obviously, your character cannot see further into his or her past than his or her age (unless the gamemaster is using the concept of reincarnation, which is an entirely different sort of thing and outside the scope of these rules). Once the Eidetic Memory roll has been successfully made, your character can make Spot or other Perception rolls as if actually present in the scene once again. Most of the time, Eidetic Memory is considered to be "photographic memory", a visual recollection, though your character is free to recall other sensory information to the memory, such as hearing, touch, or taste/smell. Additional levels spent on the time range are applied to all sense memory. The ability to recall a memory is instantaneous, though use of Perception skills to investigate memories may take additional time, though no further roll or power point expenditure is required.

Emotion Control

Range: POW x 10 meters

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 INT to activate, 1 per full turn to keep active

With this psychic ability, your character can control the emotional state of one or more sentient beings. A successful use of Emotion Control allows your character to manipulate 3 points of INT in a selected individual. Each additional power point spent increases the INT affected by another 3 points. To use Emotion Control, your character must use his or her current power points to oppose the target's INT in a resistance table roll. The gamemaster should tell you how many power points the power will cost (1/3 the target's INT, rounded up). If successful, your character must spend enough power points to accommodate the target's INT, at which point he or she is in control of the target's emotional state. If the roll is a failure, 1 power point is spent; or the full amount are lost if the roll is a fumble.

Success means that your character triggers within the target an emotional state (love, trust, hatred, fear,

lust, calm, etc.) of your character's choosing. Special or critical successes results in heightened duration or intensity of emotion, at the gamemaster's discretion. Failure means that the target is unaffected, and fumbles trigger the emotional state within the caster! Once successful, your character can attempt to keep Emotion Control active by spending 1 power point for each additional combat round. If the target remains within range of your character and does not break free from the control (see below), the target continues to feel the emotional state your character has chosen.

Your character must be within range of the intended target, and the target must be able to feel the intended emotional state. *For example, most robots are immune to this psychic ability, while an alien may or may not be immune, based on its psychological makeup.* Robots programmed with emotional states may be susceptible to this psychic ability, at the gamemaster's discretion. This emotion will not cause the target to act in a suicidal fashion or act as if mind-controlled. Instead, Emotion Control sways the actions or reactions of an individual, rather than forcing them into unwanted activity. If the gamemaster feels that the emotional state being desired is intended to provoke extreme action (such as self-destructive behavior), he or she may allow an Idea roll for the target to recognizing the outside emotional influence overcome, or even automatically have the target "snap out of it" if the emotions are self-destructive and extremely unfounded.

If your character wants to attempt to control two or more targets, each is handled as a separate Emotion Control roll and resistance roll. For convenience, the gamemaster should add all of the INT scores together and divide by 3 (rounding up) when determining the cost of the psychic ability, or he or she can figure out each target's cost separately, as above.

For example, Cathanna, a priestess of the love goddess Ithiluna, has the Emotion Control psychic ability and POW 20. She can affect a total of up to 57 points of INT ($19 \times 3 = 57$) and remain conscious. With this many power points, she can make an Emotion Control attempt against any combination of targets whose INTs equal 57 or less, though each attempt she makes will require a separate resistance roll. If she fails any of these, this may reduce the amount of INT she can affect overall (due to the 1 power point lost for a failed roll).

Once the target has been successfully dominated emotionally, he or she can attempt to break the control with a new resistance roll at the beginning of each subsequent full turn. Each full turn after being controlled, the target can make a resistance roll of his or her INT vs. your character's current power points. Success means that the target breaks free and can act accordingly. Once a target has broken free of the psychic ability, a successful Idea roll reveals that an outside force attempted to influence him or her. With a special success, he or she will recognize the

person responsible if it is not immediately obvious. Similarly, your character must make an Idea roll to recognize when a target has broken free from the Emotion Control, if it is not obvious.

Empathy

Range: POW in meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point

With Empathy, your character can read a target's emotional state to determine if inner feelings are identical to those displayed by outward appearance. Your character must be able to see the intended target or sense him or her through use of another psychic ability, and the target must be within range. To use Empathy, your character must make a resistance roll with his POW vs. the intended target's POW. Success yields an insight into the dominant state of emotion the target is currently experiencing. A special success reveals the origin of the emotional state (the cause, the person responsible, etc.). A critical success reveals a strong insight into what the target plans to do about that emotional state. Failure yields nothing, while a fumble provides your character with false or misleading information. With a successful Idea roll, the target will know that his or her feelings have been revealed to someone, and with a successful INT x 1 roll, will be able to discern your character's use of Empathy.

Mind Shield (below) is a useful defense against this psychic ability.

Intuition

Range: 100 x power points meters

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 to activate

Your character can make intuitive leaps that defy logic and stretch the limits of normal sensory perception. With this psychic ability, he or she can specify one type of thing he or she is looking for, such as a trap, lost item, secret door, valuable item, hidden safe, concealed weapon, or even the concealed thoughts of another character. The gamemaster will then provide the direction to the nearest example of such an item (or type of thing) within range. Additional power points can be spent to increase the range of the Intuition, multiplying your character's POW by the power points spent. *For example, if your character spends 3 power points on his her Intuition, the range can be increased to 300 meters ($100 \times 3 = 300$).* If desired the gamemaster can use your character's Intuition as a passive ability, rolling secretly and allowing hints or guesses to help guide the course of the adventure. When used in this passive manner, no power points are expended.

GM CAUTION: A gamemaster may choose to disallow characters to take the Intuition psychic ability as it has the potential of disrupting or unbalancing a campaign.

Levitation

Range: POW in meters

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ points

Levitation allows your character to lift 3 SIZ points of his or her own body or another character's body weight per power point spent. Levitation is a relaxing form of movement, and direction and speed can be adjusted by your character almost as instinctively as adjusting movement while walking. Levitation does not require a resistance roll—each level of the psychic ability will lift 3 SIZ point of a living being and sustain that being at a height of up to the target's normal height. Your character can use Levitation to cross chasms or other similar obstacles, up to the power points spent in horizontal meters. While levitating, your character can continue to remain lifted indefinitely, provided he or she has enough power points available. Levitation does not require conscious thought to maintain, though if your character is attacked mentally or physically, he or she must make an Idea roll to keep afloat those levitated. Failure to do so means that the psychic ability ends and your character drifts to the ground.

If a target of the psychic ability does not wish to be manipulated with this psychic ability, he or she must make a resistance roll of his or her current power points vs. your character's current power points. Similarly, if your character wants to move a Levitating target under his or her control in a direction contrary to the one the target wants to go, a resistance roll of POW vs. POW determines the outcome of the struggle. Levitation can be released at any time, though the fall is gradual enough that it does not cause damage. If the target defeats your character in a POW vs. POW roll, he or she is released from Levitation, willingly or otherwise.

Levitation will allow your character to bypass hazardous terrain, such as that described in Slippery or Unstable Surfaces on page 231. As noted in the section above, descent is gradual enough that a levitating character never takes falling damage. This differs from Telekinesis in that the movement is gradual, at the character's normal walking speed, and is generally graceful and slow movement. Additionally, Levitation can only be used on living beings, while Telekinesis is more flexible but less comfortable.

Mind Blast

Range: POW in meters

Duration: Until target recovers

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 POW affected

Your character can make a mental attack against a target within range, potentially stunning him or her. This

attack does not cause damage, but can inconvenience or overwhelm the opponent, allowing your character and allies a tactical advantage. When this power is used, your character's current power points are rolled versus the target's current power points on the resistance table. Each use of the power costs 1/3 the target's POW score, rounded up, paid after the resistance roll is made. Success indicates that the target is stunned for 1D6 combat rounds. Stunned characters can recover normally, as described in that section. If the roll is a special success, the target is knocked unconscious for 1D6 full turns. If the roll is a critical success, he or she will be knocked unconscious for 1D6 hours. Whether a Mind Blast is successful or fails, the target will realize that he or she was mentally attacked, and a special success on an Idea roll will reveal who attacked, if it is not immediately obvious.

See "Stunning or Subduing" on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Mind Control

Range: POW in meters

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 points of the target's POW (rounded up) plus 1 power point per additional combat round

Your character can use Mind Control to dominate the actions and free will of another intelligent being. First, your character must win in a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll against the intended target. Each use of the power costs 1 power point per 3 points of the target's POW characteristic (rounded up), paid after the resistance roll is made. If successful, your character may concentrate and control the movements and speech of the mind-controlled target. While controlling the target, your character does not gain any insight into the target's mind or physical state—metaphorically; your character is using a remote control rather than leaping into the driver's seat. This control is complete, though the gamemaster may allow the dominated target a POW x 1 roll to ignore or hesitate at the control if the action is utterly contrary to the target's will. Once control has been established, your character can continue to control the target each round with the expenditure of an additional power point per combat round.

If your character wishes to have the target do anything other than lie down and fall asleep, he or she must concentrate, using no other psychic abilities and doing nothing more than moving slowly and speaking to others in short sentences. If your character is forced to fight or concentrate on any other activity (he or she must make a successful Luck roll if interrupted, or a *Difficult* Luck roll if injured), the target is automatically released from the Mind Control. After the target has been successfully dominated emotionally, he or she can attempt to break the control with a new resistance roll at the beginning of each

subsequent combat round. Each combat round after being controlled, the target can make a resistance roll of his or her POW vs. your character's POW (rather than power points). Success means that the target breaks free and can act accordingly. A formerly controlled target regains control over his or her body and thoughts at the beginning of the combat round immediately after the psychic ability ends. With a successful Idea roll, he or she will know that he or she was controlled. A special or critical success on this roll will restore memories of actions taken while controlled and potentially reveal the identity of the controller. If the Idea roll fails, the target has no idea he or she was mind-controlled.

Mind Control cannot be used on unintelligent animals or beings, or those without living brains and psychic processes. A character could not Mind Control a zombie, a robot, or ghost. At the gamemaster's discretion, he or she may have additional difficulty controlling an alien or creature with vastly different mental structure. In cases of tremendously different mental processes, the gamemaster should make the Mind Control roll *Difficult*, or double the target's power points for the purpose of the resistance roll.

Mind Shield

Range: Self

Duration: 1 full turn per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 power point or more to activate

Mind Shield helps protect your character against psychic attacks. To use Mind Shield, your character must make a successful roll with the psychic ability, and declare how many power points he or she is going to spend. Each power point of Mind Shield is used as a resistance roll versus the power points spent by any incoming psychic attack. If the psychic attack is already underway, your character can attempt to disrupt it when he or she is able to act. *For example, if your character is having his or her mind read, or has being telepathically attacked over a period of several combat rounds, he or she can choose to institute the Mind Shield psychic ability as a next available action.* Your character can keep Mind Shield beyond 1 full turn by spending the relevant power points when the previous use is about to expire.

In addition to its value against offensive psychic abilities, Mind Shield works against passive psychic abilities such as Empathy or any form of detection that detects your character's psychic presence. In these cases, Mind Shield must be in effect or your character will be noticed. If the sanity system is being used, each level of Mind Shield in place will protect your character against 1 sanity point loss per horrific encounter, as a form of psychic armor. This protection is applied after your character has failed his or her SAN roll and when the loss to SAN is being determined.

If the mental force is not directly a psychic ability, then each power point spent increases your character's POW characteristic by 3 points purely for defensive purposes in resistance rolls against mental influence. Mind Shield is especially useful against psychic abilities such as Emotion Control, Mind Blast, and Mind Control.

Precognition

Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point to activate plus 1 power point per step in time (see table)

Precognition lets your character have a brief, intuitive glimpse into the future. Precognition can be utilized actively or passively. With active Precognition, your character attempts to see into the future, and spends power points to activate the psychic ability based on how far he or she wants to look. The farther into the future, the more power points the ability costs.

Power Points	Time Step
1	1 combat round
2	10 combat rounds
3	1 full turn
4	1 hour
5	1 day
6	1 week
7	1 month
8	1 year
9	10 years
10	100 years
11+	Etc.

Once the power point is spent, your character must make a successful Idea roll to interpret the future. With passive Precognition, the gamemaster secretly rolls the Idea roll for your character and provides him or her with a glimpse into the future if the roll is successful. In either case, the gamemaster rolls the dice for your character and announces the results to you. The difference is that with passive Precognition, you may not know the dice are being rolled at all, while for active Precognition, you instigate the die roll. There is no power point cost for passive use of this psychic ability, and the gamemaster may wish to have some aspect of your character's environment or situation prompt a precognitive glimpse into the future.

The results of the Precognition roll are as follows:

FUMBLE: Your character has a clear and coherent vision that is completely inaccurate and misleading.

FAILURE: Your character's flash of insight is incomprehensible or contradictory, and does little other than provide him or her with an uneasy feeling about a situation, good or bad. Your character will be aware that the Precognition has failed.

SUCCESS: Your character has a glimpse into the future up to the time step specified. The glimpse is solid enough to get a strong impression of what is to come.

SPECIAL: Your character sees the outcome in considerable detail, and has an intuitive sense as to how things will transpire. A further successful Idea roll will let him or her know what needs to be done to achieve (or avoid) that outcome.

CRITICAL: Your character has a crystal clear vision of the future event, and sees all events that immediately precede it, with little need to interpret or guess at what is to come. Furthermore, your character knows exactly what actions will result in that outcome, and how to prevent or ensure them if required.

GM CAUTION: Precognition can imply a sense of predestination if used in a roleplaying game, and to work properly it may require the gamemaster to railroad events or take control of player character actions. Thus, the role of Precognition in a campaign is entirely subject to the gamemaster's wishes, as it is easily the psychic ability with the most potential to wreck a campaign (by providing players with information that the gamemaster might want to keep secret). Gamemasters should feel free to prohibit Precognition outright or limit it in other ways such as increasing the power point cost; making the answers cryptic and vague; or even adding some long- and short-term detrimental aspects to its use, such as sanity point or fatigue point cost.

Psychometry

Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per SIZ point of object, plus 1 point per time step (see the table in "Precognition", above)

Objects are psychic sponges, able to absorb charged emotions and impressions from those who have used them. Places also have this quality, absorbing psychic turbulence from extreme emotional states, such as from emotionally violent or terrible acts committed within them. Psychometry allows your character to touch an inanimate item or some portion of a place and receive a sense of what emotions were present in the users. It does not work on living beings. A successful Idea roll allows your character to identify the user of the object if it is someone he or she has met. If the person is someone he or she has not met but knows of (through a picture, television, etc.), the Idea roll is *Difficult*. Gamemasters may wish to utilize this psychic ability in a passive sense, rolling secretly for your character's Psychometry and informing you that your character has a sudden flash of insight about a place or thing. In these cases, the psychic ability does not cost any power points to use.

Your character will receive a vision of one instance of its previous use, placing your character in the same vantage point as the item, as if perceiving it from its point of

view. With Psychometry, an object and an area are considered identically. To use this aspect of the psychic ability, make a Psychometry roll and spend the power points equivalent to the SIZ of the item (minimum of 1) plus power points equivalent to the last time the item was used (the gamemaster will provide this information). For a large area, choose some subset of that area to gain an impression. *For example, rather than try to use Psychometry on a car (SIZ 60), your character should use it on the car seat (which is human-sized).* See "SIZ of Common Objects" in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more information. Your character can also use Psychometry to determine any special activating code or term used for a device, from a combination for a lock to the magic word that allows a magic wand to be used. Your character can attempt this function of Psychometry once for each item. Failure means that your character cannot try again on the specific item or place until his or her skill with Psychometry has increased.

GM CAUTION: Psychometry can potentially wreck a campaign. When a character has the ability to determine considerable background information from common items, it could derail any sense of the unknown. A mystery would be simple to solve, if someone with Psychometry could lay his or her hands on the murder weapon, the crime scene, or some evidence. On these grounds alone, the gamemaster may choose to disallow this psychic ability. Additionally, it is up to the gamemaster's discretion whether Psychometry will work on a corpse.

Pyrokinesis

Range: POW in meters

Duration: Instantaneous, or 1 combat round

Power Point Cost: 3 power points per 1D6 damage or 3 SIZ points

Pyrokinesis is the ability to create intense heat, allowing your character to fill an area with flame or to snuff out that volume of existing flame. This flame can be used to ignite an object, to provide light, or to warm an area. It can be shaped and otherwise manipulated in a variety of fashions. The area affected is equal to 1 SIZ point per power point used for Pyrokinesis. If Pyrokinesis is directed against a living being, you must pit your current power points against the CON of the target the resistance table. If you are successful, the target takes 1D6 points of damage per power point spent on the power. Additionally, any appropriate environmental effects are also applied with the gamemaster's discretion. If the target has some protection such as insulating clothing, this may serve as armor against the damage, at the gamemaster's discretion. Pyrokinesis can also be used to melt items, using the power points spent versus the object's SIZ on the resistance table. The damage for Pyrokinesis is instantaneous, though the (relatively harmless) heat will linger for an

additional combat round or longer. **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** has additional information about fire and intense heat. The gamemaster may choose to modify the number of power points required for substances based on their melting points.

Sensitivity

Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost: 1 power point

Sensitivity is a form of psychic awareness that is nonspecific and not as powerful or narrowly focused as the other psychic abilities described in this section. When your character handles an object or enters a place that is emotionally charged, or enters the presence of a supernatural entity, hidden or otherwise, he or she can use Sensitivity to recognize this otherworldly aspect. If the emotional, spiritual, or supernatural aspects are negative or hostile, your character will feel a sense of foreboding and distrust of the area, and if the overall impression of the area is positive, he or she will feel a sense of peace and harmony. If the psychic impressions are coming from a specific object in your character's vicinity, an Idea roll will allow the character to identify the specific object exuding the most intense psychic impression, though not the specifics about the emotional state.

Sensitivity also gives an indication if other psychic abilities are being used, or have recently been used in the area. It can inform the character if a someone nearby has recently used psychic abilities, as there is some amount of psychic "residue" that remains after use of psychic abilities. Gamemasters may wish to utilize Sensitivity passively, rolling secretly for the your character's chance of success and informing you that his or her character has a sudden flash of Sensitivity. In these cases, the psychic ability does not cost any power points to use.

GM CAUTION: Like Divination, Precognition, and Psychometry, this psychic ability can potentially derail a campaign, providing useful information where the gamemaster would rather there be none. On these grounds, gamemasters may choose to disallow the Sensitivity psychic ability entirely, or warn players that it may occasionally provide misleading information, and do so during the course of play (there are a few emotionally-charged items that have nothing to do with the main plot, for example). In some settings, this may be the sole psychic ability present.

Telekinesis

Range: POW in meters

Duration: 1 combat round

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ each combat round

Telekinesis allows your character to lift objects and move them with will force. Every power point spent on

Telekinesis affects 3 SIZ points. To use the power, you should determine the SIZ of the object to be moved and divide its SIZ by 3 (round up). If the Telekinesis is successful, your character can pick up the object and move it in the air or along the ground at normal walking speed. The object must stay within range of your character. Every power point spent on Telekinesis above the SIZ of the object to be moved extends the range an item can be thrown by another 15 meters, or increases the speed to double (triple, etc.) normal walking speed. If something is has wheels and/or is being dragged across level ground, each power point spent will affect 6 SIZ points.

Once an item is being held with Telekinesis, your character can hold it indefinitely, so long as he or she spends the requisite power points to keep it aloft. If your character is knocked unconscious, falls asleep, or is dealt a major wound, the hold on the item is lost and it falls to the ground. If your character is distracted or attacked in a significant enough fashion, or attempts a complex task, the gamemaster should require that he or she make a successful Idea roll to maintain attention on the Telekinesis.

If your character attempts to use Telekinesis to pick up an unwilling living being, he or she must defeat the targeted being in a power point vs. SIZ struggle on the resistance table. A willing target does not need to be defeated in a resistance roll. Telekinesis cannot lift your character him- or herself: to do that, use Levitation. To hit another character with an object using Telekinesis, your character must succeed in a Throw roll in addition to the Telekinesis roll. Objects used as thrown weapons against other characters do 1D6 points of damage per 10 points of SIZ, or the object's normal damage if it is a weapon that can be utilized as a missile weapon. The damage bonus for such attacks equals your character's POW + INT, measured as if STR + SIZ on the "Damage Bonus Table" (page 29). To catch an item with Telekinesis, the character must make a successful *Difficult* Throw skill roll (or a *Difficult* Agility roll) and spend enough power points to handle the intended item.

Additionally, Telekinesis can be used as armor against physical attacks. Each power point of Telekinesis used in this fashion provides 1 point of armor.

Telepathy

Range: 10 x POW in kilometers

Duration: 1 combat round per power point spent

Power Point Cost: 1 power point to activate or 1 power point per 3 POW

Telepathy is the ability to read the mind of other beings. When attempting to read a target's mind, your character must defeat the target in a power point vs. power point struggle on the resistance table. If successful, your character must then spend 1 power point per 3 points of the target's POW (divide POW by three, round up). At this point, he or she has access to the target's memories

and current thoughts for one full combat round. The resistance roll must be made successfully for each and every round your character wishes to use Telepathy on a foe. When using Telepathy toward a willing target, your character does not need to make a resistance roll, and he or she only needs to spend 1 power point to activate the Telepathy.

Once the power is successful, your character can do what he or she wants, within reason. Successful use of Telepathy allows your character to perform one of the following actions:

- ❖ Speak mind-to-mind as equals, almost as if in conversation.
- ❖ Pass along a simple or complex message to the character, including instilling in the target's mind a memory or mental image of some event, place, object, or person.
- ❖ Read the surface thoughts and feelings of a target.
- ❖ Implanting false memories that last until the target succeeds in a *Difficult Idea* roll, which will only be provoked at an appropriate juncture.
- ❖ Digging deeply for buried memories or suppressed information in the target's subconscious.

Once Telepathy has been established, your character can continue it by spending 1 additional power point each combat round.

If your character has plenty of power points, he or she can attempt to affect more than one target with Telepathy at a time. In addition to making each Telepathy roll separately and paying the requisite power points, he or she must make a successful Idea roll to coordinate the multiple simultaneous Telepathic activities for each additional target beyond the first. The actions taken within the minds do not need to be the same, though if they are, only one Idea roll is required for the multiple Telepathy use.

After the target has been successfully reached through Telepathy, the character can attempt to break the connection with a new resistance roll at the beginning of each subsequent combat round. Each combat round after the Telepathy is first used, the target can make a resistance roll of his or her POW vs. your character's POW (rather than power points). Success means that the target ends the telepathic connection. With a successful Idea roll, he or she will know that he or she was in telepathic contact with your character. A special or critical success on this roll will reveal the identity of your character. If the Idea roll fails, the target has no idea he or she had telepathic contact, only that it was some strange mental state.

The gamemaster should determine how long it takes to retrieve a specific memory if the Telepathy is being used as a means of recovering hidden or suppressed information. It is suggested that this take 1D3 combat rounds for something buried but not otherwise suppressed, and 1D3+3 rounds for a memory that is exceptionally hidden or otherwise traumatic to the target.

SORCERY

Sorcery is a system for invoking supernatural effects on the physical world through complex occult formulas, formalized as spells. When your character says the required words to activate a sorcery spell, the specific type of magic energy is released and has the desired effect.

Unlike the basic magic system described previously, sorcery spells always work, though they may not be able to overcome the target's resistance. Rarely is a roll required to activate the spell, and there is no need for any special targeting. Generally, the only chance of failure for sorcery spells is if the target's relevant characteristic (usually POW) cannot be overcome on the resistance table.

A character who casts sorcery spells is often called a sorcerer, and these rules use the term in that fashion.

Who Can Use Sorcery?

Your character's POW characteristic influences the frequency and potency of the sorcery he or she can cast. To be able to cast sorcery spells, your character must have a POW characteristic of 16 or higher.

A character with a POW of 15 or less cannot cast sorcery spells. If your character cannot cast spells, he or she can still use enchanted items and other characters can still cast useful spells on him or her. For characters unable to cast sorcery spells, their power points represent a resource for other characters who can use sorcery, with several options for draining them from non-spell casting characters.

Starting Sorcery Spells

Your character will begin by knowing how to mark sorcery spells known into his or her grimoire (described below), and with knowledge of how to ready or dismiss a sorcery spell (also described below). Additionally, he or she has a grimoire tailored to his or her tastes.

Normal: Your character begins with up to 1/2 of his or her INT (rounded up) in levels of sorcery spells known, and also marked in his or her grimoire. *For example, if your character has an INT 17, he or she knows nine spell levels.*

Heroic: Your character begins with his or her INT in levels of known sorcery spells, also marked in his or her grimoire. *For example, if your character has an INT 17, he or she knows 17 spell levels.*

Epic: Your character knows up to INT x 2 levels of known sorcery spells, also marked in his or her grimoire. The normal restrictions for having spells in memory

Reliability of Sorcery

Following are some things to remember about how sorcery behaves in game terms:

- ❖ Sorcery spells and the use of sorcerous items do not generally require spell rolls to activate.
- ❖ The gamemaster may declare that some previous requirement is in effect, such as a Language skill roll to read a spell or a successful weapon attack to strike a person with a magic item, but your character does not need to make a roll to make the sorcery spell itself happen.
- ❖ Sorcery spells take effect automatically, though some spells may have limiting conditions such as resistance table rolls.
- ❖ A sorcerous item works for whoever holds it, so long as they have the capability to do so (requisite STR, DEX, etc.).

apply—all of the spells known are available in his or her grimoire. *For example, if your character has an INT 17, he or she knows 34 sorcery spell levels.*

Superhuman: Your character knows $\text{INT} \times 4$ levels of sorcery spells described in this section, or at least has them marked in his or her grimoire and available for use. The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply. *For example, if your character has an INT 17, he or she knows 68 levels of sorcery spells.*

Power Points and Sorcery

After casting spells, your character grows somewhat tired, having invested his or her life energy into powering the sorcery, almost like fuel or ammunition. The game counts capacity for sorcery in power points. As described in the introduction to this chapter, power points are sacrificed in casting sorcery, and then those points return slowly as the sorcerer recovers strength. Spent power points are replenished naturally, up to your character's normal POW.

Your character cannot spend more power points than he or she possesses, nor can the number of power points regenerate above the amount of his or her POW. If your character somehow obtains power points in excess of POW, he or she could spend them, but not regenerate them. Page 30 of **Chapter Two: Characters** has more information on this.

Strong, rare sorceries may require your character to spend permanent points of his or her characteristic POW as well as temporary power points. Particular sorcery can require special herbs, potions, words, or other components. Your gamemaster may rule that additional requirements are necessary; or none at all.

If a great task demands sacrifice of POW and power points, then your character's reservoir of power points

regenerates only to that new lower level of POW. If your character's POW increases, his or her power points will regenerate to the new higher number.

Sorcery Spell Limitations

Your character's Intelligence (INT) characteristic is equal to the maximum number of spells he or she has immediate access to. Sorcery spells are cast from the spells your character has in his or her memory. If you want your character to cast some sorcery spell not in memory, he or she must first dismiss some other sorcery to make room.

A human character can remember levels of individual spells up to equal to his or her INT. Each bound demon and bound elemental also counts against this limit. Enchanted items are independent of the INT limit, and do not count against this total. Finally, at the gamemaster's discretion, some races may have additional capacity for spell memorization.



Think of your character's mind like a shelf and spells are items sitting on that shelf. Your character's INT determines how many items he or she can have on the shelf at one time. If you want your character to learn new sorcery while he or she is at the INT limit, the only thing to do is to dismiss a spell from memory, essentially taking one thing off the shelf to make room for another.

You should list all of the sorcery spells you have in your grimoire in the "Powers" section on the back of your character sheet. In the notes column, indicate if the spell is "In Memory".

Once a spell is dismissed, it must be reacquired from your character's grimoire. A grimoire is a collection of writing that contains spells and sorcerous information. Traditionally, a grimoire is a book or series of books, but it can be a scroll (or many scrolls), a computer file, a sound recording, or almost any means of storing data. Your gamemaster will tell you what form a grimoire can take in his or her game setting. When your sorcerer character learns new sorcery through various means, his or her grimoire more or less automatically records it (or your character can do so with ease—it does not require a roll to accomplish it).

If your character loses his or her personal grimoire, he or she may be able to recall the spells it contained. Your character can automatically re-record any spells he or she has currently in memory. Once per day, your character can attempt to roll less than $\text{INT} \times 1\%$.

How Do I—

Your character needs a POW characteristic of 16 or better to be able to cast spells or summon demons and elementals. If your character qualifies to use sorcery spells, here are some quick answers to any questions that might emerge before or during play:

Learn Sorcery?

The ways to learn sorcery spells are fairly common in some settings, and extremely rare in others. To learn sorcery spells, your character can:

- ❖ Perform scholarly research to learn a particular spell or summoning.
- ❖ Study the spell or summoning from a grimoire that already contains the knowledge.
- ❖ Be taught by someone else who knows the desired spell.
- ❖ Be given the information by a powerful supernatural being or spirit.

Cast a Spell?

You must already know the spell. Each sorcery spell takes one combat round of concentration to cast. If the optional strike rank system is being used, casting a sorcery spell takes 10 full strike ranks. The spell takes effect at the end of the powers phase of the next combat round, and endures for a number of combat rounds equal to your character's current POW. If a sorcery spell is not interrupted mid-casting, it always takes effect, though the intended target(s) may resist the spell. If you are interrupted while in the middle of casting a spell (the gamemaster determines if an action is sufficient enough to interrupt a spell casting attempt), you should make an Idea roll to see if you are able to finish the spell with-

out faltering. If you fail, the spell casting does not occur and the power points you were going to use are lost.

Summon a Demon?

First, you should prepare a magical circle or some sort of specially defined area on the ground (an octagon, pentacle, etc.) in which you will contain the demon to be summoned. Some demons require special items or preparations in order to be summoned. Knowing the spell gives you access to this knowledge, but the gamemaster may require a successful Knowledge (Occult) or a Research roll to discover the particular needs the demon may have. These are determined by the gamemaster, and may involve some expensive or hard-to-find items, depending on the setting. Different demons require different costs of POW and/or power points to deal with and to bind—this varies by the type and strength of the demon.

Once these preparations are in place, you can cast the Summon Demon spell, mentally describing the demon you want as you do so. The demon will appear within the next 1D8 hours (the gamemaster rolls). Summoning a powerful demon takes the sacrifice of many power points, more than most individuals have available, so you may require additional power points from other sources, such as the Chain of Being or Brazier of Power spells. Additionally, your POW can be increased through several different methods, usually from successful characteristic rolls. If you don't have enough power points available to 'pay' for the demon, it disappears without aiding you.

Your character loses the time and power points whether or not a demon arrives. When the demon arrives, you can negotiate with it for one service, or try to bind it to you so that it is always available.

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Success means that your character recalls one sorcery spell, or item of lore that was in the lost grimoire (character's choice as to which spell or piece of information). Failure on this roll means that your character does not recall any useful information.

When Can Sorcery Be Used?

Spells usually take a combat round to cast. Sorcery in memory is available for use in the Powers phase of the combat round, as described on page 189 of **Chapter Six: Combat**. Sorcery that is not in memory can be readied, though it must be done through a different means.

Learning Sorcery

There are many ways to learn sorcery spells, though it is not necessary for every character in a magic-using campaign to use sorcery. In most cases, however, char-

acters learn sorcery spells in one of four ways; scholarly research, studying a grimoire, being taught, or accepting the gift of sorcery from a powerful supernatural force. Each of these is described in the sections that follow.

By Scholarly Research

This option requires a library, and your character needs to be able to read the language or languages in which the books within the library are written.

When creating a library suitable for studying sorcery spells, the gamemaster should determine the library's rating. This is a multiplier from 1 to 3; the higher the number, the better the sources. Your character then attempts to devise a new spell, summoning, or invocation, or to understand or recreate one that may exist or be implied somewhere in the library.

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If you bind the demon to your will, it can appear in its true form. This is not recommended in some settings, but in other settings it may be useful to have a ferocious looking demon on hand at your beck and call.

You can bind the demon within a piece of jewelry, a weapon, etc. This tucks the demon neatly out of sight. However, an object-bound demon does not have full characteristics, which can be as advantageous as it is a disadvantage. The most significant reason to bind a demon into a personal item is that when your character uses the demon, it appears as if your character is the one with the power.

Your character can also tell the demon to return to its own home plane (you can whisper its true name to compel obedience). Then your character can call it when you want it, and it is compelled to obey and return to do your character's bidding. Returning to the same plane as your character takes the demon 1 combat round. When it returns, will appear to erupt out of the item you have chosen (this could be a ring, a staff, weapon, etc.) and will be ready for your character to command.

Summon an Elemental?

You need the Summon Elemental spell, and you also need to know the "pathway" spell for the sort of elemental you want to appear. *For example, your character needs to know Gift of the Earth to summon an earth elemental.* Your character does not need to cast Gift of the Earth to summon the elemental, though. After the Summon Elemental spell has been cast, the elemental arrives 1D6 combat rounds later, ready to carry out a single task you require from it. Generally, elementals are much more pleasant than demons, and not nearly as tricky and hostile. You can bind an elemental, though this may incur the wrath of any other elemental spirits.

The gamemaster will secretly roll 1D10; the result is the number of weeks needed until your character can attempt to learn the spell. The gamemaster should subtract 1 week for each 50% of the required language(s) your character knows, though the result cannot be modified below 1: research never takes less than 1 game week. When the required game weeks have passed, you should roll D100: a success is equal to or less than your character's INT multiplied by the library's rating.

For example, if your character has INT 15, a library rated 1 will result in a 15% chance to learn a spell (15x1=15%), a library rated 2 offers a 30% chance, etc.

If the roll is successful, the particular sorcery spell is learned and inscribed in your character's personal grimoire. If the roll is a failure, your character must spend another 1D10 weeks in research and experimentation until he or she can make another INT roll attempt.

Invoke the Gods?

In theory, anyone can call upon these gods and godlike entities, and expect to be heard, since they are so mighty and since their abilities are so capacious. They can't be summoned, since that's insulting to a god. Their POW characteristics are likely to be far beyond what any character can command. Based on the setting, your gamemaster may require your character to make successful rolls in Knowledge (Occult) or Knowledge (Religion) in order to know the exact rituals for a particular god, or make a successful Research roll to discover the information in an appropriate library.

Your character can respectfully beg the deity to appear once the proper rituals and preparations (if any) are completed. If he or she has any Allegiance (see the optional Allegiance rules in **Chapter Ten: Settings**) with that divine being, your character has a 1% chance of getting a response. If your character is a champion of that god, he or she has a *Difficult* Luck chance of a divine response, and the gamemaster should determine how much effort the deity is able to expend, and will expend, to aid your character. Should a god actually respond, the results of the reaction will depend on what the god wants, and what your character can negotiate. This may require successful rolls in skills such as Bargain, Fast Talk, or Persuade, and may involve an agreement to perform a service in return.

Get a Sorcerous Item?

The gamemaster is the arbiter of what sorcerous items may be encountered in the course of play, using guidelines from **Chapter Eight: Equipment** to create such an item. Depending on the setting, a sorcerous item may be extremely rare and powerful, or could be mundane and relatively inconsequential.

If the goal is an invocation or summoning of a particular deity, a temple to that deity is likely to contain the proper information. Research in a temple is the same as in a library, but access may be even more restricted. The gamemaster should determine what access your character may have, and such a request may involve some form of service to the temple.

By Studying a Grimoire

A grimoire is a collection of sorceries, lore, formulas, and rituals. Though these rules refer to a grimoire as a type of book, a grimoire might be a scroll, a staff carved with runes, or some other sort of record, protected perhaps by with a code, a secret language, or some other means of making the knowledge inaccessible to anyone by the owner of the grimoire.

Every character that knows a sorcery spell automatically owns a grimoire inscribed with the spell(s) he or

she knows. Traditionally, the grimoire is automatically updated whenever a new spell or other information is learned. No roll is required to do so, and it is assumed to always be successful.

Essentially, a grimoire is like a closet of spells. You don't wear everything you own at the same time, but the things you're not wearing are stored there and are ready to be used when you want. Grimoires allow a character to know more sorcery than his or her INT allows, insuring that sorcery is remembered when it is not in memory. Grimoires have no maximum or minimum size. Nothing limits a grimoire's capacity. Your character can start a new or duplicate grimoire at any time. An empty grimoire is just a book with blank pages, ready to be filled with sorcery spells. The only expense is the cost of the actual physical object of the grimoire—the fancier, the more expensive.

Throughout history, grimoires have been written in a variety of languages, including some specifically magical languages. This is likely to be true in any fantasy setting with a tradition of literacy among spellcasters. The gamemaster should determine the language of any grimoire (other than those owned by the player characters) when it is introduced. Your character must be able to read the writing to learn from the grimoire. If your character has a skill rating of less than $\text{INT} \times 5\%$ in the language the grimoire is written in, he or she will have to make a successful Language roll each and every time the grimoire is used for a magic purpose.

Other grimoires can come into a character's possession in a number of ways, and are often prized possessions among sorcerers. A grimoire for sale may be a musty tome that has survived the deaths of its owner, or it may be a series of scraps of cheap spiral notebooks scrawled with tiny handwriting and disturbing pictures. Or it could even be a meticulously organized CD-ROM, complete with audio files to assist in pronouncing the difficult passages of the spell, and hypertext links of the sorcerer's annotations and digressions. A sorcerer with any experience almost always has a grimoire tailored to meet his or her taste and style.

The spells and summonings in a grimoire may be set down incompletely or misstated, or include subtle traps to guard against thieves. References, measurements, and wordings of the spell description are likely to be allusive and baffling. Learning from an old grimoire will often be a tedious and difficult enterprise: the older the grimoire, the more involved the process is likely to be.

To learn a spell from another person's grimoire (and if there is no difficulty in reading the material), your character can attempt a D100% roll of $\text{INT} \times 1$ or less once for every three game weeks of study. With a successful roll, the spell is in memory and ready to be cast.

Being Taught Sorcery

Learning any spell from a teacher may be quicker than creating it or puzzling it out of a grimoire. To teach a spell, obviously the teacher must know the spell and be able to cast it successfully. A character can be taught one spell at a time. The character studying the spell must make a D100% roll once every game week. If the result is equal to or less than his or her $\text{INT} \times 1$, the spell is in memory and is ready to cast. From here, the character can transcribe the spell to his or her grimoire, if desired.

Accepting Sorcery as a Gift

A powerful supernatural force like a god, angel, demon, or some other equivalent may grant the ability to use one or more new sorcery spells to a character. There are several ways this might transpire:

- ❖ The supernatural being might simply place the spell into the sorcerer's memory (and eliminating another spell to make room, if necessary and at the gamemaster's discretion), as if the character has learned the spell from his or her grimoire. From here, the character can write the spell down in the grimoire.
- ❖ The spell(s) might be a written version of the spell, such as on a scroll, in a book, a shard of some precious metal, a data file, or a banner bearing the words of the spell. The spell(s) could also be carved into a rock wall somewhere.
- ❖ The spell may be imbued into an enchanted object of some sort.
- ❖ The spell may not even be taught to the character at all, but instead, the character gains the right to freely call upon the supernatural being and to ask him or her to cast the spell.

In any of these instances, the gift of sorcery may come with strings attached, whether known or unknown. A wise character would be extremely wary of such a deal, especially if it seems to be too good to be true.

Readying and Dismissing Sorcery

As noted previously, your character cannot automatically cast any spell he or she knows—spells must be in memory before being cast. You should note on your character's character sheet what spells are in memory and which spells are in his or her grimoire, perhaps keeping these lists separate from each other to prevent confusion. The default character sheet provided with this game has adequate space for powers, so the front of the sheet is the best place for "ready" spells and the back of the sheet can serve as your character's grimoire.

To ready sorcery, your character's grimoire should be available and the relevant spell must exist in his or her grimoire. The process of bringing any sort of sorcery spell into memory is called *readying a spell*. Removing a sorcery spell from memory is called *dismissing a spell*. This is done as often as you would like: sorcery users are

often choosing their spells based on a particular set of requirements, based on what they plan to do in the immediate future.

For example, if your character is in his or her home and is planning to cast some major spell (like a demon summoning), he or she would ready spells like Brazier of Power, Chain of Being, Refutation, Sorcerer's Soul, and Witch Sight, along with the Summon Demon spell. If your character is adventuring, and wants to be active in combat, other spells may be more appropriate, with choices such as Unbreakable Bonds, Cloak of Night, Heal, Muddle, Sorcerer's Armor, Undo Sorcery, and an appropriate weapon enhancement.

Reading and comprehending the grimoire entry takes 1 combat round for each point of sorcery to be readied. For spells which can vary in points, the number of combat rounds needed always equals the maximum value. For example, it takes 4 combat rounds to read Sorcerer's Hammer from the grimoire and have it ready to cast. If a spell required 20 power points to cast, then your character would need 20 combat rounds to ready it.

Dismiss a spell is much easier. It is instantaneous and can be done at the same time as readying another spell. A demon or elemental can also be dismissed just as quickly, releasing it from service and allowing it to control its own fate. How the creature reacts is up to its nature, the way it was treated, and the relative balance of power between your character and the supernatural being.

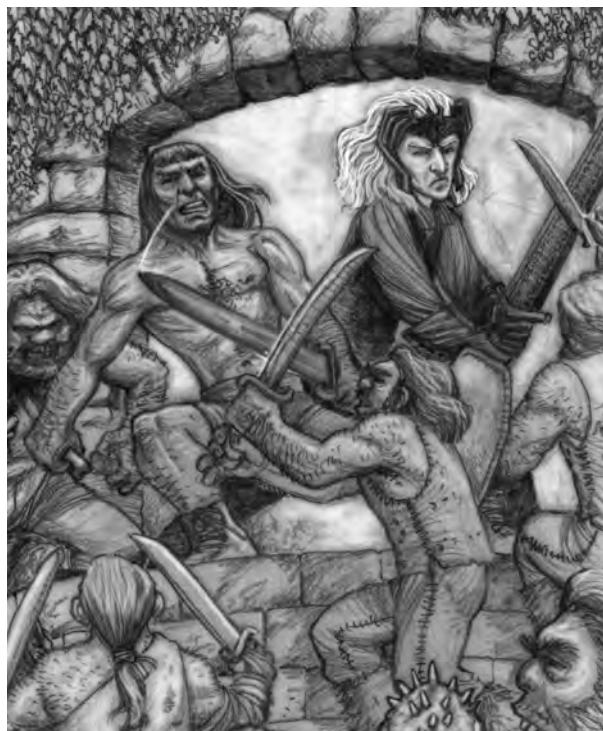
How to Become a Better Sorcerer

How does a sorcerer become more powerful? Here are three ways to increase the POW characteristic.

Exercising Power: If your character has successfully beaten an opponent of equal or greater POW in a POW vs. POW resistance roll, check the box next to the POW characteristic on your character's sheet. When you check for experience at the end of the adventure (or game session), you try to increase your character's POW as per the "POW Gain Rolls" rules in **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering**.

Sorcerous Heritage: At the gamemaster's discretion, when creating your character, you can trade 2 points from other characteristics for 1 point of POW. The effect of this is that your character deliberately sacrifices of him- or herself, to be uglier, weaker, etc., in exchange for greater prowess with sorcery. Each trade requires a successful Luck roll based on his or her original POW. Missing a Luck roll ends the chance of any further trades for your character. A result of 00 is always a miss. Sorcerous Heritage is not compatible with a point-based characteristic generation option.

Gift of the Gods: During play, your character may bargain for or plead for a gift of POW from a particular deity. The gamemaster plays the role of the deity in the negotiation, and attempts to satisfy him- or



Wise sorcerers keep an attacking spell in mind, but also does not neglect defensive spells (Sorcerer's Bulwark) and the ability to dispel the magic of others (Undo Sorcery).

herself as the persona of the god demands. The ordinary grant is never more than 1D3 POW. For each point the deity grants, your character must immediately complete some dangerous task or do some dangerous deed. Such a gift should not come cheaply, and may be more trouble than the boon is worth.

Spells in Play

If a single number or fixed cost is given for a sorcery spell, the effect always costs that many power points. If the power point cost varies, then you can select the strength of the spell by choosing a number from the given range.

Unless noted, spells successfully cast take effect automatically (however, consult Other Planes in the "Spot Rules for Sorcery" on pages 134-135). Once a sorcery spell is cast, it cannot be recalled.

Some spells are not necessarily detectable by observers, while others are obviously the product of sorcerous activity. A sorcerer will always recognize the effects of a spell he or she knows when it is cast, regardless of who is casting it.

Generally demons, elementals, and other supernatural creatures cannot use sorcery, though sorcery spells will affect them. Demons have their own special abilities that only they possess.

If numerous spells are being cast during an encounter, you might want to use a piece of scratch paper to note spell names, the rounds cast, and spell

strengths. Remember to mark off the power points that power the spells.

Procedures

A sorcery spell affects a single person, entity, area, or thing. Since casting takes only 1 combat round, separate castings of the same sorcery spell can strike additional target(s) in later combat rounds.

Sorcery spells are cast on the powers phase of a combat round, in order of your character's INT characteristic. The spell will take effect in INT order of the powers phase of the next combat round.

After you begin casting a spell, you can do nothing else during that combat round. If your concentration is broken, the power points used in the spell are also lost. Loss of concentration occurs if you take 1 or more hit points in damage while casting the spell. An upsetting event, such as a loud noise or unexpected blow during the casting, also can break your concentration. If the gamemaster feels that the situation warrants it, make an Idea roll to resist being distracted. If the roll is successful, you ignore the interruption and complete the spell casting without incident.

Duration

A sorcery spell's duration equals your character's POW in combat rounds. *For example, a character with POW 19 casts Sorcerer's Razor. The spell takes one round to cast, then takes effect in the powers phase of the next round. It lasts for 18 more combat rounds, and expires in the powers phase of the 20th round.* Once cast, a sorcery spell needs no maintenance, and continues in effect whether or not the target moves out of range.

You can extend the duration of any sorcery spell by casting it again at any time: the duration extends, but the effect does not intensify. You can choose to end the effects of a spell prematurely: most spells allow this automatically, while the gamemaster may rule that others take more than an instant to cancel. Unless specified otherwise in the spell's description, it is assumed that any ongoing effects of the sorcery end the moment your character chooses.

Sorcery Spell List

The following list of sorcery spells is not exhaustive, but is a representative sample of spells that can be used for a game setting. The gamemaster may choose to create additional spells, and future expansions and sourcebooks for *Basic Roleplaying* may include additional sorcery spells.

Each spell description is made up of the following aspects:

Name & Levels: This is a generic title for the sorcery spell. Gamemasters and players alike are encouraged to

devise more evocative names to better suit your specific campaign.

The number in parentheses after the name is the number of levels the spell has. If the number is a range, the spell's level is variable, and players can choose how many levels of the spell their characters have in memory and are able to cast. As noted previously, the spell's level is also the requisite power points to cast it.

Range: This is either Self (caster only), Touch (caster or anyone or anything he or she can touch physically), Sight (anything in the physical line of sight, not relayed by mechanical devices like cameras), or some other definition of distance.

A description of the sorcery spell's actual effects in the physical world, with any game effects quantified where needed.

Bird's Vision (1)

Range: Sight

This spell allows your character the ability to control the direction of one bird's field of vision and share in that creature's vision from its vantage point. The bird (or bird-like creature, at the gamemaster's discretion) chosen for this spell must be within your character's eyesight, though once cast, if the bird is lost from view, the spell continues to have effect and lasts as long as the spell's duration. If no bird is present when the spell is cast, it simply does not work. The gamemaster should tell the player beforehand that there is nothing to cast the spell on.

Bounty of the Sea (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a sudden torrent in a room or within a small portion of open space. The water continues to cascade into the area for the duration of the spell. By its end, enough water has fallen from nowhere to fill an average room (gamemaster's discretion). Once the spell ends, the water stays and behaves naturally, draining or remaining as appropriate. If your character is very far from a natural body of water, he or she must make a successful Luck roll before the spell can take effect. This spell is a prerequisite to be able to summon water elementals with the Summon Elemental spell. This spell can be negated by a casting of the Gift of the Earth spell on the same area. This spell can also be cancelled by a 4-point Undo Sorcery spell, but any water already summoned into the area by the spell does not disappear.

Brazier of Power (4)

Range: Touch

This spell lets your character create a reservoir of personal power points to draw upon when summoning

Sorcery Spell Summary

Following are the sorcery spells from this section, categorized, with the range of spell levels in parentheses. Each spell costs 1 power point per level, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell (usually your character's POW in combat rounds).

Augmentation Spells

CLOAK OF NIGHT (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Hide.

SORCERER'S LEAP (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Jump.

SORCERER'S SURENESS (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Stealth.

Characteristic Spells

SORCERER'S BEAUTY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to APP.

SORCERER'S PLASTICITY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to SIZ.

SORCERER'S SOUL (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to POW.

SORCERER'S SPEED (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to MOV.

SORCERER'S STRENGTH (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to STR.

SORCERER'S SUPPLENESS (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to DEX.

SORCERER'S VITALITY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to CON.

SORCERER'S WISDOM (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to INT.

Combat Spells

SORCERER'S ARMOR (1-4): Adds 1 point of armor per level.

SORCERER'S BULWARK (1-4): Adds 1 point of armor per level to shields.

SORCERER'S HAMMER (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to blunt weapons.

SORCERER'S RAZOR (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to cutting weapons.

SORCERER'S SHARP FLAME (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to impaling weapons.

SORCERER'S TALONS (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to unarmed or brawling weapons.

Enhancement Spells

MAKE FAST (1): Glues together two inanimate objects.

MAKE WHOLE (1): Repairs a broken item.

MIDNIGHT (1): Creates an area of darkness.

MOONRISE (1): Creates a floating globe of light.

Elemental Spells

BOUNTY OF THE SEA (4): Fills an area with water.

FLAMES OF THE SUN (4): Fills an area with flame.

GIFT OF THE EARTH (4): Fills an area with dirt.

WINGS OF THE SKY (4): Fills an area with wind.

Manipulative Spells

CURSE OF SORCERY (4): Causes a target to suffer a disfiguring feature.

FURY (1): Enrages a target, speeding their attacks.

LIKEN SHAPE (4): Assume the image of another person.

MUDDLE (1): Disorients target.

POX (1): Reduces a target's power points, requires a resistance roll.

UNBREAKABLE BONDS (3): Immobilizes the target, requires a resistance roll.

Occult Spells

BRAZIER OF POWER (4): Creates a reservoir of power points.

CHAIN OF BEING (4): Pools character's power points.

UNDO SORCERY (1-4): Cancels various sorcery spells.

WARD (3): Creates a magical alarm.

Summoning Spells

SUMMON DEMON (1): Summons a demon.

SUMMON ELEMENTAL (1): Summons an elemental.

Utility Spells

BIRD'S VISION (1): Allows your character to control a bird and see through its eyes.

BREATH OF LIFE (1): Provides breathable air underwater or elsewhere.

HEAL (2): Restores lost hit points.

RAT'S VISION (1): Allows your character to control a rodent and see through its eyes.

REFUTATION (1-4): Protects against Undo Sorcery

SORCERER'S EAR (1): Carries spoken words across great distances.

SORCERER'S EYE (1): Doubles the range at which something can be seen.

WITCH SIGHT (3): Allows the sorcerer to determine a target's POW.

more powerful entities or casting a large number of spells. Brazier of Power is incompatible with Chain of Being, and if one is cast on a character, the other will have no effect. Traditionally, the focus for the reser-

voir is usually a large brazier, but it could be any sturdy, solid place or thing. *For some examples, a large rune inlaid in a floor, a statue, a column of a building, etc. would all suffice for this spell.* If the focus is moved or

destroyed, the attunement is lost, and a new focus must be established from scratch. The first time *Brazier of Power* is cast, the casting character must sacrifice 4 power points and 1 permanent point of his or her POW characteristic, to attune the focus. Once this is successful, your character can store up to all of his or her remaining power points in the focus. The focus accepts new power points at any time up to the maximum of your character's POW when the focus was created (after the sacrifice). *For example, if your character's POW was 17 after the spell was complete (down 1 point from the original 18), he or she can store up to 17 power points in the Brazier of Power at any time.* Whenever your character wishes, he or she may sacrifice the stored power points in the *Brazier of Power*, along with any he or she has regenerated. The power points in the focus are always the first spent.

*For example, Kallistor has POW 18 and 18 power points. He places a large iron brazier in his laboratory and casts *Brazier of Power*, sacrificing 4 power points and 1 POW—they decrease to 14 and 17, respectively. Kallistor stores all 14 of his remaining power points in the brazier, and falls unconscious for an hour. One day later he performs a variety of magic tasks, drawing from his brazier and his own power points. He spends a total of 28 power points (14 from the *Brazier of Power* and 14 of the 17 he has regenerated), but doesn't spend them all, to avoid falling unconscious again. To refill the *Brazier of Power*, Kallistor waits a day to regenerate his power points, and then sacrifices 16 power points into the brazier, keeping 1 to remain conscious. The next day, all of Kallistor's power points have regenerated. He now has 17 power points in himself; and 16 more in the *Brazier of Power*; a total of 33. If he transfers 1 more power point into the brazier, in an hour he has 34 power points ready to use: 17 in the *Brazier of Power* and 17 of his own (he has regenerated the lost power points in the hour).*

The sorcerer must be in physical contact with the *Brazier* to draw the power points from it. Only the creator of the *Brazier of Power* can use the power points directly, however, if he or she has another means of transferring power points from him- or herself to another character, the relevant power points must first be drawn from your character, then from the *Brazier of Power*. To make a focus of greater capacity, your character must cast the spell again, sacrificing another point of POW and the relevant power points. In this fashion, a *Brazier of Power* can become an immense reservoir of power points for a caster to use. Most serious spell-casters tied to a particular location (such as the priests of a god) will use *Brazier of Power* in the lair or sanctuary.

Breath of Life (1)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to breathe normally if he or she is underwater or in some other similar medium. At the gamemaster's discretion, a successful Agility

roll may be required to get the spell off beforehand if suddenly immersed. This spell allows your character to speak normally while underwater, as well.

Chain of Being (4)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

This spell allows up to eight individuals to pool their power points into a single shared resource, a useful practice when summoning or binding a demon or elemental, or casting some mighty spell beyond the reach of a single character's power points reserve. The participants in the spell must be linked by touch; usually they hold hands in a circle. The circle must be maintained while the power points are being spent on any casting. Only a single casting of *Chain of Being* is needed per summoning. Only your character needs to know this spell for it to work, and the 4 power points spent to cast the spell must come from your character. Any power points spent in excess of those 4 points are drawn as uniformly as possible from each participant, starting with your character. If a participant accidentally drops to 0 power points, the chain is broken, the spell ends, and the power points are lost. This spell is incompatible with *Brazier of Power*. If the summoned creature (demon, elemental, etc.) is bound, the participants hold it in common, and must agree upon the action or actions it takes. If they cannot agree after it is bound, the summoned creature does nothing. If its service needs to be negotiated or bargained for, only your character needs to make these skill attempts or offer the terms.

Cloak of Night (1-4)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

When cast upon a character, each level of this spell increases the target's Hide skill by +20%, cumulative, for the spell's duration.

Curse of Sorcery (4)

Range: Touch

With a successful POW vs. POW resistance roll, your character can endow part of the target's body with some gruesome or demonic quality of his or her choice, such as being extra warm to the touch, slimy, always wet, scaly, extra hairy, warty, multicolor, etc. With a second successful POW vs. POW roll, the targeted body part takes on the appropriate physical appearance of a tentacle, a crab leg, a bird's wing, an insect feeler, etc. though the appearance is solely cosmetic—no bonuses or abilities are conferred by this curse. If the affected body area is visible, it may cause a loss of 1D3 points of APP while the spell is in effect. The spell's effect ends when the original caster dies. This sorcery spell can only be cast once upon a single target while it is in

effect, though it can be repeated if the spell's duration has ended. Casting this spell may cause the sorcerer to gain Allegiance points (see page 315) for any force emphasizing cruelty or chaos.

Flames of the Sun (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a mass of floating fire to appear in and hang in any position within line of sight of your character. The fire burns without fuel for the duration of the spell. The churning flame measures about three meters across, and is hot enough to ignite adjacent materials, as any fire can, doing 1D6+2 fire damage per round. This spell must be known before fire elementals can be summoned or invoked with the Summon Elemental spell. This spell can be negated by the spell Wings of the Sky cast on the area it affects. A 4-point Undo Sorcery will dispel this spell; if so, any flame present will fall to the ground and behave naturally (smoldering, perhaps catching twigs and brush afire, etc., at the gamemaster's discretion).

Fury (1)

Range: Touch

This spell induces a furious, berserk rage in the target, making him or her fight recklessly and with savage abandon. You can cast this on yourself or another target. If successful, the recipient of the spell will begin to fight and to fight unceasingly for the spell's duration. If the target is unwilling, you must make a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll comparing your current power points (not your maximum power points). The target of the spell is always able to choose who he or she wishes to attack. The spell increases the number of attacks that the maddened character can choose to make in each round by one additional attack (above and beyond those allowed by skill). The extra attack will be made on the last DEX rank of the round (or strike rank, if that optional system is used). The spell does not add skill percentiles or increase damage done.

This spell lowers the natural instinct for self-preservation, and reduces the targeted character's skill ratings for any dodges or parries in the round by 30%, in addition to any other modifiers such as for additional actions. The furious character ignores any unconsciousness stemming from a major wound. A fatal wound is still fatal to the enraged character, but he or she attacks until the end of the round of death, striking blows while technically dead, and then finally keeling over at the end of DEX rank 1. During this fury, the character can only take actions directly related to the most immediate form of combat. No magic, no healing, etc. The

gamemaster should decide whether an action qualifies as a combat action or otherwise.

Gift of the Earth (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a mass of dust, soil, and sand to suddenly appear and accumulate quickly in a small room or small area of open space. When the duration of the spell ends, the spell will have transmitted more than 60 cubic meters of new earth, enough to fill an ordinary room. This spell must be known before earth elementals can be summoned or invoked using the Summon Elemental spell. The use of Undo Sorcery 4 defeats this spell; though any earth that has already arrived will remain. The Bounty of the Sea spell will negate Gift of the Earth if cast on the same area. If you are far out on a body of water, in the sky, or in space, you also may need a successful Luck roll to complete the spell.

Heal (2)

Range: Touch

This spell immediately adds 1D3 hit points to the target's current total, up to his or her maximum hit points. This spell can be cast once per wound. Additionally, you can use this spell to treat a wound that has already been treated by First Aid, and both will improve hit points if successful. This spell is often used in tandem with First Aid by some healers.

Liken Shape (4)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character or his or her target to assume the visual aspect of another human or natural creature. The character affected by the spell temporarily takes on the new shape and corresponding attacks for the duration of the spell, but must retain his or her original SIZ as well as any applicable characteristics. Essentially, this spell allows a change of physical appearance and the ability to use physical characteristics.

For example, if your character chose to become a canary, the resulting bird would be improbably large, but would have a correspondingly powerful beak attack (due to his or her human-sized STR and SIZ bonus to damage). If your character chooses to Liken Shape into a bear, he or she would be quite small and weak as far as bears go.

It is up to the gamemaster to determine what aspects of a being's abilities are natural and can be assumed with the spell, but if it does not involve a physical attack of some sort or has a magic origin it cannot be duplicated by the spell. This can vary from setting to setting.

For example, in a high fantasy setting, a dragon's flaming breath may be magical, while a grittier sword-and-sorcery set-

ting may have dragon's breath be acidic, venomous, and only occasionally combustible. In the first case, your character would not be able to duplicate the effects of the flame breath, while in the second case, it should be allowed.

Furthermore, the spell allows duplication of another living being that your character has at least seen briefly. Based on his or her familiarity with the subject, the gamemaster may choose to allow any subterfuge related skills involving the disguise to be *Easy* (double normal chance). The spell is negated if the disguised character has physical contact from an actual creature of the species being imitated, or the original human being duplicated touches the character.

Make Fast (1)

Range: Touch

This spell causes one specific item of roughly hand size or less to stick fast to one other thing, and they cannot be separated by any normal means short of destruction of one or both items. This spell does not work on living or dead flesh, or on enchanted or otherwise magic items.

Make Whole (3)

Range: Touch

This spell mends some broken thing, a weapon or wagon, for example, but nothing of size and bulk much greater than that of a wooden wagon or a length of wall around the same SIZ (around 50). The target item should be comprised mostly of the same material or a limited number of materials (a brick wall is fine, a car is too complex). The gamemaster should determine if an item is too complex or composed of too many types of material for the spell to have an effect. The duration of this spell is longer than normal, lasting for 1D6 hours. Furthermore, if your character makes a successful Luck roll immediately after casting the spell, the effect is permanent and the item is restored as if new. This spell does not work on living tissue, or on supernatural creatures, magic items, or other types of magic enchantments. Undo Sorcery 3 will end this spell.

Midnight (1)

Range: Sight

This spell creates an irregular cloud of absolute darkness in an area roughly that of a small room, about four meters on each side. Normal human vision does not work within this area until the spell ends. Otherwise, there is no other effect. If your character wishes, he or she can move the darkness about by grasping it. Only your character can move it in this manner. Undo Sorcery 1 will remove this spell.

Moonrise (1)

Range: Touch

This spell causes a ball of light 1/2 meter across to appear and float in the air, glowing sufficiently enough to brightly illuminate a room. If your character wishes, he or she can grasp the ball of light and move it about. Only your character can move it in this manner. Undo Sorcery 1 will cancel this spell.

Muddle (1)

Range: Sight

If your character succeeds in power point vs. power point resistance roll (current values, not totals), this spell disorients the target enough that he or she cannot cast spells or carry out coordinated plans. However, the target continues to be able to defend him- or herself and move by his or her own volition. If your character succeeds in a *Difficult* Luck roll, he or she can momentarily convince the target of something as if using the Fast Talk skill. The command or misinformation must be spoken aloud and the target must be able to understand the language being spoken. The target can attempt to break it once each combat round if he or she can make a successful Idea roll (to realize your character's influence). If this roll is successful, the target can attempt a power point vs. power point resistance roll. Both rolls must be successful for the target to break free. The nature of the spell requires that the Idea roll be made each round, but once the target is free from the spell, no further rolls are required.

Pox (1)

Range: Sight

This spell attacks the target's power points, weakening him or her magically. When this spell is cast, your character must overcome the target with a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll (current power points, not total). If successful, the target loses 1D6 power points from his or her current total; those lost points will regenerate normally. A character reduced to 0 power points will immediately fall unconscious. For the remainder of the round in which this spell goes off, the target cannot cast any sorcery spells (or use other powers, at the gamemaster's discretion). If the resistance roll is successful the spell has no effect and the target's power points are not removed.

Rat's Vision (1)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

Like Bird's Vision, this spell allows your character to share in and control the vision of one rat, mouse, or

similar rodent (or rodent-like animal), chosen from within eyesight. If the target animal is lost from view, the spell continues for the rest of its duration, and can be extended with subsequent castings of the same spell. If no rodent is present when the spell is cast, it simply does not work. The gamemaster should tell you beforehand that there is no creature available to cast the spell on.

Refutation (1-4)

Range: Self

This spell allows your character to defend him- or herself against the Undo Sorcery spell. It can be cast in the same round as Undo Sorcery during the Powers phase, and will activate at the beginning of the next round. Your character should match his or her levels of Refutation against any levels of Undo Sorcery being cast on the resistance table. If Refutation wins, the power points spent in Undo Sorcery are lost and the spell has no effect. If Undo Sorcery wins, Refutation has no effect, and the Undo Sorcery spell continues to work as if unaffected, negating as many more levels of sorcery as appropriate. If Undo Sorcery is able to attack more than one sorcery spell, you can choose the type of spell to negate from the list at the beginning of this chapter, but you cannot specify the precise spell.

Sorcerer's Armor (1-4)

Range: Touch

The spell is specific to the character it is cast on. This spell should be treated as the last resistance encountered before the target of an attack loses hit points. Using fixed armor values, the Sorcerer's Armor spell simply counts as a second set of armor to the protected character's total armor value. *For example, a character wearing 3-point leather armor with Sorcerer's Armor 2 cast on him or her will first subtract 3 points of damage from any successful attack for the leather armor, then will subtract another 2 points for the spell.* For variable armor values, this spell increases the value of the number rolled by +1 per level of the spell cast, up to the maximum of the armor.

For example, a character is wearing leather armor with 1D6 points of protection and Sorcerer's Armor 2 cast on him or her. If attacked successfully, he or she will roll 1D6 for the leather armor's protection, and will then add +2 to the result, up to a maximum of 6 points of armor protection to be subtracted from the attack.

Sorcerer's Beauty (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase his or her APP characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell,

thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to APP for the duration of the spell. This increase can also temporarily increase the character's distinctive features and Charisma roll. If your character casts Sorcerer's Beauty 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the APP characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly-increased APP characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Bulwark (1-4)

Range: Touch

This spell adds the levels of the spell into the armor protection value of shields and any objects used as shields. Each casting of the spell must be on a single shield or shield-like item. The gamemaster should determine what items count as shields, if it is not immediately obvious.

Sorcerer's Ear (1)

Range: Sight

This spell allows two speakers to whisper to each other across a visible distance. The space between them should be line-of-sight: intervening walls, boulders, forests, etc. will negate the spell. Your character specifies the second party to the conversation when the spell is cast. Any characters standing near one of the two involved parties hear only that character's portion of the conversation. The involved characters will hear each other perfectly well, however. The gamemaster may require the involved characters to make relevant skill rolls for the actual conversation to succeed, such as various Communication skills. This spell can be used against enemies, and no resistance roll is allowed to prevent its effects.

Sorcerer's Eye (1)

Range: Sight

This spell allows your character to see something or everything twice as close as it is. While the spell is active, each additional casting of this spell cumulatively doubles the closeness, allowing for greater magnification.

Spot Rules for Sorcery Spells

Following are a number of spot rules that may be of use to gamemasters when dealing with the use of sorcery spells in the game.

Characteristic Effects

Despite the standard list of spells, sorcery is considered to be individual and idiosyncratic. Unless the gamemaster has reason not to allow it, you can choose any characteristic sounds, lights, smells, or other emanations to associate with your character's spell casting. Does the spell need a wand, a focus, or a fetish? Is a specific gesture required? Unless there is a specific reason why not, the player always chooses.

Enchanted Weapons

If a weapon that currently bears a spell (*for example, Sorcerer's Hammer*) on it is given over to another character, or is dropped and picked up by another character, the effect of that spell is unbroken until the spell expires.

Maximum Attack Damage

Sorcery spells on weapons usually augment their average attack damages, but do not increase the maximum damage possible for the attack. The effect of the spell is to boost the average damage done with the attack.

For example, a normal broadsword does 1D8+1 damage. The rolled damage is 7. With Sorcerer's Razor 4, the minimum damage is 6 points (1 on a 1D8, +1, and +4 for the spell). The damage can never be more than 9 points, since 9

is the maximum damage that can be rolled for a broadsword attack. Casting Sorcerer's Razor 4 insures that each hit does between 6 and 9 points of damage. The formula is 1D8+1+4, but not more than 9+ any STR damage bonus.

The spell does not change the damage bonus or the chance to hit. In case of a special or critical success, each damage roll is treated separately, with the same restrictions.

Other Planes

These notes concern the spells found in this section and their effects on beings from other planes (such as demons).

- ❖ Spells cast against entities from other planes usually work, but not always. If the spell fails for some reason, the power points spent are lost.
- ❖ Spells cast with the intention of enhancing entities from other planes, such as casting Sorcerer's Armor on a demon or elemental, never work. The power points spent are lost.
- ❖ At the gamemaster's discretion, spells learned on one plane (your character's home plane, for example) and then cast on another plane cost double the power points and have 1/2 the normal duration and effect (round up if necessary). Sorcery spells are no longer automatically assumed to succeed—every time your character casts a sorcery spell on another plane, he or she must make a successful *Difficult* Luck roll. If this roll fails, the spell does not work and the power points spent are lost.

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Sorcerer's Hammer (1-4)

Range: Touch

This spell can be cast on a single blunt weapon, like a staff, club, mace, hammer, etc. The spell's effects only apply to blows from blunt weapons; if cast on an edged or pointed weapon, it does not have any effect, or will only apply to blunt use of the weapon, such as an attack from a sword's hilt having the effect, but the blade remaining unaffected. Each level of the spell increases the damage roll result by +1 for any appropriate weapon, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. This does not take into account a wielder's natural damage bonus. The spell bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the character damage bonus being applied separately (and receiving no bonus itself). If it is not clear from the weapon's description, the gamemaster should determine what weapons this spell can apply to.

Sorcerer's Leap (1-4)

Range: Touch

Each level of this spell increases your character or the target's Jump skill by +20%, cumulative, for the dura-

tion of the spell. The distance your character can jump (see the Jump skill on page 63) also increases by 1 meter for each level of the spell.

Sorcerer's Plasticity (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase or decrease his or her SIZ characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell, thus adding or subtracting 3, 6, or 9 points to SIZ for the duration of the spell. This increase can also temporarily increase or decrease the character's damage bonus, hit points, and strike rank, as appropriate. See the rules for "Big and Little Targets" on page 215 for more details. Any hit points lost while this spell is in effect are first removed from the temporary hit points. This spell may affect the character's MOV. The minimum allowable SIZ is 1, so any points in excess of this spell are ignored. The character's clothes and armor (but not weapons) also change SIZ for the duration of the spell. If a character casts Sorcerer's Plasticity 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added or subtracted from the SIZ characteristic of

(. . . continued from the previous page)

- ❖ Demons and elementals do not cast spells. Instead, they have abilities, which are spell-like in function. In some cases, these may be identical to a sorcery spell's description, though they are intrinsic powers and do not need to be readied or have any INT limitations.

Resistance Table Procedure

If a spell compares your character and target's power points or POW on the resistance table, you should compare the current points, including those needed to cast the spell (the power points or POW are subtracted from the current total once the spell's effects have been determined and the resistance roll is completed).

Resistant Targets

If the target does not resist, your character may transfer the effects of most spells by touch. If a target resists, resolve the issue comparing your character and target's current power point vs. power point on the resistance table.

Spells Cast on an Object or Person?

Spells cast on an object will influence that object only. *For example, if Sorcerer's Razor is cast on one sword, that cast does not increase the damage done by a second sword held in the other hand. Two weapons need two spell castings.*

The object affected by the spell is independent of your character, as well. *For example, if a sword has Sorcerer's Razor cast upon it, and is used by another person, the wielder would get*

the benefit of the spell for the remaining duration of the spell. Sorcerer's Talons is the only weapon enhancing spell that can be cast on a person.

Spells per Object

Only one spell can be cast on a single object at a time. *For example, if Sorcerer's Bulwark is cast on a shield, then it cannot have Sorcerer's Armor on it at the same time. If the spell Sorcerer's Sharp Flame is cast on a weapon, then it cannot have Sorcerer's Razor on it simultaneously.* An additional spell cast on an object has no effect and is dissipated, though the power points spent are lost.

Spells per Person

Any number of compatible spells may be cast on a person, at the gamemaster's discretion. If multiple power types (magic spells, super powers, etc.) are in effect, the gamemaster should determine if the effects can be stacked and what aspects will be affected if so.

Variant Spells, Abilities, Etc.

Occasionally, a gamemaster may introduce new sorcery of his or her own creation into the game. Only the gamemaster can do this. Other gamemasters are not obliged to recognize unpublished sorcery spells. Do not assume that everyone accepts your favorite variant. If you are roleplaying with another gamemaster consult the gamemaster before introducing characters possessing variant or new sorcery spells.

the targeted character (matching the temporary increase or decrease). However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly-modified SIZ characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (hit points, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change. This spell can also be cast on insects, birds, and other nonhumans.

Sorcerer's Razor (1-4)

Range: Touch

This spell can be cast on a single slashing weapon with a cutting edge or edges, such as swords, axes, etc. The spell's effects only apply to blows from edged weapons; if cast on a blunt or impaling weapon, it does not have any effect unless the weapon is used in a slashing fashion. Each level of the spell increases the damage roll result by +1 for any appropriate weapon, up to the maximum dam-

age possible using that weapon. This does not take into account a wielder's natural damage bonus. The spell bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the character damage bonus being applied separately (and receiving no bonus itself). If it is not clear from the weapon's description, the gamemaster should determine what weapons this spell can apply to.

Sorcerer's Sharp Flame (1-4)

Range: Touch

This spell may be cast upon a single impaling weapon. The spell's effects only apply to impaling weapons, and have no effect if cast upon another type of weapon. Each level of the spell increases the damage roll result by +1 for any appropriate weapon, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. This does not take into account a wielder's natural damage bonus. The spell bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the character damage bonus being applied separately (and receiving no bonus itself). If it is not clear from the weapon's description, the gamemaster should determine what weapons this spell can apply to. This spell does not work for bows, slings, or guns, but

does work on individual arrows, sling stones, and bullets. If the modified roll results in the maximum damage for the weapon, the tip of the weapon has become red-hot and will ignite a flammable target, causing 1D6 fire damage as a result.

Sorcerer's Soul (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase his or her POW characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to POW for the duration of the spell. This spell does not increase power points, nor does it contribute to training or special response for the POW characteristic (such as temporarily qualifying a character for sorcery use). While in effect, the increase to POW will also increase the Luck roll and will aid in any POW vs. POW resistance rolls, including binding rolls for summoned demons (the point of POW spent to bind a demon must be real, not the temporary POW conferred by the spell). If the character casts Sorcerer's Soul 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the POW characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly increased POW characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic rolls, hit points, power points, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Speed (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase his or her maximum MOV by 1 per level of the spell while the spell is in effect. The spell can be cast on another species, such as a horse. Sorcerer's Speed does not affect DEX. If a character casts Sorcerer's Speed 3 for the maximum increase of 3 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the MOV characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly increased MOV characteristic must now permanently subtract 3 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics

(characteristic rolls, hit points, power points, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Strength (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase his or her STR characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to STR for the duration of the spell. This increase can also temporarily increase the character's damage bonus and Effort roll. If a character casts Sorcerer's Strength 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the STR characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly increased STR characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Suppleness (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell allows your character to increase his or her DEX characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell, thus adding 3, 6, or 9 points to DEX for the duration of the spell. Additionally, each level of this spell increases his or her Dodge skill by +6% for the duration of the spell. *For example, a cast of Sorcerer's Suppleness 2 adds 6 points to DEX and +12% to Dodge for the duration of the spell.* Increasing DEX also temporarily increases the Agility roll and may affect strike rank, if that optional rule is being used. If a character casts Sorcerer's Suppleness 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the DEX characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly increased DEX characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic rolls, hit points, power points, characteristic modifiers,

etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Sureness (1-4)

Range: Touch

Each level of this spell will increase the effectiveness of the target's Stealth skill by +20%, cumulatively, for the duration of the spell.

Sorcerer's Talons (1-4)

Range: Touch

This spell increases the damage roll results for a single weapon that augments an attacker's hand such as brass knuckles or the cestus, or it increases the damage done with the Brawl or Grapple skills. Each level of the spell increases the damage by +1. As with other such spells, Sorcerer's Talons will not increase the damage above the weapon or skill's maximum. This does not take into account a wielder's natural damage bonus. The spell bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the character damage bonus being applied separately (and receiving no bonus itself). The spell needs to be cast on a single target and cannot be stacked—if the target has the spell cast on him- or herself, it does not affect any hand-weapons he or she is using, and if it is also cast on an appropriate hand weapon, the bonus to damage is not applied twice.

Sorcerer's Vitality (1-3)

Range: Touch

This spell increases the target's current CON characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell cast. *For example, casting Sorcerer's Vitality 3 on a character will increase his or her CON by 9 points for the duration of the spell.* Increasing CON temporarily also increases hit points for the duration of the spell and aids in fighting off certain poisons, diseases, etc., as well as increasing the associated Stamina roll. Optional systems affected by this include the Fatigue Point system and any characteristic bonuses. If any damage is taken while this spell is in effect, the extra hit points are the first to go. It is impossible to die while Sorcerer's Vitality is cast upon a target, but a target with 0 or negative hit points is unconscious and cannot act. Further attacks against the character continue to accrue negative hit points, and may result in the loss of limbs or other major wounds. Once the spell's duration ends, however, the character dies immediately if successful measures were not taken to restore his or her health to a positive hit point total. The effects of any major wounds or limb loss are still in effect, unless otherwise treated successfully. If your character casts Sorcerer's Vitality 3 for the maximum

increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the CON characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly-increased CON characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic rolls, hit points, power points, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Sorcerer's Wisdom (1-3)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

This spell increases the target's current INT characteristic by 3 points per level of the spell cast. *For example, casting Sorcerer's Wisdom 3 adds 9 points to INT and increases the associated Knowledge roll by +45% ($9 \times 5 = 45$) for the duration of the spell.* If your character casts Sorcerer's Wisdom 3 for the maximum increase of 9 points, the gamemaster should roll D100. On a result of 00, the sorcery becomes permanent and those points are permanently added to the INT characteristic of the targeted character. However, after that, the spell does not affect the character any more, and he or she becomes unable to cast it again. In recompense, the character with the newly increased INT characteristic must now permanently subtract 9 points from his or her other characteristics, in any combination, and make relevant adjustments to any values calculated from those characteristics (characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc.). If the optional Allegiance system is being used, such a dramatic rearrangement should be worth 1D8 points to whichever force celebrates randomness and/or change.

Summon Demon (1)

Range: Self, Sight

This spell contains the key phrases that open a pathway of communication to the other planes (or hidden places within this plane, at the gamemaster's discretion), allowing communication with a demonic entity and the ability to bring it forth into your character's home plane. Usually, demons have a general name and a true name. The former is the one the demon is summoned under, the latter is a closely-guarded secret as it gives power over the demon. Sample demons (major and minor) are provided in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**, though more types may exist in some settings. The actual spell is relatively short, but the listing of the requirements of the demon to be summoned, and the negotiation with the individual

demonic entity takes 1D8 hours to do correctly. Unlike other sorcery spells, summoning a demon costs 9 power points, paid when the demon appears.

Alternately, at the end of the 1D8 negotiation, your character may attempt to bind the demon to his or her service. Binding a demon for a period of service costs your character 1 point of permanent POW (not power points), or 3 points of permanent POW to permanently bind the demon into an object. To attempt to bind a demon, you must roll your POW (before the permanent POW loss) vs. the demon's POW in a resistance roll. If you succeed, your character now owns his or her own demon. When a demon is bound, your character can control its actions. If the roll fails, the demon escapes and will never again deal with your character. Typically, your character is limited to his or her INT in D8s of demon POW, just as if were a spell. *For example, a POW 3D8 demon counts as 3 levels of INT that your character cannot fill with sorcery spells.*

Several types of bindings exist. A demon can be bound into the flesh, appearing as it does in its home plane; or it can be bound into an object or place. An ordinary binding lasts as long as your character lives or until he or she dismisses the demon. Permanently binding a demon is a special way to create a unique item or place with demonic powers and qualities that will last long after your character dies, or until the object or place is destroyed. A bound demon responds only to its binder. If the demon is bound in an object, that object will appear and function as ordinary to anyone except the binder. If a binding object is broken, the demon dies.

Following are some general rules regarding demons:

- ❖ A bound demon counts against your character's INT limit of memory, even if the demon is sent to another universe.
- ❖ If bound into an object, the demon might be within an amulet, a ring, a wall of stone, sword, etc. It retains only its abilities and its INT, POW, and other characteristics necessary to its abilities or skills. In all other things the demon and the object in which it is bound are equivalent. The demon cannot move from the object until it is dismissed.
- ❖ Once bound, a demon surrenders its true name to the summoning character.
- ❖ If the demon's true name is known to your character, he or she can dismiss it, and then summon it again to bind it once more. The demon is now a known quantity and its dice in POW do not count against the memory INT limit.
- ❖ If your character knows the demon's true name, he or she can keep it bound, send it to its home plane, and then call it back. The process takes one combat round. In this way, a demon that is already bound and on another plane can reappear in a matter of seconds. Holding a demon in this way counts against the INT limit to memory. The demon appears through some focusing object touched by your character (your choice as to what the item is), and seems to emerge from it. The focusing object must be visibly marked with some sigil or item to specify its nature.



Summoning creatures from other planes can greatly increase a sorcerer's might. Gamemasters might occasionally throw a very powerful demon or elemental at sorcerers who bind too many creatures.

If your character bound the demon, he or she can dismiss it at any time. This eliminates the binding, takes 1D6 minutes, and costs no power points. The demon slowly evaporates in steam, smoke, and flame, and disappears. The binding party retains knowledge of the true name, but the demon is removed from the INT limit to memory. A dismissed bound demon departs the object in which it has been bound. If it is later summoned again, it appears in its natural form and is not bound into the object. However, it can be bound again into the same object, place, or shape.

There are four ways to break an ordinary binding: you can dismiss the demon if you summoned it; you can kill the demon; you can kill the sorcerer who bound the demon; or you can learn the demon's true name and successfully rebind it. A permanent binding cannot be destroyed except by destroying the object the demon is bound into. A bound demon that has been mistreated or whose needs have been neglected may be persuaded to reveal its true name to a second person. It will seek to be dismissed by that second person in exchange for some negotiated task. Since it may be immortal, a demon can afford patience. It will not casually give its true name to someone if it does not suspect that it will achieve its freedom.

Summon Elemental (1)

Range: Self

This spell contains the key phrases that open a pathway of communication with various elemental planes of existence, or allow speech to elemental spirits in your

character's home plane. The gamemaster will determine where the communication is going, if it is pertinent. Though the spell itself is relatively short, the listing of the requirements for the particular elemental requires 1D8 combat rounds to do correctly. Additionally, in order to be able to cast this spell, your character must know the spell linked with the particular element desired—these spells are Bounty of the Sea, Flames of the Sun, Gift of the Earth, and Wings of the Sky. Simply knowing these spells is enough: they do not need to be cast for the Summon Elemental spell to work. Sample types of these four elementals are in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**, and more types can exist. If so, the gamemaster should work up additional element-based spells for each of the elemental types.

Unbreakable Bonds (3)

Range: Touch

Any living thing this spell is cast upon will be seized and held as if bound by invisible chains of great strength. The person or thing being held cannot significantly move any limb, finger, tentacle, tongue, etc., as long as the spell's effect lasts. This spell will only work on living beings, so it has no effect on undead, robots, or vehicles, though it should affect aliens or animals. The target can attempt to break the Unbreakable Bonds spell once per combat round by succeeding in a resistance roll of his or her STR vs. the sorcerer's current power points. If successful, the Unbreakable Bonds are broken. If unsuccessful, the target can try again next round. A 3-point Undo Sorcery spell can cancel Unbreakable Bonds.

Undo Sorcery (1–4)

Range: Touch

Each level of Undo Sorcery cast on another spell or spell-affected item can negate 1 level of Unbreakable Bonds, Bounty of the Sea, Flames of the Sun, Fury, Gift of the Earth, Liken Shape, Make Fast, Make Whole, Midnight, Moonrise, Muddle, Pox, Refutation, Wings of the Sky, or Witch Sight. If the levels of Undo Sorcery are lower than the spell it is cast upon, the levels of Undo Sorcery are subtracted from the ongoing spell, weakening it but otherwise allowing it to remain in effect.

Ward (3)

Range: Touch, Sight, etc.

As this spell is cast, your character must walk and define a line of 15 meters or less in length, or a circle of 15 meters or less in diameter. Afterwards, your character will become automatically aware the first time any enemy crosses the line or enters the circle. Once the spell is cast,

it is ready to go but does not actually activate until the line is crossed. No further effort is required to maintain the spell, and for a little-traveled path or area, it might take years before anyone sets it off and alerts your character. At the gamemaster's discretion, the use of powers such as the Witch Sight spell or other means of detecting sorcery or magical emanations will identify a Ward. Undo Sorcery 3 will eliminate a Ward.

Wings of the Sky (4)

Range: Sight

This spell causes a mass of air to suddenly appear in a small room or small open area for the duration of the spell. The howling region of air has a wind force of STR 2d6+6; those caught in it must succeed in a difficult Agility roll to remain standing. This spell must be known before air elementals can be summoned or invoked using the Summon Elemental spell. Undo Sorcery 4 can negate this spell, but any air that has arrived will remain. Flames of the Sun can cancel this spell if cast upon the same area.

Witch Sight (3)

Range: Self, 100 meters of sight

Your character learns the approximate strength of a target's POW characteristic, defined as one of the following (compared to your character's POW):

Much Stronger Than Me (more than double your character's POW)

Stronger Than Me (up to double)

Equal To Me (within one or two points)

Weaker Than Me (down to half)

Much Weaker Than Me (less than half)

The spell can be canceled by or shielded against by Undo Sorcery. During the spell's duration, your character can also see emanations from any invisible beings, elements, and spirits, and can follow or trace where sorcerous entities have recently passed. The gamemaster should determine if this spell works to detect characters made invisible through technology or another type of power (basic magic, psychic, super, etc.). The spell will also detect beings of extremely high Allegiance to a particular force, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Witch Sight is almost always used in summoning demons or elementals. If your character is using the Summon Demon spell and has cast Witch Sight on him- or herself, the gamemaster should roll the number of D8s you specified for the demon's POW, and tell you the demon's relative POW. Without using the Witch Sight spell you risk summoning an unbindable demon. Similarly, if an artifact or magic item has an intelligent being like a demon or an elemental bound within it, you

can use the Witch Sight spell to mentally converse with the being in the object, providing it is able and willing. This process takes a full day of studying the artifact and requires a successful roll of POW x 1 or less, but does not require the Witch Sight spell to be cast until the actual moment when communication is desired. The gamemaster should tell you whether your character has succeeded in the adequate time for study and if the POW x 1 roll is successful. The gamemaster does not need to inform you ahead of time if the being inside the artifact is able to or willing to communicate, or if a particular language skill is required to communicate successfully.

SUPER POWERS

Super powers are extraordinary abilities that stem from a wide range of sources: radioactivity, experimentation, freak accidents, intense training, ancient legacies, super-science gadgets, and many other origins. Though the term *super powers* implies *super heroes*, these abilities are not limited to men and women in tights and capes, and can be used for any manner of being: robots, demigods, highly-trained individuals, or other exceptional characters who break the rules of what's possible, and exhibit tremendous and strange powers.

Characters with super powers are described as being super-powered, and will be designated as such within this section.

Super Power Origins

You consider what sorts of super powers you'd like your character to have. Will your powers be offensive in nature, or defensive? Will they center on manipulating the physical environment around you, or represent internal discipline and your own heightened competency? Are they themed, such as based on a single element, or are they varied and without a common theme? Will they be subtle, or visibly dynamic in nature? Would you rather that they make you more effective doing regular tasks, or would you prefer that they open up new avenues of movement and activity?

How did your character get these powers? Was your character an unusual genetic mutation, rare and special, or the result of a regimen of intense physical training? Are the super powers common, such as genetic enhancements for special agents of galactic societies, standard racial abilities, or are your character's powers one-in-a-million? Is your character the mystic heir to ancient sorcerous power and responsibilities? Did he or she stumble across them in a freak accident of science? Are the super powers intrinsic to your character, or do

they depend on some item or substance, from an ancient relic, a rare and hard-to-synthesize substance, or a series of high-tech gadgets and inventions?

You should ask the gamemaster what the context of the powers is in the setting. Does society worship and respect people with super powers, or are super-powered characters hunted and feared? Is the situation somewhere between these two extremes? Is your character alone in having these powers, or do the other player characters also have super powers? Do you and the other characters have themed powers, based on a unifying concept (an element, a color, an origin, etc.), or are you all a separate and unique?

Finally, how does your character view these super powers? Are his or her super powers a useful adjunct to a normal life? Do these super powers utterly define who your character is, giving him or her no choice about them? Does your character view these powers as a thing apart from his or her profession, or are these powers used on a day-to-day basis in normal life? Does the character's profession normally incorporate these powers? *For example, he or she may belong to an order of super-powered martial artists.* Or does your character keep these super powers hidden, and using them presents great risk?

The gamemaster should be working with you and the other players during this step, providing answers and helping shape your character's creation process. Not all of these questions need to be explored fully, or even answered at all, but they should help you devise good background for your character's powers and their source, as well as providing an understanding for the role powers will have in the game setting.

How Super Powers Work

Super powers are measured in levels of effect. Each level costs a different amount of POW and represents increased effectiveness. Super powers are often based on a characteristic (STR, DEX, SIZ, INT, etc.), or the power's level itself is the relevant factor. Some powers must have their level exceed the particular characteristic in order to succeed, while others pit your character's related characteristic against an opposed characteristic on the resistance table.

Super powers that need to be directed at the target will use an existing skill such as Brawl, Throw, or will use the Projection skill introduced in this section. Other powers are less straightforward, but still work within the same set of rules. These often utilize an existing skill in a way not available to normal characters, and are defined in the power descriptions.

A few powers work differently: once they are successfully used, the effects are automatic, or they are mere adjuncts to your character's existing skills and characteristics. *For example, Super Characteristic and Super Skill increase those aspects of your character.*

Starting Super Powers: the Character Point Budget

After rolling or otherwise determining initial characteristics, look at your character's highest unmodified initial characteristic. This value becomes his or her initial Character Point Budget. The Budget can be modified through character failings or power modifiers (see the relevant sections below). The gamemaster will modify your Character Point Budget based on the campaign power level, using these guidelines:

Normal: Your character begins with 1/2 his or her highest initial unmodified characteristic as the initial Character Point Budget.

Heroic: Your character begins with his or her highest initial unmodified characteristic as the initial Character Point Budget.

Epic: Your character begins with double his or her highest initial unmodified characteristic as the initial Character Point Budget.

Superhuman: This is the default starting level for a super powered campaign. Your character begins an initial

Character Point Budget equal to the sum of all his initial unmodified characteristics added together.

As your Character Point Budget is based off an initial unmodified characteristic, other player characters will likely begin with different Character Point Budgets. This allows for some degree of variation between starting characters. Alternately, the gamemaster may simply give you a straightforward Character Point Budget such as 10 Character Point Budget points for a lower-powered campaign, 20 for a heroic campaign, 35 for an epic campaign, and 50 or more for the superhuman power level.

Buying Powers

Examine the list of powers on page 146, and their descriptions in this section. Power titles are generic in most cases—you can rename them based on the setting when you're adding flavor to your character (just let your gamemaster know if you're renaming a super power, so he or she knows what you're talking about when you mention). Consider what you want your character to be able to do, and try to find the easiest super power or combination of super powers to achieve that goal. The gamemaster can help you clarify what super power does what, and what higher levels of each super power can do.

The super power descriptions will tell you what benefits each level of the super power gives your character. This should help you determine how many levels of the super power you'll need to purchase to succeed in your intended actions. Some super powers may have special requirements based on your characteristics—pay special attention to these. Determine how strong you would like the super power to be and purchase super powers accordingly.

One thing to remember (and it's in bold for a reason), **Extra Energy is probably the most important super power, if you want your character to use super powers more than a few times a day.** Buy as many levels of it as you need.

Character Failings and Power Modifiers

After choosing what your basic super powers will be, and how much of your Character Point Budget they'll cost, you may want to stretch that budget somewhat. Now it's time to see about adding to your Character Point Budget, and in doing so, personalizing your character a little bit. There are two ways of doing this: character fail-



Each super hero character must "buy" their powers using points determined by their characteristics. This means that some characters have more points than others, lending more variety. Alternately, the gamemaster can dictate that each character begins with an identical point pool.

Benefits From Character Failings

Character Failing	Character Point Budget Reward
Super-powered identity must be 'turned on' and is not in effect full time.	+1 point
Super-powered identity must be turned on in an obvious and preventable manner, such as any of the following: being gagged to prevent an activating word from being spoken; being tied to prevent an activating gesture; removing an item of power that activates the identity; etc.	+1 point
Super-powered identity is on full time, making a normal life difficult or even impossible, such as having some super power obviously in effect or causing continual inconvenience.	+5 points
Physical frailty of character, either impaired or totally disabled, such as blindness, missing an eye, loss of a limb, or a debilitating disorder such as epilepsy. The gamemaster should determine skill or characteristic penalties based on Major Wounds or similar guidelines.	+1 point for partial problem, +3 points for fulltime problem
Psycho-social frailty of character, causing a mental or cultural problem such as recklessness, self-loathing, a major phobia, acute contempt for a particular group or belief system, or some other compulsion.	+1 points each (up to a maximum of +3 points, higher at the gamemaster's discretion)
Bad or self-destructive habit, vice, etc. (alcoholism, drug abuse, noxious personal habits, gambler, etc.)	+1 to +3 points, depending on severity
Dependent family-member, significant other, friend, or other ally needing regular attention, potentially threatened by character's enemies or activities.	+1 points for infrequent minor involvement, +3 points for frequent significant involvement
Responsibility to some organization or group that influences or restricts character's freedom and requires regular attention.	+1 points for infrequent minor involvement, +3 points for frequent significant involvement
Member of socially excluded group or other organization that causes the character inconvenience in day-to-day life.	+1 point for infrequent minor inconvenience, +3 points for frequent significant inconvenience
Character is actively hunted by some individual or organization, either for legitimate or illegitimate reasons.	+1 to +3 points, depending on size & power of group, level of threat it presents, and frequency of appearance.
Special weakness of to some substance or class of item, inflicting damage upon them while being exposed to it within 15 meters. The character cannot have a power offering resistance to this item or condition. Choose damage and rarity of item below.	Choose damage and rarity of item below.
1D6 points damage per combat round	1+1 point
2D6 points damage per combat round	+2 point
Each additional +D6 per combat round	+1 additional point per add. D6 damage
Item is very common (fire, sunlight, water, steel, etc.)	+2 point
Other type of power than the one the character has (magic vs. super, etc.), if used in the game	+2 point
1D6 points temporary characteristic loss per combat round while in close proximity	+1 point
Each additional +D6 temporary characteristic point loss while in close proximity	+1 additional point per +D6 reduction
Item is very rare (meteoric rocks, rare metals, special radiation, etc.)	-1 point to above modifier
Special added damage from certain attacks (cold, fire, sound, radiation, etc.), taken each attack. Choose added damage below:	
+1D6 damage	+1 point
+2D6 damage	+2 points
+3D6 damage	+3 points
+4D6 damage	+4 points
Each additional D6	+1 point per D6, etc.

ings and power modifiers. Each has a different purpose. Character failings are problems your character faces, inherent flaws in his or her character or social existence, while power modifiers are applied to a specific power. Each is described below.

Character Failings

One way to increase your Character Point Budget is to take a character failing. This is a cultural, physical, or social disadvantage that you choose to assign to your character, with the gamemaster's approval. A character failing limits your character's usefulness in some fashion. In return, you get extra points in your Character Point Budget to spend as you see fit. There is limit on the amount you can increase your Character Point Budget by taking on character failings: **no character can take more than 1/2 his or her starting Character Point Budget (round up) in character failings.** This is to keep a sense of balance to the campaign, and to prevent your character from becoming unplayable, burdened and hindered by an overabundance of disadvantages. If you have reached the limit of your Character Point Budget and want to exhibit traits from the list, go ahead, but they won't give you any more points.

On a previous page is a list of sample character failings. The gamemaster may add more to this list, or with the gamemaster's permission, you may introduce a similar (or new and unique) character failing

Power Modifier Benefits

Power Modifier

Character Point Budget Reward

Power works only under certain conditions, such as under water.	+5
Power does not work against certain objects:	
Common items (a color, plants, living beings, etc.)	+1 per level
Other power types (magic vs. super, etc.)	+1 per level
Uncommon items (rare elements, special radiation, etc.)	+1 per level
Power has a limited number of uses per day (must be at least 1 use)	+(10 - number of uses)
Power has different attributes than described:	
Projection-based power has no range and must be used with touch	+1 per level
Power that normally affects only a single target instead has range (usually 15 meters)	Doubles base cost of power
Power costs power points or fatigue points to use where normally it has no cost	+1 per power point or fatigue point cost
Power point cost is doubled	+1 per power point cost per round
Power point cost is halved	Doubles base cost of power
Power which usually only costs power points to activate now costs every combat round	+1 per power point cost per round
Power which normally has no power point cost now costs power points each combat round	+1 per power point cost per round
Power costs power points and fatigue points, or power points and sanity points	+1 per power point cost per round +1 per fatigue or sanity point cost per round
Energy from power is dissipated involuntarily:	See below
Under special circumstances (during a rainstorm, underground, in presence of holy items, etc.)	+(power point cost per round)
Under common circumstances (in daylight, in moonlight, etc.)	+(2 x power point cost per round)
Power cannot improve through experience or other adjustment, and is "fixed" at character creation	+1 point per level

and together determine an appropriate Character Point Budget reward. Budget points earned from taking on failings are cumulative, as well.

Power Modifiers

With power modifiers (above), you can gain extra Character Point Budget points by modifying a super power to make it less effective in some way, or by voluntarily limiting some aspect of the super power's use. By assigning power modifiers to specific super powers, you can gain more points to buy super powers, or buy more levels in your super powers. Not all power modifiers are limitations, however. Some are positive, and make a power cost extra.

The column labeled "Power Modifier" lists the special conditions or limitations of the super power, while the "Character Point Budget Reward" column lists the value of taking the limitation, as applied to the super power's overall cost. Each reward is associated with a single super power: if you wish to have a modifier affect all of your character's super powers, the modifier should be applied separately to each super power. Not every power modifier is appropriate for every power, and gamemasters should feel free to veto any combination of power and modifier that seems unlikely or inappropriate.

No super power can earn more Character Point Budget points than 1/2 its initial cost (round down) through power modifiers.

Other Disabilities

If you would like to assign an additional disability to your character in return for additional points in your Character Point Budget, the gamemaster should examine the disability and determine if it is worthwhile for a Character Point Budget bonus, and if so, how many points it is worth. Is the disability seriously limiting, or is it merely inconvenient? Will the disability cause your character trouble during the campaign, or will it have a negligible-to-nonexistent effect? Will the disability cause the other characters (or players) difficulty? Can it even affect the gamemaster's long-range goals for the campaign?

The gamemaster should be willing to negotiate with you for any potential new disabilities. Similarly, you should accept it if the gamemaster disallows any campaign-breaking disabilities. If your suggestion is rejected, try to come up with an alternate solution. One option is for the gamemaster to put the disability "on hold" and see if it can be worked into the campaign, with the Budget points being awarded at the time it becomes effective. You would note the disability initially, but it would not be a significant issue until such time as the gamemaster allows it, and at that time, you would get the extra points of Character Point Budget.

Allocating Super Power Levels

All super powers have their effects defined in levels, and you'll buy levels of each power with your Character Point Budget. The description of each power specifies what additional levels of the power

can do. A single level in a power gives the base damage, range, and other attributes, as well as any other effects listed, and additional levels of a power will increase one or more of these attributes. The section on “Power Modifiers” (previous page) offers means of further customizing these powers. Usually, one level of a damage-dealing power means that the power does 1D6 damage. Two levels will deal 2D6 damage; three levels deal 3D6, etc. This is almost always true, and only a few powers break this paradigm.

Unused Budget Points

You may not be able to spend the remaining points of the Character Point Budget, because you can't afford another level of the power you want for your character, or any other reason. Any unused Character Point Budget points are not lost—they are kept in a bank of points you may draw from between adventures when improving your character (see “Character Point Budget Awards”, following). You can store any number of points in your Character Point Budget, though you can never reduce this number to below 0. If buying a new level in a power costs more Character Point Budget points than you have in your bank, you should either take (or improve) a character failing or power modifier, or wait until you have the Budget points required to purchase new power levels.

Improving Super Powers

Super powers are handled differently from the traditional skill and character experience system. They do not improve as per normal skills (the Projection skill is an exception), and traditionally, super powered characters do not change fundamentally in their powers. Following are guidelines to handle improvement of super powers during the course of a campaign:

Experience: At the conclusion of an adventure, the gamemaster may allow you to trade in the results of any successful characteristic improvement roll, adding to your Character Point Budget in return. Your character can improve POW through experience, and other characteristics such as STR, DEX, CON, and APP through some form of training or research.

For example, after successfully rolling to improve his or her POW characteristic, Mysterioso gets a result of 2. He can turn that into 2 points of Character Point Budget to use for improving powers. It's not a lot, but you can keep it banked away between sessions and wait for the next improvement for a later purchase of a new level in a power.

See “Increasing Characteristics” on page 186 for more information.

Training: Using the same method described above, you can seek out training in a power (assuming you can find a suitable trainer with the time and resources to train alone). The trainer must have the power at a higher

level than your character in order to provide any useful information. Use the methods and times for characteristic improvement provided in “Increasing Characteristics” on page 186. At the conclusion of the training, roll as if a characteristic were being improved (usually 1D3–1). Use the result as an increase to points in your Character Point Budget. Based on the setting, finding a suitable trainer or the resources to train a power may range from *Impossible* to *Easy*.

For example, in a setting where Mysterioso is a renegade super powered individual in a world where he or she is rare and feared, it will be extremely difficult to find someone to help improve. By contrast, a campaign where Mysterioso is a super powered teenager in a super hero high school will be full of easily-available resources for training, either alone or with a teacher.

Character Point Budget Awards: The gamemaster may choose instead to reward a few Budget points upon the completion of an adventure or at the resolution of a major plot. These can range from 1 or 2 points for a minor or average adventure, to 5 to 10 points for a major victory in the campaign. These values can be adjusted by the campaign's power level, and the gamemaster may require you to provide an explanation to why your character's powers suddenly improved to a significant degree. These points in the Budget can be spent immediately, banked and new levels purchased in lump sums, but they cannot be spent on anything other than new levels of powers or on new powers.

New Character Failings or Power Modifiers: You can also gain additional points in the Character Point Budget for your character by taking on new character failings or power modifiers, often driven by events in the campaign.

For example, if you run afoul of some organization in the course of play, the gamemaster may allow you to assign your character a “hunted” character failing for 1 to 3 points. Or you may be exposed to strange chemicals during an adventure, and the gamemaster may allow you to take some new power modifier as a result of the power interacting strangely with your existing powers.

The gamemaster may choose to limit the number of Budget points that can be gained through taking on new character failings or power modifiers, and any such increases to your Character Point Budget should be approved by the gamemaster.

Examples

Many of the examples in this section are distinguished by their address to a particular character, usually a super hero or super villain, rather than the default ‘your character’ used throughout the rest of this rule-book.

OPTION

The Projection Skill

This optional skill is specifically used by super-powered characters who must “fire” or otherwise direct a super power at a target. This skill can be increased during character generation by a character who has super powers, up to the limitations imposed by the setting power level. If your gamemaster is using optional skill category modifiers (see page 31), your Physical skill bonus applies to the Projection skill.

Projection

Base Chance: DEX x 2

Category: Physical

Use this skill to direct powered attacks at your character’s intended target. Powers using this skill include Energy Projection and Snare Projection, and it may cover other applications of powers such as Energy Control at the gamemaster’s discretion. You can choose from where your character emits this power—whether it be from hands, eyes, or from a device.

Effects: Following are the results for different levels of success:

FUMBLE: Your character misses spectacularly, costing double the normal power point expenditure. In combat, the missed shot is disastrous. Consult the “Missile Weapon Fumble Table” on page 194.

FAILURE: The projected super power misses the target. If projected from above, roll 1D4 to see if the projection falls in front, behind, or to the right or left of the target. If projected laterally, roll 1D2 to determine if it veered to the right or left, and another to see if the projection was short or long. The attack misses by 1D3 times the following, based on the range of the initial distance to the target:

Distance Projected	1D3 x
1–15 meters	1 meter
16–30 meters	3 meters
31–45 meters	6 meters
each additional 15 meters	+3 meters

The gamemaster may determine that the outcome of a missed shot causes considerable damage to the environment, perhaps requiring you to make a successful Luck roll to see that your character does not inadvertently strike a civilian or cause considerable property damage.

SUCCESS: The projected super power hits your target squarely and damage is determined normally.

SPECIAL: Your character’s super power strikes the intended target with precision. Depending on the type of super power, this may inflict additional damage or have some special effect, provided in the super power’s description.

CRITICAL: Your character executes a perfect shot, ignoring any armor the target possesses and doing the effects of a special. This may be modified by the gamemaster, based on how deadly critical hits are allowed to be.

Setting Notes: Any setting with super powers will need this skill.

System Notes: Your character’s damage bonus is never included in any projected super power. Each super power may have additional special effects or side effects described in the power’s entry. Your character must have line of sight to use Projection, otherwise he or she cannot properly target opponents. Any modifiers that apply to missile or ranged attacks also apply to the Projection skill. Projected super powers can be aimed at specific body parts or other small areas of a target: see “Aimed Attacks” on page 212. Projection can be dodged, like any missile weapon attack, though at the gamemaster’s discretion, the Dodge skill may be as *Difficult* as it is against firearms (see “Dodging Missile Weapons” on page 198).

Gaining New Super Powers

You may wish to introduce a new super power to your character after he or she is created, during the course of the campaign. The gamemaster should handle this in the same manner as he or she allows for improving an existing power, described above. He or she may require you to come up with a dramatically appropriate means of justifying the new power, such as basing it on an event in the campaign or a particular adventure, a new power manifesting during a time of stress or crisis, or some goal your character is striving towards. The power might be the result of a side effect of an existing power, or it might have been latent and has only recently emerged. In most cases, if the power is entirely new to your character, the gamemaster may

require your character to find an instructor who has the power, or some other means for your character to learn the power.

In extreme cases, the gamemaster may allow you to completely redo your character’s powers, though this should be considered to be a major and dramatic change in the character, such as a traumatic incident that has caused a near-total emergence of a new character. This might be accompanied by a new identity, a new costume, or some other radical re-imagining of the core of the character. Alternately, your gamemaster might simply ask you to make up a new character based on a new or previous power level, and you can treat the new character as if he or she were a metamorphosed version of your old character.

Losing Super Powers

Sometimes, for various reasons, you or the gamemaster may wish to permanently strip your character of some power. This should be extremely rare, and based on some dramatic moment or extraordinary set of circumstances. However, there is nothing stopping you from simply declaring that your character releases or otherwise surrenders some or all of his or her powers. In any case, the relevant points spent on the powers are returned to your character's Character Point Budget, and he or she must lose any character failings or power modifiers that depended upon the power(s). Depending on the reason and method the powers are lost, the gamemaster may allow you to spend them later on new powers, or the Budget points may be lost completely. This last situation is not recommended for any but the most extraordinary situations, and should generally only be used to represent your character retiring from play, or passing on his or her powers to a new character, a successor of some sort.

Losing Character Failings or Power Modifiers

If you earn additional Character Point Budget points from experience or some other method, you may choose to spend these to "buy off" any character failings or power modifiers that you do not wish your character to have. This should only be done with the gamemaster's permission.

Similarly, if through some course of events in the campaign, your character becomes unlikely to ever suffer from the conditions of a particular character failing or power modifier, the gamemaster may require you to make up the deficit in Character Point Budget points by taking on a new and equal character failing or power modifier, or should charge you for the difference out of any banked points in the Character Point Budget your character may have. Generally, however, this should not involve your character needing to reduce levels in a power to earn the Budget points to balance things.

Powers and Success Levels

Unlike the Skills section, super powers are not as cut-and-dried in how their effects should be applied based on the result of the dice roll. Many super powers have effects that are either "on" or "off", with no difference between a critical, special success, and a normal success. However, following are guidelines for how to handle super power rolls based on the quality of success indi-

cated by the dice roll. The gamemaster should consider the super power's nature and potential effects when deciding these outcomes.

FUMBLE: The power points expended on the super power are lost. Additionally, the character cannot attempt use of this super power for 1 combat round after the round the super power failed in (essentially losing a round of super power use). If the super power involves doing damage, you should make a Luck roll. Success indicates that the power just fizzled and doesn't work. Failure indicates that the super power struck an unintended target (an innocent bystander, valuable equipment, etc.) causing collateral damage and potentially complicating the situation. Some super powers may indicate additional consequences for fumbles.

FAILURE: The super power doesn't work, but doesn't cause any harm or complications other than the expected outcome for failure. The power points are expended normally but the power has no useful effect.

SUCCESS: The super power works as described and the requisite power points are expended.

SPECIAL: The super power works with increased effectiveness. If one of the special success damage types (crushing, entangling, impaling, knockback, or slashing) is appropriate, the gamemaster should incorporate it into the super power's effectiveness. At the gamemaster's discretion, another aspect of the power (range, influence, etc.) may have doubled effect. Alternately, if the power involves a roll on the resistance table, the gamemaster may increase the super power's level by half again its level (rounded up) for the purpose of the resistance roll.

CRITICAL: The super power works perfectly. If the super power causes damage, it ignores any armor the target possesses and does the effect of a special success (above). If the super power does not normally cause damage, the gamemaster should determine an appropriate aspect (or aspects) of the super power and double its effectiveness. Alternately, if the super power involves a resistance roll, the gamemaster may temporarily double the super power's level or your character's relevant characteristic for the purpose of the resistance roll.

Obviously, with the wide array of powers and circumstances, these outcomes may require additional interpretation, or the gamemaster is free to simply utilize the results of dice rolls without any adjustment for degrees of success.

Each power described in this section is described in the following manner:

Base Range: "Self" indicates a super power that is internal to your character, "Touch" indicates close range, and "15 meters" is a default range. Many ranged super powers can have their ranges increased with additional levels.

Duration: "Instantaneous" super powers work immediately on the DEX (or strike) rank they are utilized. Other super powers work for 1 combat round or longer. When used, these super powers exist from the moment they're utilized until the end of the combat round. "Always On" means that the power is always present

Super Power Summary

Following is an alphabetical listing and summary of the super powers in this section.

ABSORPTION: Absorbs energy from an attack and turns it into power points.

ADAPTATION: Each level allows survival in one hostile environment.

ALTERNATE FORM: Each level is an alternate body your character can switch into.

ARMOR: Each level provides 1 point of protection against a specific energy type.

BARRIER: Each level creates a 1 meter square section of protective wall.

DEFENSE: Lowers your chance to be hit by 1% per level.

DENSITY CONTROL: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of density (SIZ).

DIMINISH/ENHANCE CHARACTERISTIC: Lowers a characteristic by 1D6 per level.

DRAIN: Each level drains 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point from a target.

ENERGY CONTROL: Allows creation of and control over a specific energy type.

ENERGY PROJECTION: Allows projection of a focused beam of damaging energy.

EXTRA ENERGY: Each level provides 10 additional power points.

EXTRA HIT POINTS: Each level provides 1 additional hit point.

FLIGHT: Each level allows self-powered flight for 1 SIZ point.

FORCE FIELD: Each level offers 1 point of protection against a specific type of energy.

INTANGIBILITY: Allows movement through solid objects.

INVISIBILITY: Each level turns 1 SIZ point invisible.

LEAP: Adds to the normal jumping distance, horizontally and vertically.

PROTECTION: Each level reduces the level of an attacking energy type.

REGENERATION: Each level returns 1 lost hit point per combat round.

RESISTANCE: Each level resists 1 point of damage from a single energy type.

SIDEKICK: A loyal sidekick to aid and assist your character.

SIZE CHANGE: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of SIZ.

SNARE PROJECTION: Each level is 1 STR and/or SIZ of a net, web, rope, or other confining snare.

STRETCHING: Stretch body into different sizes and shapes.

SUPER CHARACTERISTIC: Extra points in STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, APP, or EDU.

SUPER MOVEMENT: Each type involves a unique method of movement.

SUPER SENSE: Each type improves an existing sense, or adds an extraordinary aspect to the sense.

SUPER SKILL: Each level adds +20% to a specific skill.

SUPER SPEED: Each level adds an additional action or movement each combat round.

TELEPORT: Each level allows instantaneous teleportation of 1 SIZ point of an object or target.

TRANSFER: Each level allows transfer of 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point from your character to a target.

UNARMED COMBAT: Increases your character's ability in unarmed combat.

WEATHER CONTROL: Alters or creates weather in an area.

unless you would like to deactivate it. These powers will automatically return whenever willed, or when your character sleeps and awakens.

Power Cost: This is the amount the super power costs per level.

Power Point Cost: This is how many power points the super power costs to activate and/or keep active.

A description of the super power and what its effects in the game world are. This description will refer to other game systems the super power may interact with or rely upon.

The powers in this section have generic titles: for flavor, you may change the name of the power to match your character concept, with the gamemaster's permis-

sion. You should note the original title of the power for ease of reference.

Absorption

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always active

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of Absorption gives your character the ability to absorb 1 point of damage your character has taken from of one type of energy (see "Types of Energy" on page 150) and store that same amount in his or her own power point supply. These power points can either go into your character's own reserve of power points or can be used to fuel some device requiring them. The "battery" must have enough

space for the power points, or the excess damage will affect your character.

For example, Stormcloud has 5 levels of Absorption against electric energy. While battling the villain Dynamo, Stormcloud is hit for 16 points of damage from Dynamo's electric Energy Projection.

Stormcloud's player subtracts 5 points of damage because of her Absorption 5 super power and takes 11 points of damage. The 5 points of damage absorbed are transformed into power points and go automatically into her power point supply, up to her normal power point maximum. Power points beyond this are lost.

The damage absorbed into power points is drawn from actual damage your character takes—so if he or she is wearing armor (or has the Armor super power), the Armor protection comes out of the damage before Absorption can affect it.

When this power is selected, you must designate what type of energy is absorbed from the Types of Energy list on page 150, such as "Absorption (Electric)". The energy type to be absorbed must be of a type and intensity that can injure your character under normal circumstances. *For example, absorbing normal sunlight or normal radio waves are not valid for the Absorption power.*

Your character cannot take energy out of an internal power point supply and use a power to put it back into his or her power point supply, even if the power point expense to use the power is greater than the power points that would be absorbed. Basically, your character can't attack him- or herself to gain power through Absorption. However, if your character is carrying a device (such as an energy weapon) that produces energy he or she can absorb (like lightning), it is legitimate for your character to shoot his or her own body to transfer the energy. Similarly, if a suitable means exists, a device with the Absorption power can be recharged through a character using an internal power. *For example, Dynamo cannot hit himself with his own Energy Projection (Electric) power to replenish the power points used to power the lightning bolt. However, he can drain power points from another source such as household current. If no obvious measure exists for an energy type's intensity (such as from the environment rather than a power), the gamemaster should assume that a weak current generates 1 point of energy per combat round, a mild current generates 1D6 points of energy per combat round, a moderate current is 2D6, a strong current 3D6, etc.*

Adaptation

Base Range: Self

Duration: 1 full turn

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per SIZ point to activate, then 1 power point per full turn

Each level allows your character to alter his or her body to exist in a single new environment, such as underwater or a vacuum. At the gamemaster's discretion, Adaptation against one environment may offer limited

or full protection against related environments (survival in a vacuum might offer 1/2 as much protection against intense cold). It is assumed that your character's gear is protected from the adverse effects of the environment, as appropriate, though this is again at the gamemaster's discretion. For each level of this power, you must pick one environment from the following examples, though the gamemaster may introduce additional environments:

COLD: Your character can survive comfortably in extremely cold environments, though this does not automatically protect against cold-based attacks.

CORROSIVE: Your character can survive a corrosive environment, such as one with extremely high acidic content in the air.

HEAT: Your character can survive comfortably in areas with extremely high temperatures, though this does not automatically protect against fire or heat-based attacks.

HIGH GRAVITY: Your character does not suffer ill effects from being in high-gravity environments.

HIGH PRESSURE: Your character can survive in a high-pressure environment, such as in the depths of the ocean.

LOW GRAVITY: Your character does not suffer any of the medical side effects from long-term living in zero gravity environments.

RADIATION: Your character can ignore low-grade radiation safely, and does not accumulate it while in environments with amounts of background radiation in excess of normal Earth levels.

UNDERWATER: Your character can breathe normally underwater, or does not need to breathe while underwater.

VACUUM: Your character can survive without ill effect in a pressureless environment, including immunity from the damaging effects of rapid depressurization.

Adaptation allows your character to exist comfortably in extremes of environmental conditions, but does not offer special defense against attacks of concentrated versions of these conditions, such as with the use of Energy Control. For protection against environments containing extremes of temperature, radioactivity, etc., use the Armor, Protection, or Resistance powers.

Adverse environments are described in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. If no obvious measure exists for an the harmful effects of an environment, the gamemaster should assume that a minor hazard inflicts 1 hit point of damage per combat round, a mildly harmful environmental element causes 1D6 hit points damage per combat round, a moderately hazardous environment inflicts 2D6 hit points per round, an extremely dangerous environment inflicts 3D6, etc. Some environments may require a combination of two or more types of Adaptation to survive, such as underwater (underwater, high pressure), outer space (cold, radiation, vacuum), or on the sun

(heat, radiation, high gravity). A wide variety of environments can easily be simulated with the above guidelines.

Alternate Form

Base Range: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Character Point Cost: 20 per form

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of Alternate Form provides your character with an alternate body he or she can transform into, usually one more suitable for adventure or peril. This form only exists when summoned, and switches place with your character's natural form. The change can be transformative (such as a werewolf), or an outright switching of places. This transformation is instantaneous, for game purposes, though it does not necessarily need to be for descriptive purposes.

You should make a copy of your character sheet before super powers are purchased. This is the template for the alternate form. Next, the following steps are to be taken:

- ❖ You can buy powers for the new form with your existing Character Point Budget, just as if they're being spent on your character.
- ❖ Any unmodified characteristics or skills of the new form are assumed to be those of your character. However, the new form makes its own set of experience checks, specific to that form, and these are not backwards-compatible with your character's "original" characteristics or skills.
- ❖ The new form can take any applicable character failings or power modifiers to reduce the cost of powers, at the gamemaster's discretion.
- ❖ If the new form resembles an animal, you and the gamemaster should consult **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** for potential additional powers to complement the new form. You might just copy the animal's stats if you want a quick alternate form, with the gamemaster's approval.
- ❖ You should determine any special gear or garments the alternate form should arrive equipped with.
- ❖ You and gamemaster should decide what happens to the form (original or alternate) not currently in use. Does your character simply transform, shedding garments and growing in size, or is there a flash of energy as one form is switched out across dimensions for the other?
- ❖ Some questions that are not system-related, but are useful to answer are whether the alternate form has consciousness while away, or is it unaware of the passage of time and events concerning the current form? Do the forms differ in personality and goals, or are they essentially the same character? Does your character even know about the alternate form?

Alternate Form does not cost anything to utilize. When rendered unconscious in the alternate form, your character reverts to his or her original body. The switch to the original body from the Alternate Form gives your character the lower of your character's or the alternate form's power points, sanity points, hit points, fatigue points, etc. Furthermore, a character suffering from a debilitating state, such as unconscious, cursed, insane,

etc. will remain so in either form. Physically debilitated states are at the gamemaster's discretion, based on the nature of the affliction.

You and the gamemaster should decide whether death in one form means death in both, or if one form can survive the loss of the other and what detrimental effects may be suffered. At the very least it is suggested that this be a traumatic experience, perhaps with an attendant sanity point loss (severity depending on the manner of death and your character's involvement) or inflicting shock requiring a *Difficult* Luck roll to overcome immediately. The gamemaster may rule that if your character fails this roll, he or she is stunned for 1D6 combat rounds or longer. When combined with a sanity point loss, this is the sort of event that may traumatize your character.

Taking this power goes hand in hand with one or more of the power modifiers involving an alternate form or non-full-time identity, each yielding additional Character Point Budget. At the gamemaster's discretion, one of these power modifiers may be mandatory with the purchase of the Alternate Form power.

Armor

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always active, or 10 combat rounds

Character Point Cost: 1 per level per type

Power Point Cost: None, or 1 per level per 10 combat rounds

Each level of Armor provides 1 point of armor value against a particular type of attack. This protection can be in the form of tough skin, hardened scales, steel plate, or any other substance. When the Armor super power is purchased, you must specify which energy type or types it is intended to protect against, from the "Types of Energy" list on page 150, such as "Armor (Kinetic) 5". Purchasing Armor that protects against multiple types of damage equally costs the super power's level, multiplied by the number of energy types it protects against.

For example, buying 5 levels of Armor against electric, kinetic, and radiation energy will cost 15 points of your character's Character Point Budget (5 x 3 = 15). On your character sheet, you should mark "Armor (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation) 5". In play, your character will have 5 armor points against any of these attacks.

However, there is no requirement for all types of Armor to be at the same level, so your character could have Armor (Kinetic) 2 and Armor (Heat) 5. In this case, the power should be broken into different power listings on your character sheet. While in effect, this super power will be proof against all protected types of damage, in any number of attacks per round, and does not have to be consciously directed.

If you wish to purchase Armor as a force field needing power points to activate, you may do so at 1/2 the normal price (rounded up). The power point cost is 1 power point per level to activate the force field. This field will last for 10

Types of Energy

Many super powers refer to different types of energy in their descriptions. There are a wide range of these energy types. These terms are loosely defined and do not represent conventional scientific energy forms. Instead, they serve to classify energy for the purpose of game mechanics in terms that are common from primitive humans to advanced space faring civilizations. Admittedly, many of these energy types make no sense scientifically.

For example, a "darkness" energy type is ridiculous, but is utterly acceptable in a setting inhabited by super powered characters. To a super villain, a darkness force is a perfectly reasonable super power to have.

Energy types are classified in these groups specifically for powers—a character with Energy Control specializing in fire "energy" is not necessarily adept at using cold "energy". Similarly, rather than being all-encompassing against all energy types, a defensive power like Absorption has a specific type of energy it is proof against.

When purchasing super powers, it is wise to purchase levels of the same super power but affecting different energy types, so if you'd like your Absorption power to be proof against heat and cold attacks, buy the super power two times but focus each use on the different energy type. These energy types are also described here to provide guidelines for how powers can potentially interact with the environment and equipment. **Chapter Eight: Equipment** covers equipment in more detail, and has examples of gear that replicates the effects of powers. *For example, a thermal suit may provide Resistance 1 against cold, but is no protection against other damage types such as gravity, darkness, kinetic, psychic, or electricity.* The energy types are presented in the power descriptions in greater detail when they are utilized, but a complete roster of these energy types is summarized below for reference. If another energy type is directly opposed, this is noted.

COLD: Extremely cold temperatures, such as freezing, whether simple radiant cold or something solid such as hail, ice, and or snow. In this case, "room temperature" and human body temperature are the yardsticks—if the temperature is below these, it's cold. The opposing energy type is heat.

DARKNESS: This represents not just the lack of light, but darkness as a near-measurable element that violates the laws

of physics. Darkness energy behaves almost exactly like light does—it can form beams or rays, and can fill an area, ridding it of light. Darkness and light are obviously opposites.

ELECTRIC: This covers any galvanic current, whether lightning or regular household current. For the purpose of game systems, most energy storage devices (batteries) store electric energy.

GRAVITY: This is both the force and the ability to manipulate it against principles of physics. This can be an alteration of normal gravity, such as intensifying it or negating it to various degrees, or generating it where it is not noticeably present, such as in deep space. Almost all space ships in films and television seem to be generating some sort of gravity energy to keep people walking upright and maintaining Earthlike living conditions.

HEAT: Radiant heat all the way up to intense fire that becomes plasma, this covers all manifestations of thermal energy above and beyond room or human body temperature. Heat and cold are opposites.

KINETIC: This encompasses any physical force, from a punch, gunshot, sword-blow, to the impact of a fall. In most settings, kinetic energy is the most common, as it is the easiest to generate in combat.

LIGHT: Whether ambient or laser, this covers all light. It also extends into ultraviolet and infrared spectrums. Light and darkness are opposed.

MAGNETIC: The force that attracts or repulses metallic objects or substances falls into the magnetic energy type.

RADIATION: This can be atomic, nuclear, fusion, beta, gamma, microwave, cosmic, or any flavor or source of radiation. This is a broad category: most of the other energy types should actually be classified as radiation.

SOUND: Sound waves, from inaudible to deafening. Though the power "Silence" cancels sound energy, it is not an energy type in and of itself.

WIND: Focused air currents strong enough to hinder or harm a target.

You or the gamemaster may devise additional energy types appropriate to the setting, using the above descriptions as guidelines.

combat rounds. At your discretion, the force field will automatically renew itself at the cost of 1 power point per level.

Barrier

Base Range: 15 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: 3 per level

This power brings a wall-like obstruction out of the ground or forms it of an available material. Alternately,

the barrier can be formed of an energy type generated by another power—though your character must use that power to create the energy before shaping it with Barrier. The barrier is usually placed immediately before your character, to protect him or her against attacks or attackers, though it can appear anywhere within range. Each level will provide a barrier 1 meter thick, 1 meter wide, and 1 meter high. These square meters can be distributed as you wish along the dimensions of width, height, and length. This barrier can be shaped in whatever simple

form your character chooses, such as a straight or curved wall, half-sphere, etc. Whatever its configuration, the base of barrier must be resting on the ground. When the barrier is created, you should decide how large it will be, using the formula of *height x thickness x length* as to determine the requisite levels and the power points. Any extra multiples can be distributed as you desire anywhere along the length of the barrier. *For example, if your character has Barrier 9, he or she can create a barrier that is 1 meter thick, 3 meters high, and 3 meters long (1x3x3=9).*

A Barrier cannot be created in the air to drop onto an opponent, though a tall thin barrier could be toppled onto a foe. A barrier utilized in this fashion does 1D6 points of damage per 1-meter section that impacts an opponent (if he or she does not dodge successfully). If desired, more authentic hit point values for the barrier's substance can be found in "Objects" in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. If the barrier is composed of an energy type (see page 150 for a list of these), the gamemaster may assign additional properties to the barrier, such as a barrier of fire being able to cause incendiary damage to characters who attempt to bypass it.

Regardless of the substance it is made of, a barrier has 30 hit points if any attempt is made to destroy it. Each additional level of material added to the thickness of the barrier adds 30 hit points to its total in that spot. However, most human-sized opponents will only need to destroy one or two 1-meter segments for adequate space to move through. When the power ends, the barrier dissolves, melts, retracts into the earth, or gradually disappears in an appropriate manner, unless it is formed of a

substance that would normally remain (like stone, or ice in a polar environment).

Defense

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Defense makes your character harder to hit by an attack. Each level of this power subtracts 5% from all attacks made in a combat round against your character. This bonus does not increase with experience, but it can stack with other powers that reduce an attacker's chance to hit your character, such as the Unarmed Combat power. Your character cannot purchase more levels of Defense than his or her original DEX + POW, though if the gamemaster is using the optional rule allowing for attack skill ratings above 100%, this restriction can be ignored.

Density Control

Base Range: Self

Duration: Variable

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level per combat round

Each level of Density Control allows your character to increase or decrease his or her density by 1 SIZ point. This is represented through the SIZ characteristic as weight and not actual physical mass or a change in overall dimensions. Density Control allows both an increase and decrease in density, unlike the Size Change super power.

Increased density temporarily increases your character's damage bonus and hit points, though it lowers his or her movement rate by 2 meters per round. Additionally, every 10 levels of Density Control add 1 point of armor value versus kinetic-based attacks (punches, falls, gunshots, etc.). Round this number down.

For example, the costumed hero White Dwarf normally has a STR 14, CON 16, and SIZ 12, giving him a +1D4 damage bonus and 14 hit points. With 20 levels of Density Control, his SIZ becomes 32, increasing his damage bonus to +2D6 and his hit points to 24. Though he has not changed physical dimensions such as height or clothing size, his weight has increased dramatically, due to his extreme mass. As such, White Dwarf is only able to walk 5 meters per combat round, or 20 meters running. He has an additional 2 points of armor value versus kinetic attacks due to the dense matter his body is now composed of.

Decreasing density temporarily lowers your character's SIZ in weight, and modified damage bonus and hit points in the same manner. At SIZ 0, a human-sized character can fly by gliding on air currents, following the air currents and moving at the speed of the wind. Decreased



In a world of gangsters and G-men, armor good vs. kinetic damage seems a good idea. Consider the nature of the game world when crafting your super hero.

density does not affect your character's movement otherwise. Every level of decreased density lowers your armor value by 1 point, to a minimum of 0. Decreased density also lowers the damage your character takes from falls by 1 point per level while the power is active.

Consult **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more information on weights relating to an item's SIZ. At the gamemaster's discretion, this power applies to any equipment your character is wearing (as such, any armor will be modified as above).

Diminish/Enhance Characteristic

Base Range: Touch

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Character Point Cost: 5 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level

This power can diminish or enhance a target's characteristic (STR, CON, DEX, INT, POW, or APP) by 1D6 per level. If the target does not desire the enhancement or diminishment, your character must overcome the target's with a power point vs. power point resistance roll. No resistance roll is required if the effects are desirable by the target. The effects of the diminishment or enhancement are temporary (except for hit points, see below), and will affect the target's damage bonus, characteristic rolls, DEX rank, power points, or fatigue points as appropriate. Characteristics enhanced can surpass the normal maximums allowed for rolled characteristics (usually 21 for humans). If the optional characteristic modifier system is used, enhanced or diminished characteristics will affect these bonuses. If a characteristic is reduced to 0 or less, it is considered to be 0 and the target is unable to perform any activities relating to that characteristic. Anyone reduced to CON 0 is comatose during the effects of the spell, and a target with 0 hit points is dead. *For example, having a DEX 0 means the target cannot move, while STR 0 means that he or she cannot lift anything.* When the super power is over, the diminished characteristic is restored to its normal value, and any secondary attributes are no longer affected. The target's hit points are restored to their previous value or the current value, whichever is lower. Similarly, power points and fatigue points are restored to the lower of their previous or current value.

Drain

Base Range: Touch

Duration: 1 combat round

Character Point Cost: 10 per level for hit points, 5 per level for others (fatigue, power, or sanity points)

Power Point Cost: 1 per level per combat round

Drain allows your character to drain a resource from another character and use it to replenish his or her own supply of the same resource. The resource is one of the following: hit points, power points, fatigue points, or sanity points. When this power is purchased, you should

designate which of the four resources your character can drain. Draining more than one resource requires taking the power more than once.

How the resource is drained can differ from character to character (it could be a grab, a bite, a handshake, etc.), but must involve physical contact for at least one full combat round. You and the gamemaster should decide the specifics. This may require a successful Grapple attempt if in combat, or Agility roll if outside of combat. No roll is required for an immobile or willing target. If your character wishes to continue to drain a target on successive rounds, the requisite maneuver (Grapple, etc.) must be rolled again as per the appropriate rules. Once contact has been established, your character must beat the target in a power point vs. power point resistance roll. Success means that the super power takes effect, while failure means that it does not have any effect and the intended target can attempt to break free. If the target is willing, no resistance roll is required. If successful, the amount of the resource being drained is then transferred from the target to your character at the beginning of the next round. The rate of this transfer is 1D6 points per level per combat round, with additional levels providing more points drained (level 2 drains 2D6, level 3 drains 3D6, etc.).

Following are specifics about each of the four types of resources that can be drained:

HIT POINTS: While being drained, the target must make a successful Effort roll to be able to act against your character. If the target's hit point total reaches 1 or 2, he or she falls unconscious. If the target's hit point total reaches 0, he or she will die at the beginning of the next combat round. The section on "Hit Points" on page 12 covers this. Your character cannot transfer more hit points than his or her normal hit point total—any additional hit points drained are simply lost.

POWER POINTS: While being drained, the target of the power must make a successful Luck roll to be able to act against your character. If the target's power point total reaches 0, he or she falls unconscious. Your character can store power points above and beyond his or her normal power point maximum: though these points are temporary and will not be recovered when spent. Furthermore, they will dissipate at the time of the day when the normal power point total is restored. The maximum number of "extra" power points is equal to your character's normal power point maximum plus the levels in the Drain power.

FATIGUE POINTS: Fatigue points are an optional rule, so if that rule is not being used, this aspect of the super power cannot be taken. While being drained, the target must make a successful Stamina roll to be able to act against your character. If the target's fatigue point total goes below 0, he or she suffers penalties to actions as described in the rules for Fatigue on page 32. Your character cannot transfer more fatigue points than his or her normal fatigue point total—any additional fatigue points drained are simply lost.



A hero's ability to control and project Heat energy could be portrayed as a special ray-gun powered by his super energy points "carried" in a pack on his back. These form parts of his super hero costume.

SANITY POINTS: While being drained, the target must make a successful Luck roll to be able to act against your character. Though a character cannot go below 0 sanity point, having 0 sanity point indicates that he or she is hopelessly insane and at that point will become a non-player character. Loss of sanity point is covered in the optional sanity rules section in **Chapter Ten: Setting**. Your character can transfer as many sanity points as desired up to the maximum allowed sanity (see "Maximum Sanity" on page 319).

Your character does not necessarily have to transfer the resource points drained: he or she can choose to "lose" them, allowing them to dissipate and gaining no benefit from them. If your character is able to drain multiple resources (hit points and power points, for example), he or she can attempt to do so in the same contact, but must make a separate resistance roll for each resource drained. Each additional resource type takes the super power's full duration, and targets cannot be drained simultaneously of multiple resources by the same power-user, though they can alternate turn-to-turn.

This super power is the opposite of the Transfer power (page 166).

Energy Control

Base Range: 15 meters, or Touch (when attacking)

Duration: 1 combat round

Character Point Cost: 3 points per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level each combat round to activate, 1 per combat round to keep active

Energy Control allows your character to manipulate a single type of "energy", and to generate that energy type

if it is not already present in the environment. This super power covers several energy types, including some that are not normally considered energy types (cold, darkness, gravity, etc.). Consult "Types of Energy" (above) for more detail. Each Energy Control type is a separate super power, chosen when the power is purchased. When you select a type, it should be specified on your character sheet, such as Energy Control (Cold), Energy Control (Darkness), etc. Your character can have multiple types of Energy Control, though each must be purchased separately. If you wish to have a character with a range of super powers relating to a single energy type, you should purchase Energy Control and other powers such as Absorption, Armor, Energy Projection, Resistance, and Snare Projection, using your energy type as the defining characteristic of those powers.

Each level of Energy Control is equivalent to a point on the resistance table, for purpose of quantifying the power. *For example, if you are trying to affect an area, the level is equal to SIZ. If you're trying to overcome the STR of an opponent, the level is equal to STR.* When directed at a specific target (as opposed to an environment or area), you may need to succeed in a resistance roll using the power's level as the active force. Whenever possible, use the resistance table if the power affects something (or someone) that will be affected significantly by the power.

Once a super power is active, your character can instantaneously deactivate it, ending the major effects. Some lingering effects may remain (such as non-harmful frost for cold, or smoldering embers for fire), but there is no further game effect once the super power's effect is ended. If the use of the energy set into motion significant reactions in the environment, the gamemaster may decide that these effects are continual, such as a heat energy setting a fire near a gas station.

Following are specific guidelines for each energy type covered by this power, though you and the gamemaster can devise other types:

COLD CONTROL: Cold Control can cover an item or section of floor with ice, freeze a liquid, make an item brittle and easier to shatter, or freeze an opponent's limb (or entire body) as if the Snare Projection power. In cases where the target's SIZ is applicable, assume that the power affects 1 SIZ point per level. The target must succeed with his or her CON vs. the super power's levels on the resistance table. Failure means that the target takes 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of Cold Control (rounded up) from the intense cold. The gamemaster may require an Agility or Grapple roll to touch the target. With the gamemaster's discretion, any appropriate environmental effects are also applied. If the target has some protection such as warm clothing, this may serve as Protection against the damage (or increase CON for purposes of the resistance roll), at the gamemaster's discretion. The gamemaster

should use discretion in what uses the ability can imitate, using the level as a baseline for resistance table rolls. Cold Control can cancel the effects of Heat Control on a level-for-level basis.

DARKNESS CONTROL: Each level of Darkness Control creates a volume of darkness 2 meters in radius, centered around your character or at a point within range of his or her choosing. Within this volume, all creatures without some form of infrared vision will suffer all the penalties of fighting in darkness, as described in "Darkness" on page 220. Darkness Control does not cause any hit points in damage. Any normal benefits from intense darkness also apply, such as to the Hide skill. Aside from light-based powers, there is no resistance to Darkness Control, as it is not directly cast on a target. The only counter to it is a light-based power, a super sense, another sense like hearing, or some other means of detection such as sonar. Each additional level adds another meter to the volume of darkness. Darkness Control cancels Light Control on a level-for-level basis.

ELECTRIC CONTROL: Your character can manipulate ambient electric current or generate fresh current. For the purpose of this power, each level lets your character utilize enough electricity to affect 1 SIZ point of an electrical appliance or vehicle. Additionally, your character can generate enough electricity from his or her body to cause 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up), if a resistance roll is made with the super power's levels vs. the target's CON. The gamemaster may require an Agility or Grapple roll to touch the target. Other uses may include shorting out any non-insulated equipment that has metallic parts and runs on a power current (use the object's SIZ as a guideline for the strength in a resistance roll), or to transfer ambient electricity into a storage battery at the rate of 1 power point per point of stored electricity.

GRAVITY CONTROL: Gravity Control lets your character increase or decrease a target's SIZ by 1 point per level (similar to the Density Control super power). The target can be a living being or an inanimate object. This may adjust the target's hit points and damage bonus. If used against an object, use the super power's levels vs. the object's hit points as the resistance roll. Against another character, it is an opposed power points resistance roll. If your character deactivates the power, the targeted object (or character) regains his or her original weight instantaneously. A character whose SIZ has doubled or been reduced by half (round up) involuntarily has all his or her combat and physical actions made *Difficult*, due to his or her unfamiliarity with the current weight. If the target is accustomed to this power's effects, or is voluntarily under its influence, there is no penalty to actions. Gravity Control can be used offensively, causing physical damage from intense gravity increasing. Once a target is already under the effects, on the succeeding combat rounds the gravity can be increased to do damage at the rate of 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up).

HEAT CONTROL: Each level of Heat Control lets your character fill 1 SIZ point of an area with flame, or to snuff out that much existing flame. This flame can be used to ignite an object, to provide light, or to warm an area. It can be shaped and otherwise manipulated. If directed against a living being, the target must be overcome by the super power's levels vs. his or her power points in a resistance roll. Heat Control causes 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up) to the target, though the object or opponent to be burnt must be touched (requiring an Agility or Grapple roll). Heat Control can also be used to melt items, using the power's level versus the object's SIZ or hit points on the resistance table. The gamemaster should increase or decrease the object's SIZ for the purpose of this roll based on how susceptible to melting it is. Each successful resistance roll for melting an object does the power's level in points of damage to the object and lowers its SIZ by the same number of points. When the hit points or SIZ reach 0, the object is melted completely. Heat Control can cancel the effects of Cold Control on a level-for-level basis.

KINETIC CONTROL: This energy type lets your character exert crushing force on an item or targeted opponent. Each level of this power allows your character to affect an area equal to 1 SIZ point and affect it with crushing pressure. The gamemaster may require an Agility or Grapple roll to touch the target. If the target's CON can be overcome with the super power's levels on a resistance roll, it suffers 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up) from pure kinetic energy. If directed against a nonliving target, the object's current hit points are used as the basis of the resistance roll. Another utilization of Kinetic Control is to inhibit the use of kinetic force in the same area, creating a form of armor against kinetic attacks or action. This may be used to lessen the effects of a fall, or duplicate the effects of the Armor (Kinetic) super power, though it must be targeted specifically and only lasts 1 combat round. If uncertain about what Kinetic Control can do, assume it is the equivalent of a rapid or forceful movement, not subtle or dexterous.

LIGHT CONTROL: Each level of this power allows your character to fill 1 SIZ point of an area or illuminate 1 SIZ point of an object with the brightness of a light bulb. The light can be of any color desired, and can strobe, pulse, or radiate from any source within range. Light Control can potentially blind a target if it strikes him or her in the eyes (gamemaster's discretion) and if he or she is overcome by the super power's levels vs. the target's power points in a resistance roll. All sight-based actions for a blinded character become *Difficult* for one combat round, after which the blindness wears off. Light Control does not cause any hit points damage. Additional forms of light (infrared, ultraviolet, etc.) may also be created and utilized by this power, with effects to be determined by you and the gamemaster, using the super power's levels as a guideline. Light Control can cancel the effects of Darkness Control on a level-for-level basis.

MAGNETIC CONTROL: With Magnetic Control, your character can influence and manipulate 1 SIZ point of metal or metallic substances. He or she can magnetize metal objects, draw them to him or her through a pull of magnetism, or affix one metallic object to another magnetically even if those objects would not normally be able to be magnetized. Magnetic Control does not cause any hit points in damage. Other uses may include damaging any mechanical item that has metallic parts (use the object's SIZ as a guideline for the strength in a resistance roll), as well as disrupting electronic equipment or erasing magnetically stored electronic media such as memory cards, floppy disks, etc. If utilizing Magnetic Control against a countering force, use the object's SIZ as the opposing force for a resistance roll.

RADIATION CONTROL: With Radiation Control, your character can fill an area 1 SIZ point in size with radiation, or eliminate radiation in the same area. The nature of this radiation is up to you and must be approved by the gamemaster. When used against a living being, your character must defeat the target's CON on the resistance table, vs. the super power's level. The gamemaster may require an Agility or Grapple roll to touch the target. Radiation Control inflicts 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up) to the target. If your character wishes to attempt to use the power to cause radiation poisoning on an opponent (rather than the immediate attack described above), the level of the power must overcome the target's CON + POW on the resistance table. See "Radiation" on page 230 for more information. This power can also be used to remove latent radioactivity from an area, with each level removing 1 point of the radiation's potency (POT).

SOUND CONTROL: Your character can use Sound Control to affect 1 SIZ point of an object as it relates to sound, such as silencing it, increasing its volume, etc. This power can also duplicate sonic or ultrasonic forms of sound. In combat, your character can create a cacophony of painful sound energy, using the super power's level opposed by the target's CON on the resistance table. Success means that the target is stunned for 1D3 rounds (see "Stunning or Subduing" on page 232). Additionally, for the duration of the stunned state, all of the target's Listen checks become temporarily impossible and any mental skill checks are *Difficult*. For less offensive uses, your character can create phantom sounds that mimic existing sounds, transfer sound from one place to another (within range), and even duplicate any sound he or she has heard (use an Idea roll to determine how correctly the sound is remembered). Sound Control can also be used to destroy inanimate objects, doing 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels (rounded up) to an object whose hit points or CON is overcome on the resistance table. Sound Control can oppose itself as well as other sound-based attacks, such as Sound Projection (see page 156).

WIND CONTROL: Your character can control the wind, stirring air currents to incredible force, whether in a straight line or whirlwind. Though Wind Control does not cause hit points damage, it can be utilized in a vari-

ety of ways, from opposing foes' movement in a particular direction, holding a target in place in a vortex of wind, blowing something over, reducing the chance of missile weapons from being utilized successfully in the power's range, creating a tornado in an enclosed area, filling a sail with wind, fanning a fire into an inferno, or blowing a fire out. Wind Control is not subtle, and the effects are often difficult to control. When this super power is used, use the levels in the power versus the target's SIZ or STR, where appropriate, on the resistance table. "Weather Conditions" on page 181 includes other effects that might be simulated using Wind Control.

OTHER ENERGY CONTROL: This category covers any undefined or new sort of Energy Control you and/or gamemaster may devise. The guidelines for the other types of Energy Control can be used to determine the parameters for new types of energy, with the following guidelines: 1 level equals 1 SIZ point of energy to be manipulated or generated; if appropriate, the power will do 1D6 points of damage per 10 levels of the power (rounded up); base range is 15 meters. When in doubt, determine a means by which the super power can be used on the resistance table.

COMBINED ENERGY CONTROL: Your character can combine these super powers if he or she pays the full amount for each Energy Control type. Each aspect of the power will have full effectiveness, though damage is rolled separately for each type, as the target may have different types of Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance. Levels of combined Energy Control types do not have to be equivalent. All special effects for each Energy Control type are added onto this attack. For combined attacks, each use costs the full amount of power points required for the power.

You and the gamemaster should discuss further potential uses for each energy type, though whenever the use of the super power duplicates another power exactly, that super power instead should be purchased. This super power does not grant immunity to the energy type being used—instead, your character is immune to the initial release of the energy from his or her body, but is susceptible to any continuance of that energy type. You should purchase levels in Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance against the relevant energy type.

For example, the costumed hero Firefly uses Heat Control 20 to send a massive pillar of flame up the chimney of a building she is trapped in, trying to signal her allies with a display of flame above the roof. If she inadvertently starts the building on fire and cannot escape or use her super power to control the flames, she could be burnt alive by a fire she started. Fortunately, she has Absorption (Heat) 20, so she should be all right.

Many of these energy types can be used to duplicate or mimic environmental effects, such as those described in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Energy Projection

Base Range: 15 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Character Point Cost: 10 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level

Energy Projection allows your character to shoot a beam of concentrated energy of some type (see "Types of Energy" on page 150) at a single target. Each type of Energy Projection is a separate power and must be purchased separately: choose which one your character uses when the super power is purchased. You should specify which type of energy it is on your character sheet, such as Cold Projection, Darkness Projection, etc. Your character can have multiple types of Energy Projection, but each must be purchased separately. These super powers each cause 1D6 hit points of damage per level, at a 15-meter range. Each additional level will increase the power's damage by 1D6 and range by another 15 meters. To strike a target in combat, your character must also have the Projection skill, described on page 145. This skill does not need to be defined separately for each type of attack—the same skill is used for all types of Energy Projection.

At the gamemaster's discretion, different types of energy may have special side effects. Following are some commonly used types of energy projection, and their potential side effects. You are encouraged to work with the gamemaster to develop appropriate side effects for any Energy Projection types not described here, or additional appropriate side effects.

COLD PROJECTION: This super power lets your character to generate a ray of intense cold or ice. Each level does 1D6 damage. When used against a physical object, Cold Projection can confer a POW x 1 chance per level of the object becoming brittle and having its armor value and hit points halved for 1 combat round.

DARKNESS PROJECTION: Darkness Projection lets your character to fire a bolt of darkness from his or her hand, an energy force damaging to normal matter. Each level does 1D6 damage. If targeted against a foe's eyes, it can blind him or her for the duration of the power (see "Darkness" on page 220).

ELECTRIC PROJECTION: This super power manifests as a lightning bolt. Each level does 1D6 damage. When used on a metallic object, Electric Projection has a POW x 1 chance per level of traveling (and jumping) along any connected or nearby metallic surface to strike any other target touching the metal surface. Successive targets will

take 1/2 of the original rolled damage (round up).

Additionally, it has the potential to "fry" any electric or electronic equipment it is directed against, using its power level against the item's hit points in a resistance roll.

GRAVITY PROJECTION: A gravity projection attack is a pure wave of gravity energy, causing everything it hits to either become incredibly heavy or light, depending on the will of your character. Each level does 1D6 damage. In addition to damage, it can sweep items aside or cause them to plummet to the ground, taking damage as appropriate.

HEAT PROJECTION: This super power manifests as a line of flame or intense heat. Each level does 1D6 damage. Heat Projection has a POW x 1 chance per level of setting a flammable object on fire in addition to any damage it causes.

KINETIC PROJECTION: This super power manifests as a beam of concussive force. Kinetic Projection can cause crushing damage special successes in addition to the normal damage it inflicts on a target, if the dice result indicates a special success.

LIGHT PROJECTION: This super power projects as a laser-like ray of light. It can temporarily blind an opponent if it strikes them in the eyes (see "Aimed Attacks" on page 212) and the power brightly illuminates the area when it is used.

MAGNETIC PROJECTION: Each level does 1D6 damage. This wave of magnet-

ic force can do tremendous damage to electronic circuitry or machinery made of ferrous materials. Use the power's level as the active force against the object's hit point total on the resistance table.

RADIATION PROJECTION: This super power is a beam of radioactive energy, either glowing or barely visible. Each level does 1D6 damage. Aside from damaging the target, it can irradiate any objects, causing potential radiological reactions (exposing film, etc.) or even radiation sickness. The chance for this is POW x 1. The gamemaster should consult "Radiation" on page 230 for more information.



SOUND PROJECTION: This super power manifests as a shock wave radiating along a path towards the target. Each level does 1D6 damage. If targeted against the head or ears of a target, Sound Projection can temporarily deafen him or her for 1D3 combat rounds if the level of the power overcomes his or her CON on the resistance table. All hearing-based actions for a deafened character become Difficult until the deafness wears off.

WIND PROJECTION: This super power manifests itself as an intense wind directed at the target, in a straight line or as a whirlwind. Each level does 1D6 damage. Wind Projection can cause a knockback damage special success in addition to the normal damage it inflicts on a target, if the dice result indicates so.

OTHER ENERGY PROJECTION: See the notes for "Other" in the Energy Control power (page 153) for suggestions on creating new energy types.

COMBINED ENERGY PROJECTION: Your character can combine these attacks if he or she has purchased each Energy Projection type separately. Levels for the different Energy Projection types do not have to be equivalent. A single successful Projection skill roll means that all involved Energy Projection types hit the target. Each Energy Projection type will have full effectiveness, though any resistance rolls or special side effects must be determined separately. Damage is rolled separately for each type, as the target may have different types of Absorption, Armor, Protection, or Resistance. For combined Energy Projection attacks, each attack costs the full amount of power points for all levels and all types of energy used.

Many of these powers are either more effective or less effective against certain types of defenses, such as a Fire Projection being weak against cold-based defenses, or a Magnetic Projection being especially powerful against metallic defenses. At the gamemaster's option, the power level of the Energy Projection may be checked on the resistance table against the resisting force to see if it has any effect: super powers that would be weak against a particular defense are at -5 to their level for the purpose of the resistance roll, while powers especially potent against a defense are at +5 their power level for the resistance roll (as if a special success—if a special or critical success is rolled, these bonuses stack).

Extra Energy

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 1 per 10 points of additional power points

Power Point Cost: None

This is an extremely important super power, and should be taken by any character wishing to use super powers. This is an additional energy reserve your character uses to power his or her powers, above and beyond the power points granted by the POW characteristic. Each level of

this super power gives your character 10 extra power points, though has no effect on his or her POW score. The energy source may be personal energy from your character's own body, or it may be an external source like a battery. The source is irrelevant except in cases where the energy supply may be targeted—internal energy supplies can fuel personal powers or equipment requiring power points, and external energy supplies can fuel external powers as well as powers generated by your character directly. Furthermore, your character can have multiple energy supplies, each fueling different powers or being used by the same powers.

Some super powers do not need power points to activate, though many others do. Super powers use energy in one of the following ways:

- ❖ The power point cost is used to simply activate the super power and the power costs no more power points until the super power is activated again. This includes most instantaneous powers.
- ❖ The power point cost must be paid each round the super power is in use.
- ❖ Expended energy in the form of power points returns to your character as described in "Power Points" on page 30. Battery energy must be replenished by recharging. One common method is a wall socket, though others such as batteries, solar panels, and generators can be utilized. The Absorption super power can be used to recharge personal or external energy supplies, if the energy type matches.

Extra Hit Points

Base Range: Self.

Duration: Always On.

Character Point Cost: 1 per level.

Power Point Cost: None.

This super power grants your character higher hit points than his or her CON and SIZ would indicate. These hit points are added on top of your character's normal hit points, and his or her Major Wound threshold is adjusted to the new total.

Your character cannot purchase more levels in Extra Hit Points than his or her initial rolled CON characteristic, unless the gamemaster allows it. If the optional hit location system is being used, the additional hit point total is added to your character's total hit points before determining hit points per location.

Flight

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 power point per 3 SIZ points to activate, then 1 power point per turn to maintain

Each level of Flight allows your character to use the Fly skill to fly 3 SIZ points at a rate of 500 meters per combat round or any speed lower than this, including a

hover. To actually fly, your character must purchase enough levels of Flight to accommodate his or her SIZ. Your character's ability to carry anything else while flying is depending on his or her STR characteristic and any additional levels of Flight above those needed to keep your character in the air. In non-combat situations, the gamemaster may allow each power point spent to maintain flight last for 1 hour rather than one turn. Once the initial power points are spent, your character can land and fly at will during the duration of the power without needing to spend the initial power point cost again.

The flight conferred by this power is not automatically maneuverable or graceful. Flight requires some finesse to properly utilize, represented with the Fly skill (page 59). This super power is a prerequisite for the Fly skill, giving your character that skill at the starting skill rating if the power is innate, and 1/2 of DEX as a skill rating if the power is granted by equipment.

If this power is used in conjunction with Super Speed, the number of additional meters provided by the Super Speed may be added to the meters per combat round provided by the Flight power. For reference, 500 meters per combat round is a speed of roughly 85 miles per hour.

Force Field

Base Range: 15 meters.

Duration: Varies.

Character Point Cost: 1 per level per energy type per point of SIZ.

Power Point Cost: 1 per combat round, plus 1 per point of damage absorbed.

This super power allows your character to project a defensive field that provides 1 point of armor to 1 point of SIZ from incoming injury based on a specific energy or attack type. The type of energy the Force Field protects against must be specified when the super power is purchased, and selected from the "Types of Energy" list on page 150. Your character can choose multiple types of energy for the Force Field to protect against, though each energy type must be purchased separately.

Damage is rolled for any attacks against your character or object protected by the Force Field, and the armor value of the Force Field is subtracted from that damage. You can decide to use any and all additional levels of Force Field to protect against attacks. Any damage inflicted on the Force Field is subtracted from your character's power points. If the Force Field is dealt more damage in a single blow than you have specified protection for, or exceeds your character's available power points, the Force Field is dissipated.

Typically, the Force Field is centered on your character, though he or she can project it to cover other objects or beings adjacent to him or her, or anywhere

within range. Additional levels can be used to extend the range of the power an additional 15 meters, to increase the damage protection, or to increase the SIZ being protected by the Force Field.

Intangibility

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 2 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per point of SIZ per level, then 1 power point per combat round

Each level allows your character to move 1 SIZ point through 10 centimeters of wall or other materials per combat round, and allows your character to essentially "fly" by walking on air at a normal walking speed. While your character is intangible, he or she cannot be affected by kinetic or thermal (cold and heat) forces of any sort, and cannot use any attacks resulting in the same forces. Your character can still be affected by radiation or other non-kinetic forces, and can utilize them as well. Each extra level adds another 10 centimeters to the distance that can be passed through in a combat round (up to his or her normal movement rate), or can be used to move another SIZ point outside of his or her own SIZ. Once active, intangibility can be maintained at a cost of 1 power point per combat round, though it ends if your character is knocked unconscious or runs out of power points. If your character takes damage in a combat round, the gamemaster may require a successful Idea roll to maintain the intangibility. If desired, the gamemaster may determine that certain materials are easier to pass through than others, based on the guidelines presented in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. Denser materials may slow or even stop an intangible character from passing through.

Invisibility

Base Range: 15 meters

Duration: 1 combat round

Character Point Cost: 1 per level per point of SIZ

Power Point Cost: 1 per point of SIZ to activate, then 1 power point per combat round

Each level of Invisibility allows your character to turn invisible 1 SIZ point of him- or herself, another character, or another being. Your character must concentrate on the super power and must do no more than walk or speak. Fighting, using other super powers, or similar distractions such as taking injury or intense physical activity will break the effects and cause the invisible thing to become visible once more. Any attacks against an invisible character or object are at 1/4 the normal skill rating. Any parries are equally difficult, requiring a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to even attempt parrying. A successful roll for one of these skill to over-

come the Invisibility reduces the penalty of attacks to 1/2 instead of 1/4 (making them *Difficult*).

There are few limitations to what actions your character can commit while invisible. He or she can move, attack, flee, or stand still as long as the super power is active. Invisibility can be deactivated at any time, though starting it again requires activating the super power again. Several spot rules systems may come into play when Invisibility is utilized in a combat situation. See the sections on “Ambushes and Backstabs” and “Helpless Opponents” in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Leap

Base Range: 2 meters per level

Duration: Instantaneous

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of Leap adds an additional 2 horizontal meters or 1 vertical meter to your character's normal jumping range (see the Jump skill on page 63). Leap only adds to the range of the Jump skill, and does not require a roll or power point cost. The Jump skill must still be used successfully when appropriate (in combat, not during normal movement). A Leap counts as a normal movement action during a combat round. As with Jump, your character can automatically land successfully, no matter how great the controlled leap. However, your gamemaster may call for a successful Agility roll if your character tries to catch the ledge of a building or land somewhere small or requiring balance. This roll may be *Difficult* for especially small or narrow perches (such as leaping up to a windowsill or the top of a street-light). If your character is falling, he or she may use the Jump skill to mitigate damage. If a Jump skill roll is successful, reduce the distance fallen by 3 meters for every level of Leap.

In combat, your character can leap at an opponent to gain extra damage. Each level of Leap used (up to the character's SIZ) can be added to the character's total of STR and SIZ to determine a new damage bonus (if any) on a physical attack. The levels of Leap you can use for this increase to damage bonus are those of the actual distance leaped, not the overall levels, and the damage bonus only applies for the first attack made during the attack. A successful Jump roll must be made in addition to the normal attack roll.

For example, the jungle hero Tanjar uses his Leap power to spring from a tree-branch at his foe Ur-thak, a great silverback ape who killed his human family. Tanjar has Leap 4, giving him the ability to leap a total of 10 meters (2 meters base human norm, +8 meters from the Leap power). Tanjar has positioned himself exactly this distance from his foe, to maximize his Leap's power. He makes his Jump roll, with a normal success. Normally, Tanjar's damage bonus is +1D6 (his STR 20 and SIZ 17 give him a total of 37 on the damage bonus chart. Adding Tanjar's Leap levels make this bonus 41, equaling a

damage bonus of +2D6, meaning that Tanjar's attack will do +1D6 extra damage!

Consult the damage bonus table on page 29 and the Jump skill on page 63 for more information. Depending on how high and far a character jumps, “Aerial Combat” in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** may be useful.

Protection

Base Range: Self or touch

Duration: 1 combat round

Character Point Cost: 1 per level per energy type

Power Point Cost: 1 point per level per combat round

When purchased, Protection must be specified for a particular type of energy, such as Protection (Kinetic). Each level of Protection reduces the level of the appropriate super power directed at your character. This may reduce the attacking super power's level to 0, meaning that it has no effect on the protected character. Multiple types of Protection can be purchased. There is no requirement for all types of Protection to be at the same level, so your character could have Protection (Kinetic) 2 and Protection (Heat) 5. If an attack utilizes multiple types of energy, only the applicable types of the super power are reduced through the Protection power.

For example, the super hero Sunburst has Protection (Heat) 3 and Protection (Radiation) 2. She is hit by an Energy Projection attack that combines the Heat, Kinetic, and Radiation energy types all at once at level 5 each. Sunburst's Protection reduces the attack's levels to Energy Projection (Heat) 2 and (Radiation) 3. She has no Protection power versus Kinetic energy, so it hits her for the full value of 5 levels.

Many types of armor and equipment extend the Protection power to characters. See the equipment rules in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more information.

Regeneration

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per hit point healed per combat round

This super power gives your character the ability to heal extremely fast, drawing on his or her body's natural energies to accelerate the natural healing process. Each level of Regeneration allows your character to heal 1 hit point of damage every combat round at the end of the combat round (DEX rank 0), as long as there are power points to fuel the power. Regeneration does not have to be activated to work, though your character may deactivate it at will. This super power will not bring your character back from the dead, but will heal damage that would normally require hospitalization. Regeneration will also heal the effects of any major wound, though the effects of this healing will only take place once all

hit points from the injury have been completely restored. The gamemaster should use discretion in determining if severed body parts can be restored. Your character cannot have more levels of Regeneration than 1/2 his or her CON characteristic (round up). Various pieces of equipment may confer this power, as described in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Resistance

Base Range: Self or touch

Duration: Always On, or 1 full turn (5 minutes)

Character Point Cost: 1 per level for turn-based, 3 per level if permanent

Power Point Cost: 1 per level used if turn-based, none if permanent

Resistance serves as an artificial shield allowing your character a greater chance of resisting attacks of a particular energy type. Each level of Resistance must be specified towards an energy type (see the list on page 150), and will either add to your character's passive resistance characteristic on the resistance table, or will provide a resistance value if there is no applicable characteristic.

For example, all characters naturally resist the Radiation energy type with the CON characteristic, but have no natural protection against the Gravity energy type. Thus, levels of Resistance (Radiation) would be added to your character's CON characteristic for the purpose of resisting the effects of radiation, while Resistance (Gravity) would oppose the Energy Control (Gravity) power as the sole value on the resistance table.

Resistance is an all-or-nothing power. If Resistance overcomes the attacking energy type, that energy type has no further effect. If Resistance fails to resist the active energy type, Resistance has no effect.

Additional types of Resistance can easily be created, including varieties not keyed to the energy types specified in this section. Following are some of the alternate sources of damage that Resistance can be utilized against:

DISEASE: This increases your character's resistance to disease, adding to his or her CON in resistance rolls against illness, infection, or other sickness. Resistance (Disease) also applies to any other characteristic (such as STR) the disease acts against on the resistance table.

POISON: This increases your character's resistance to poison, whether natural toxins or some manufactured chemical compounds. It also offers resistance to non-poisonous chemical influences, such as against drugs, alcohol, or other non-lethal substances. In all cases, levels in Resistance (Poison) are added to your character's CON or applicable characteristic.

This power works well in tandem with Armor and/or Protection. At the gamemaster's discretion, Resistance can be expanded to encompass entire power types, such as Resistance (Magic) or Resistance (Psychic), but it is suggested that this widespread Resistance be significantly more expensive, such as 10 points per level.

Sidekick

Base Range: Not applicable

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: Variable

Power Point Cost: None

With Sidekick, you can create a secondary character to control alongside your own character. The Sidekick is loyal to the your character and potentially possesses similar skills and powers. You and the gamemaster should roll the Sidekick up as if it is a new character, though the Sidekick does not have to be human. The Sidekick's characteristics and skills must be purchased as if they were Super Characteristics and Super Skills, out of your character's Character Point Budget. If the Sidekick is a natural animal, determine its characteristics and skills normally and then pay for them, using the above powers. The Sidekick can have powers and equipment, but these must also be paid for out of your character's own Character Point Budget.

Absorption, Armor, Protection, and Resistance

It may be confusing about how these four super powers differ, since they apparently serve the same purpose: keeping your character from taking damage. Here are a set of quick guidelines illustrating the differences between these super powers and how they work in conjunction with one another.

ABSORPTION soaks up some or all of the damage your character takes from an attack, and turns it into energy he or she can use.

ARMOR works like armor... if your character is hit by an attack; it reduces the amount of damage you take. Armor is the last line of defense.

PROTECTION reduces the effects of an attack. Like sunscreen, it limits the amount of solar radiation getting through to your skin, but it isn't the same as staying in the shade and it certainly won't help against skin cancer.

RESISTANCE is an all-or-nothing power, like parrying with a shield. If it resists the attack, no problem. If the attack gets past the shield, it strikes your character with full effect.

In cases where more than one of these four super powers is in effect, handle them in reverse alphabetical order. First, Resistance determines whether the power works at all, then Protection lowers the levels of the power if it gets through, Armor reduces the damage inflicted on your character, and Absorption soaks up any remaining points and turns them into power points.



A party comprised of the super hero player characters and their sidekicks can add up to a considerable number of characters. The gamemaster might introduce scenarios affecting only a few of the potential PCs (say, one per attending player). The others are assumed to live mundane super hero lives—a good time to get some training or research hours in.

Generally, a Sidekick has powers and skills similar to its 'owner', though this is not necessary. A Sidekick usually has the following attributes:

- ❖ It is loyal to the owner, though it may disagree and occasionally rebel.
- ❖ It often idolizes its owner and fashions its appearance after him or her.
- ❖ It depends on its owner for living arrangements and basic necessities.
- ❖ It often gets into trouble, and sometimes must be rescued. This should happen at least twice as often as a Sidekick is able to rescue its owner.
- ❖ It is often younger and less experienced than its owner, though it can increase in experience as a normal character would. The Sidekick's owner can determine how it will improve powers through earned Character Point Budget.

When the Sidekick is finished, the gamemaster allows you to run the Sidekick as a secondary character, rolling for it and guiding its actions. Occasionally, the gamemaster may choose to roleplay the Sidekick and make rolls for them, though this should be rare. The Sidekick is in most cases an extension of your character's identity, and you should have control over the Sidekick's behavior.

Normally, your character can only have one Sidekick at a time, though the gamemaster may allow you to purchase an additional Sidekick or more. Your character cannot have a Sidekick with a higher POW characteristic than him or her. If this happens due to POW increases, the Sidekick leaves your character's service (becoming a character controlled by the gamemaster, or even another player) and your character gets 1/2 of the *original* Character Point Budget back. If a Sidekick is killed, your character gets 1/2 of the original Character Point Budget back. Similarly, if you want

your character to release the Sidekick, he or she gets 1/2 of the Sidekick's *current* Character Point Budget back (this should be calculated from current characteristics, skills, and powers). This way, it is more profitable in the long run to nurture and train a Sidekick before parting ways, rather than to let it outstrip your character or get killed in the line of duty.

Size Change

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level to activate, no cost to keep active

With Size Change, your character can increase or reduce his current SIZ by 1 point per level (no maximum, minimum 0). When this power is purchased, you must specify whether it is to grow or to shrink. To do both, buy the super power twice.

Growing to giant size has the following effects on your character:

- ❖ Increasing your character's SIZ increases his or her total hit points—you should recalculate your character's hit point total based on the average of CON and SIZ.
- ❖ Increasing your character's SIZ can improve his or her damage bonus, as it is the total of STR + SIZ (see page 29).
- ❖ Increased in SIZ by more than 20 points makes your character twice as easy to hit in combat. Any attacks against him or her are considered *Easy*.
- ❖ If the optional fatigue point system is used, your character's fatigue point total is not affected by being giant-sized. Actions expend just as many fatigue points as normal.
- ❖ If the optional strike rank system is being used, this may increase your character's strike rank.

Shrinking has the following effects upon your character:

- ❖ Shrinking may decrease your character's hit point total—recalculate his or her hit point total based on the average of CON and SIZ.
- ❖ Shrinking may decrease his or her damage bonus, as it is based on STR + SIZ. Consult the damage bonus chart on page 29 to see if it is lowered.
- ❖ Shrinking to SIZ 1 or 0 makes your character much harder to hit: all attacks against him or her are considered to be *Difficult*. If your character's SIZ is below 0 (see below), it may be impossible to hit him or her with normal weaponry, though attacks with an area of effect (like a flamethrower) will still have full effectiveness if your character can be spotted. This is at the gamemaster's discretion.
- ❖ Hiding becomes *Easy* when your character is below SIZ 3. At SIZ 1 or 0, only a critical result for a Spot roll will find your character.
- ❖ Your character's physical attributes are also affected in a number of unquantifiable ways (volume, etc.).
- ❖ Your character's fatigue point total is not affected by being tiny.
- ❖ If the optional strike rank system is being used, this may decrease your character's strike rank.
- ❖ Your gamemaster may allow your character to shrink beyond SIZ 0, though this is outside the scope of these rules.

Once your character has become giant or tiny, this super power does not cost any further power points to maintain. If your character is knocked unconscious, goes asleep, runs out of power points, or is hit with a super power that would otherwise cancel any active super powers, the Size Change will deactivate and your character will return to his or her normal SIZ. If your character takes a major wound while using Size Change, he or she must make a successful Stamina roll to maintain the current SIZ. If the roll fails, your character reverts to his or her original SIZ.

If your character has taken damage while in giant or tiny form, the switch back to normal size gives your character's normal hit points or those from the alternate sized body, whichever is currently lower.

For example, Macro-woman, a super hero, grows to giant size. In the course of action, she is reduced to 22 hit points. When in her normal human size, Macro-woman has 12 hit points, so when she returns to normal size, her current hit point total will be 12. Later, her twin brother and crime-fighting partner, Micro-man (who becomes tiny-sized), is reduced to 3 hit points from injury. When he returns to his normal size, he will stay at 3 hit points, which are less than his normal 12 hit points.

If your character has already taken damage before using the Size Change power, the gamemaster should take note of the damage your character has already taken before figuring the new hit point total. Once these have been determined, the gamemaster should apply this damage to your character's new hit point total. This may incapacitate your character, if he or she is shrinking.

The spot rules for "Big and Little Targets" on page 215 may be of use. Consult the SIZ table on page 26 of character creation and the Comparative Sizes table on page 296 of **Chapter Nine: Gamemastering** for expanded guidelines of what larger SIZ ratings indicate.

Snare Projection

Base Range: 15 meters

Duration: Until destroyed or 10 combat rounds

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 point per use

Snare Projection allows your character to create an entrapping force (webbing, lasso, energy cage, blob of adhesive, extensible limb, etc.) that can be used against an opponent within range. The snare has a STR characteristic equal to the super power's level. Use of the power is automatic, though directing it may involve a skill check (see below). Being entrapped by Snare Projection forces the target to make a STR vs. STR resistance roll, or be held as if entangled (see the entangle special success on page 196). If the resistance roll overcomes the snare's STR, the snare dissipates (if appropriate) or is otherwise shrugged aside. If used against multiple opponents, the levels of Snare Projection are distributed evenly among the targets, with you choosing which foe gets any leftover levels. Each target is required to make a STR vs. STR resistance roll to break free of the snare.

Your character can increase the range of the snare by allocating levels to it, on a per-use basis. Each level adds another 15 meters to the range.

For example, the super-villain Daddy Longlegs has a web spinner that gives him Snare Projection 20. He may allocate 1 level of the power to hit an opponent outside his range, giving him a range of 30 meters (15 base meters + 15 meters for 1 level of extra range) and an effective Snare Projection 19.

Snare Projection may involve use of the Brawl, Throw, or the Projection skill (on page 145). Ask the gamemaster which applies. If it is a piece of equipment, the relevant weapon or gear use skill should be used to determine if Snare Projection hits the target. If the power is not intrinsic to your character and is a piece of gear, the rules on powered equipment from **Chapter Eight: Equipment** may be of relevance. Consult the rules for entangling (page 196) for additional detail.

Stretching

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of this super power allows your character to stretch his or her entire body (or some portion) for 1 meter in any direction. Additionally, if the total levels

of Stretching are equal to twice your character's CON, he or she is capable of stretching in even more remarkable ways, through keyholes, under doors, gliding like a kite on the wind, mimicking items of furniture or other objects, or other examples of extraordinary plasticity. Expanding in SIZ will always be limited to your character's base SIZ plus the levels of Stretching, and your character can contract his or her body to a SIZ equal to his or her SIZ characteristic minus the super power's levels (minimum SIZ 1).

For example, musclemen-adventurer Flex Armstrong has Stretching at level 12. Armstrong's normal SIZ is 15. He's therefore able to enlarge his body up to SIZ 27 ($15 + 12 = 27$), and can compact himself to a mere SIZ 3 ($15 - 12 = 3$).

Every meter your character stretches lowers his or her current STR by 1 point, which may lower his or her Damage Bonus.

For example, the Coil (a costumed villain with a snake motif) has a normal STR 23. He stretches his torso 10 meters to reach an unlocked window on the third floor of an office building he plans to rob. This reduces his current STR to 13.

If your character is knocked unconscious, goes asleep, runs out of power points, or is attacked with a super power that would otherwise cancel any existing super powers, Stretching will deactivate and your character will return to his or her normal shape. If your character takes a major wound while stretching, he or she must make a successful Endurance roll to maintain the current shape. If the roll fails, your character reverts to his or her original form.

Your character can use his or her Stretching power to improvise the effects of another super power such as Absorption, Barrier, Defense, Flight, Super Sense, Leap, Resistance, Shape Change, Size Change, Snare Projection, or others. In these cases, the gamemaster should require you to describe exactly what your character is doing, and your character to succeed in an Idea roll. If successful, your character can spend double the relevant power points and will have 1/2 his or her Stretching levels in the super power being imitated. If you routinely abuse this by repeatedly mimicking a super power your character does not have, the gamemaster should require you to purchase levels in that mimicked super power.

Super Characteristic

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 1 per point of STR, CON, SIZ, or APP; 3 points for each point of DEX, INT, POW, and EDU.

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of this power adds 1 point of STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, APP, or EDU to your character's original characteristics. All characteristic rolls (Effort,

Constitution, Agility, Idea, Luck, Charisma, and Education) and figured abilities (hit points, fatigue points, power points, sanity points, and strike rank) are also increased. If you increase your character's STR and/or SIZ characteristics, you should increase his or her Damage Bonus as described in "Damage Bonus" (page 29). Increases to the INT and EDU characteristics will grant higher initial skill points, as described in Step Seven of character creation on page 21.

Super Movement

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 10 per type

Power Point Cost: 1 per combat round

Each type of Super Movement allows your character to move his or her normal MOV rate in a manner that defies physics or is otherwise unconventional. Each type must be purchased separately, but there are no levels—the movement simply works if your character spends the relevant power points. Carrying capacity is based on your character's normal STR, and heavy weights are handled with a resistance roll. Following are a number of Super Movement types. The gamemaster and player should be able to come up with additional types using these as examples.

AIR WALKING: Your character is able to traverse on air itself, as if levitating or flying, though he or she cannot actually accomplish these actions. Instead, it is almost as if there are a series of invisible walkways and staircases that your character can move along, immaterial to anyone else. Your character can carry others, but this must be done physically.

IRRESISTIBLE: Your character can move through water or any environmental condition as if without resistance. Hazards that would normally slow your character's movement rate (water, mud, etc.) do not hinder your character, allowing the full movement rate. This also applies to movement speed outside of combat, ignoring weather or terrain effects, but it does not apply to resistance from unnatural conditions, such as Snare Projection or a physical barrier.

LIGHTFOOT: Common in Asian martial arts films, Lightfoot movement allows a normal movement rate while in the air, through leaping from surface to surface, gliding, skipping, or making slight motions upon solid surfaces to maintain movement. Lightfoot lets your character stand on surfaces that would not normally support his or her weight, moving as if gravity has no effect. Your character can run lightly up rough walls or trees, or even skip across water or the surface of snow. He or she can stand on items obviously unable to withstand his or her normal weight, such as a bamboo reed, a slender tree branch, a sword point, or even a house of cards. Your character cannot remain in the air indefinitely, and to change direction (right, left, or even up or down) requires a successful Agility roll as well as additional power points expenditure.

TRACKLESS: Your character can move across the ground or the surface of snow and leave absolutely no track unless he or she wishes to. Only critical successes on Track rolls will allow someone to find the trail of your character if he or she is using this power, and the result will only be a standard success. Your character can stand still or even cartwheel across a surface and will not leave tracks. This power is intrinsic in your character and cannot be shared. Carrying any more than your character's normal burden negates the power entirely.

WALL WALKING: Your character can walk on walls and ceilings, whether on all fours or standing upright. Your character can stand still on vertical or upside-down surfaces as if on the ground, and jumping will keep your character on the same plane. Carrying additional weight must be handled through a normal STR resistance roll.

WATER WALKING: Your character can walk or run across water as if it were solid ground, meeting no resistance from waves and not sinking. Unlike Lightfoot (described above), your character can stand still on the water's surface, though turbulent water will cause him or her to sway with the motions of the waves. Your character can also surf along rapid-moving water, riding the current and being swept along as if on a surfboard or conveyor belt. The gamemaster should determine how rapid the water is, and may require Agility or Jump rolls to overcome obstacles such as outcropping stones in river rapids.

ZERO-GRAVITY: Your character can ignore the effects of zero gravity, orienting his or her body in relation to whatever object or plane in three-dimensional space he or she desires. Your character can move easily through zero-G environments, incurring no penalties to actions, and even when in deep space will always be able to find a comfortable orientation. Your character can use Super Movement (Zero-gravity) to orient other characters in zero-G through touch.

For any of these types of Super Movement, if a conscious character falls down, he or she can attempt an Idea roll to remain on the surface he or she is on (air, water, ceiling, wall, etc.) rather than sink or fall to earth. If your character is knocked unconscious or runs out of power points while using Super Movement, he or she falls to the ground, sinks beneath the water, etc. as appropriate. If your character is using normal movement and is presented with an opportunity, he or she can make a *Difficult* Agility roll to switch to Super Movement, such as being hurled through the air towards a wall and using Lightfoot or Wall Walking to land on the wall, in control and unharmed.

Super Sense

Base Range: Varies

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Super Sense represents a variety of super powers, each keyed to a principal sense. Each type of the super power

must be bought separately, and should be noted like "Super Sense (Dark Vision)". Your character can purchase different types of Super Sense powers and combine them, allowing for the same skill roll to stand for each power, or you can choose to keep them separate and use the super powers separately. Following are a variety of senses, though the gamemaster may introduce other varieties of super detection:

SUPER HEARING: Each level doubles the range your character can effectively use his or her Listen skill. Normal hearing range is 15 meters, assuming there is no intervening obstacle (such as a wall) or noise-making interference. This super power can also be used to hear things outside the normal human range of perception, such as an opponent's heartbeat. At the gamemaster's discretion, this super power also allows your character to hear opponents successfully using the Stealth skill. If an opponent has an average success on a Stealth roll, your character can hear him or her with an *Easy* Listen check. If the opponent has a special success, your character can hear him or her with an unmodified Listen check. If the Stealth-using character has a critical result, your character can hear him or her with a special success.

SUPER SMELL/TASTE: Your character can use his or her Sense skill to detect the taste of something a normal human would be unable to discern, such as a tasteless poison. Each level increases the range of the sense of smell by another 15 meters, so your character can smell something faint at great range. The sense of taste increases by 1 meter per level, so your character can even taste something within range without actually having to consume it.

SUPER TOUCH: Each level lets your character use his or her Sense skill to detect subtle changes in texture through fingertips or other body parts. It also gives your character the ability to "see" with exposed skin and act in darkness as if in normal daylight, ignoring any penalties from darkness (use the Listen skill to determine the chance of success). Finally, it provides your character with a POW x 1 per level chance of detecting oncoming missile weapons or other hand-to-hand attacks that might not be detected otherwise (such as via an ambush or backstab). The range is 15 meters. Each additional level extends the range by an additional 15 meters.

SUPER VISION: Each level doubles the distance your character can see detail in, doubling the range at which he or she can use skills such as Spot. It also increases the magnification that your character is capable of, allowing him or her to perform skills such as Appraise at long range.

Following are a number of extraordinary Super Senses:

DARK VISION: Your character can see 15 meters in absolute darkness, despite the absence of light. This super power cancels any negative modifiers to the Spot or combat skills due to darkness. Your character cannot automatically discern between terrain features and living beings, however, and color detection is impossible using Dark Vision. Each extra level increases the range by 15 meters.

INFRARED VISION: Your character can detect heat patterns within range, allowing him or her to see living beings in the dark through bodily heat. Heat sources appear as red blurs in a bluish-black background. Everything outside the range of the power is an indistinct blur, and the super power does not allow detection of objects that do not emit heat, such as furniture or walls, unless they are wired to do so. Each additional level increases the range by another 15 meters.

MICROSCOPIC VISION: Your character can see microscopic objects within range. At level 1, the rate of magnification is 25X (or 25 times normal size). For each additional level, double the existing magnification (25X becomes 50X, then 100X, then 200X, etc.), or add an additional 15 meters in range. Use of Microscopic Vision is incompatible with normal sight—your character will need to switch it off to be able to perceive the world normally. This can be done instantly, but it must be switched back on to be used again.

NIGHT VISION: If there is some source of light (however faint), your character the ability to see with perfect clarity for 15 meters in near-dark conditions. This super power cancels any negative modifiers to Spot or combat due to partial darkness. Night Vision allows for some differentiation between colors,

and provides the sharpest form of vision in near-dark conditions. Each additional level increases the range by another 15 meters.

SONAR DETECTION: Your character hears ambient sounds in the area (or makes them) and utilizes them as a form of echolocation, determining the presence of other beings and obstacles in range. Each level provides your character with a 15-meter, 360-degree field of sonar detection, projected from his or her head. Use your character's Listen skill to determine if an obstacle is noticed, and an Idea roll to see if it can be identified. Each additional level of this power adds 15 meters to the range.

ULTRASONIC HEARING: Your character can hear sounds that would be inaudible to a normal human, above or below audible frequencies. Use your character's Listen skill to see if the sound is noticed. A wall or other barrier 10 centimeters thick will block most sounds from passing through, but this super power negates that blockage. Each additional level increases range by 15 meters and increases the ability to hear through barriers that would normally block sounds (2 levels allows hearing through 20 centimeters of barrier, 3 levels through 30 centimeters of barrier, etc.). Ultrasonic Hearing does not give your character sonar detection (as described above).

X-RAY VISION: Your character can see through 10 centimeters of any substance per level of this super power, blocked only by a single substance (lead, gold, or some other higher-density substance). Choose a substance the X-ray Vision doesn't work through, and ask the gamemaster for approval. The range is 15 meters. Each additional level increases range by 15 meters and the penetrating value of the power by an additional 10 centimeters. With enough levels, your character can make Spot or other visual perception skill rolls unimpaired, even when obstructed by a barrier.

Super Skill

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On

Character Point Cost: 2 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Each level of Super Skill provides your character with a +20% bonus to an existing skill rating, above and beyond skill points spent during character creation. Additional levels of the super power can be stacked for greater bonuses. If you wish to add a bonus to more than one skill, take the super power again. The increased skill rating also improves the likelihood of special successes and critical results. The Super Skill can increase with experience as normal: the bonus is never figured into the experience roll. The gamemaster may wish to limit the total levels of this power your character can purchase, based on the campaign power level. He or she may also prohibit certain skills from being used with this power. This super power is most useful in campaigns where skill levels are allowed to go in excess of 100%. See the sections titled "Skill Ratings Over 100%" on page 49 and "Attack and Parry Skills Over 100%" on page 198 for details.

Super vision, and other abilities purchased with this system, can be portrayed in the scenario as being incorporated in the advanced technology and exotic composite components in Wingman's helm and flight suit.

Super Speed

Base Range: Self

Duration: Varies

Character Point Cost: 20 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level used per combat round

Super Speed allows your character to move his or her full movement in a combat round as well as performing a combat action. Normally your character would be restricted to only one of these actions. Each additional level beyond the first allows your character to perform another of these options: full movement or another action. Super Speed never allows your character to make additional combat actions in a round—its effects are solely additional movement. The extra full movement can be taken before, after, or at your character's normal DEX rank. When your character is performing a normal action using Super Speed, he or she performs the action at the usual DEX rank. Alternately, your character can run all-out, performing a full movement for each level of Super Speed, plus his or her normal full movement without performing an action other than movement during the combat round. If your character is running all-out, he or she cannot perform an action in the combat round.

Super Speed used in a combat round reduces a single attacker's chance to hit your character by 10% per level. However, if the attacker is also using the Super Speed power, the reduction to attack chances is based on the difference between levels, if the defender is higher than the attacker. If both Super Speed powers are of equal level, there is no modification to any attack chances, and there is no modification to the attack chances if the attacker has a higher Super Speed than the defender. The Super Speed defensive bonus is cumulative with modifiers such as cover, darkness, etc. Area attacks are not affected by Super Speed if your character is in the area affected.

If the optional strike rank system is being used (see page 199), each level of the Super Speed power reduces your character's DEX strike rank by 1.

Teleport

Base Range: 1,000 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Character Point Cost: 1 per level

Power Point Cost: 1 per level

Each level of Teleport allows your character to instantaneously teleport 1 SIZ point from his or her current location to another place within range of the power. Teleport can also be used on things outside the character's own body (such as other items or beings), either along with your character or independently. If the target is affixed to something or does not wish to be transported, your character must also successfully overcome the item's hit points (or armor value) vs. his or her power points on the resistance table. For a living target, the opposing force is the target's current power point total. A willing target does

not require a resistance roll. Teleport does not need a targeting roll and can be used on anything within range.

A fumbled defensive resistance roll with this super power will send the item or person being teleported into a solid object, perhaps even underground. The gamemaster should ask your character to make a Luck roll if he or she wishes to avoid this mishap. If the roll is successful, no damage or ill effects are taken and the teleported character or object narrowly escapes this fate. If the roll fails, the unlucky character immediately takes 3D6 points of damage and the gamemaster should roll on the Major Wound table (page 207) to determine a likely effect for this level of trauma, adapting the result as appropriate. An object is merely fused with the structure or ground.

If your character is trying to Teleport a living target or an item into a solid structure, a living target is allowed the same chances at escaping this fate (a Luck roll prevents it). If the subject of the teleportation into a solid substance is another item, the gamemaster is the judge as to what happens. Whether inadvertent or intentional, becoming fused with a solid item is usually traumatic, and the target must find some means of extricating him- or herself from the item or structure. Failure to do so can cause the Major Wound listed above to have permanent effect. Intentionally using the power in this fashion increases the power point cost per level to 3.

Consult the section on objects in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for sample sizes and hit points of items that could be teleported in the course of play.

Transfer

Base Range: Touch

Duration: 1 combat round

Character Point Cost: 3 per level for hit points, 1 per level for other resources (fatigue points, power points, sanity points)

Power Point Cost: None

Transfer allows your character to move a resource (power points, hit points, fatigue points, etc.) from him- or herself to a living target. Transfer works similarly to Drain, though in the opposite direction. The rate of this transfer is 1 point per level per combat round, with additional levels providing more points able to be transferred (level 2 transfers 2 points, etc.). The means by which the resource is transferred can differ (it could be a grab, a bite, a handshake, etc.), but must involve physical contact for at least one full combat round. This may require a successful Grapple attempt if in combat, or Agility roll if outside of combat. No roll is required for an immobile or willing target. If your character wishes to continue to transfer points to an unwilling target on successive rounds, the requisite maneuver (Grapple, etc.) must be rolled again as per the appropriate rules.

Once contact has been established, make a resistance roll with your character's power points vs. the

target's power points. Success means that the Transfer works, while failure means that it has no effect and the intended target can attempt to break free. If the target is willing, no resistance roll is required. If successful, the resource is transferred from your character to the recipient in the power phase of the next round. The power works the same no matter what resource is being transferred:

- ❖ Your character can transfer 1 point of a resource per level of the power per combat round.
- ❖ Your character cannot transfer more of the resource than he or she currently possesses.
- ❖ The target cannot accept more of the resource than his or her normal maximum (other than power points, see "Power Points" on page 30 for more detail). Any resource points beyond the maximum are lost.
- ❖ If your character reaches 0 in the resource, he or she will likely fall unconscious and suffer serious consequences (insanity or death, appropriate to the resource being transferred).

Following are descriptions of the four types of resources that can be transferred:

HIT POINTS: If your character reduces his or her own current hit point total to 1 or 2 hit points, he or she will fall unconscious. It is possible to transfer all of your character's hit points to the recipient, but this requires a successful POW x 1 roll must be made to go below 1 hit point before falling unconscious. At 0 hit points, your character will fall unconscious and begin to die, as described in "Hit Points" (page 30). Your character cannot transfer enough hit points to go into negative hit points. While these points are being transferred, the recipient must make a successful Effort roll if he or she wants to act against your character, though the contact is not broken.

POWER POINTS: If your character's power point total reaches 0, he or she falls unconscious. While being recharged with power points, if the recipient wishes to act against your character, he or she must make a successful Luck roll to do so.

FATIGUE POINTS: If your character's fatigue point total goes below 0, he or she suffers penalties to actions as described in the rules for Fatigue on page 32. While being recharged, if the recipient wants to be able to act against your character, he or she must make a successful Stamina roll to do so.

SANITY POINTS: The sudden addition of sanity points will not eliminate any insanity the target may possess—it merely provides a more stable base against future losses. Specific insanities must be dealt with through psychotherapy and treatment. If your character's sanity point total reaches 0, he or she is hopelessly insane and at that point will usually become a gamemaster-controlled character. Additionally, your character is at that point effectively beyond recovery. Consult the optional sanity rules section in **Chapter Ten: Settings**. Your character can transfer as many SAN as he or she desires up to the target's maximum allowed SAN (see "Maximum Sanity" on page 318). If the target wishes to

act against your character, he or she must make a successful Luck roll to do so.

This super power works well in tandem with Drain, allowing a character to restore resource points he or she has transferred to others. As noted in the descriptions of each type of transfer, the sections on hit points (page 12), fatigue points (page 32), power points (page 12), and sanity points (page 13) will be relevant.

Unarmed Combat

Base Range: Self

Duration: Always On, or 5 combat rounds

Power Cost: 20 per level

Power Point Cost: None

Unarmed Combat represents an exceptional level of martial arts training, above and beyond that normally attainable by humans. This can be in mysterious or secret techniques, ninjutsu, mystic fighting styles, or hyper-advanced combat training. No roll or power point expenditure is required—your character must merely announce that he or she is using Unarmed Combat. Each level of this super power:

- ❖ Adds 2 points of damage to any successful Brawl or Grapple attack.
- ❖ Acts as 2 points of armor to your character's limbs when parrying melee, missile, or unarmed attacks while unarmed. This armor value is only applied if the parry is successful and damage is being applied to your character. The 2 points per level are also subtracted from damage determining a knockback or other weapon breakage.
- ❖ Subtracts 5% from a single attacker's chance to hit your character in a combat round. You pick who gets this penalty, and it can vary from round to round. Alternately, this penalty can be divided among multiple opponents in 5% increments, at your discretion.
- ❖ Adds 5% to your character's unarmed hand-to-hand attacks, whether the Brawl or Grapple skill is used. This applies to all attacks your character makes in a combat round.

If your character is using Unarmed Combat and faces an opponent using the same power, make a resistance roll of your character's power level vs. the opponent's level. If both succeed, or both fail, the super powers cancel one another out and no one benefits from the super power for 5 combat rounds. If only one of the combatants is successful, he or she can use Unarmed Combat while his or her opponent(s) cannot. If the combat is still in effect at the end of the 5 rounds, the resistance roll is made again to determine if the Unarmed Combat super power is effective against the opponent. Unarmed Combat is always effective against anyone without the super power.

For example, the martial artist Blue Lotus has studied and learned secret martial arts techniques representing 3 levels of Unarmed Combat. She is fighting Iron Wing, an evil warlord

with Unarmed Combat 1. Iron Wing is in his characteristic 8 point iron armor, and Blue Lotus wears a blue silk outfit providing no armor protection. She and Iron Wing make opposed rolls for their Unarmed Combat powers—Blue Lotus' roll is successful and Iron Wing's fails.

She hits Iron Wing with a Brawling attack, doing 1D3+1D6 points of damage (1D3 for Brawling, +1D6 Damage Bonus), +6 points for her 3 levels of Unarmed Combat. The total is 11 points, but Iron Wing's armor blocks all but 3 points of the damage from her attack! Iron Wing grunts with pain and attacks Blue Lotus. Though she could choose to reduce his chance to hit her, Blue Lotus is aware that his henchmen are circling behind her and she will want to use that aspect of the power to reduce their chances to hit. Iron Wing strikes at her, but she successfully parries. Since both combatants are unarmed and neither makes a special success or critical success, neither takes damage from the attack or parry.

Meanwhile, Iron Wing's three thugs circle behind her with and try to shoot her with crossbows. She can reduce each of their attack skill ratings by -5%, reduce a single one of their attacks by -15%, or reduce one attacker's chance by -5% and another by -10%, or any other division of 15%. The odds do not look good for Blue Lotus. At the end of 5 rounds of combat, she and Iron Wing will check again to see if his Unarmed Combat power can have an effect. However, his thugs do not have the power, so they will be affected by the full strength of Blue Lotus' attacks, so there may be a bright spot...

Unarmed Combat can work in conjunction with the Martial Arts skill, allowing all modifiers from that skill to stack alongside the super power's benefits. The Brawl and Grapple skills (pages 52 and 60) are relevant.

Weather Control

Base Range: 15 meters per level

Duration: 1 combat round

Power Cost: 3 per level

Power Point Cost: 3 per level to activate, 1 per combat round to maintain

Weather Control lets your character create and control weather conditions in the immediate area. He or she can create new atmospheric conditions, manipulate the ambient temperature, increase or decrease precipitation, and create a variety of non-harmful weather conditions that may have game-related effects such as fog, freezing rain, etc. Additionally, a character with Weather Control can attempt the following effects:

- ❖ For every level, your character can raise or lower the temperature by 10 degrees Fahrenheit. For information on these conditions, see the sections on "Cold and Freezing" and "Fire and Heat" in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.
- ❖ Each level allows your character to alter the weather in range by one "step" per combat round. "Weather Conditions" are described in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Furthermore, Weather Control can create a specific but non-damaging weather effect such as any of the following (covered in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**):

- ❖ A hailstorm or thunderclap that can potentially cause stunning effects (see "Stunning or Subduing" on page 232).
- ❖ High winds that can potentially cause knockback effects (see "Knockback" on page 225).
- ❖ Tornadoes that can cause sweep attacks or eliminate any threat of missile weapon use (see "Sweep Attacks" on page 233).
- ❖ Rain that can douse a fire, including fires created with Energy Control (see page 153).
- ❖ Snow and/or ice that can make a surface slippery and dangerous (see "Slippery or Unstable Surfaces" on page 231).
- ❖ Fog that can reduce effective visual range to 5 meters (see "Weather Conditions" on page 181).
- ❖ Other, alternate effects can be devised with the gamemaster's approval.

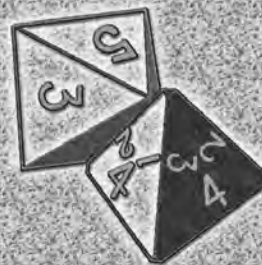
Once the super power ends, the weather returns to its normal state by one step per combat round. Each level increases the range by an additional 15 meters. Weather Control does not allow your character to create lighting bolts or weather effects strong enough to cause direct damage. These should be purchased as Energy Projection (page 156).





CHAPTER FIVE

SYSTEM



The most common question asked around the game table is “Do I succeed or do I fail?” The second most frequent question is “How well do I succeed or fail?” The rules presented in *Basic Roleplaying* provide a framework and consistent system to determine these chances, using dice rolls to simulate the randomness of whether an action succeeds or fails.

Routine game actions in routine situations almost always succeed. However, when the action becomes dramatic or extraordinary, you (as a player or gamemaster) should roll dice for the resolution. You will want to know if skills succeed when danger threatens, or if they fail miserably in the face of stress. Dice allow crises and decision points to be resolved without the constant intervention of the gamemaster.

Some skills, especially weapon skills, are inherently dramatic and dangerous, and always are rolled for, as are accidents such as falls. You will attempt most skill rolls and all resistance rolls with percentage dice (D100). Other sorts of dice establish the damage done by various weapon attacks. Armor and shields block attacks. **Chapter Six: Combat** discusses attacking and defending. **Chapter Seven Spot Rules** contains a variety of spot rules to cover numerous variable subjects where the outcomes may be influenced by outside forces.

Usually, the gamemaster tells you when to roll dice and usually tells what sort of roll to make—whether it be a skill roll, a resistance table roll, a characteristic roll, etc.

Actions

Regardless of genre, all good stories (and roleplaying adventures) have one thing in common: action. Characters are called upon to do all sorts of



things in the course of an adventure, from finding and interpreting clues to overcoming enemies in deadly combat.

Percentile (D100) rolls are used to determine the success or failure of actions whose outcome is in doubt. Other dice can help define the results of a roll (damage, etc), but percentile rolls form the core mechanic of the system. To see if an action succeeds, roll D100 and compare the result to the chance, determined by the type and difficulty of roll being made. If the percentile roll is equal to or less than the target, the action succeeds. Rolls higher than the skill chance fail.

Automatic or Impossible Actions

Not all actions require a die roll. Routine physical and intellectual actions attempted under mundane conditions always succeed. Anyone can walk across a room, see or hear, or communicate basic concepts in his or her native tongue. No D100 roll is necessary for any action the gamemaster deems simple or routine.

Conversely, gamemasters can rule that truly overwhelming tasks, like performing heart surgery without medical training or building a computer out of coconuts are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. If the gamemaster rules that a task is impossible, no die roll will be sufficient—all attempts fail.

Skill Rolls

Most actions characters attempt will be resolved in terms of skill rolls. In a skill roll, the percentile roll uses your character's rating in whatever skill is most appropriate to that action as the base chance. See **Chapter Three: Skills** for more information about skills, and the effects of success or failure.

Any skill that has a base chance of 5% or higher (see **Chapter Three: Skills** for more information) will always have a 5% chance of success, even if difficulty, conditional modifiers, or other factors would reduce the skill rating below 5%. See "Modifying Action Rolls" (page 175) for more detail.

Characteristic Rolls

Some actions are not easily linked to a skill: keeping balance while moving along a narrow ledge, for example. In these cases the gamemaster will call for a characteristic roll, with a base chance of your character's characteristic multiplied by a number. CON, INT, DEX, and APP are common characteristics to use, and most characteristic rolls have a x 5% multiplier. Depending on the difficulty of the action, the gamemaster may use a higher or lower multiplier. See "Action Difficulty" (page 175) for more detail.

Resistance Rolls

Some actions require more than skill or natural ability: obstacles must be overcome for the character to succeed. In these cases, gamemasters should refer to the resistance table and call for a resistance roll. Resistance rolls rarely involve skills, instead pitting characteristics or other measurable quantities against each other. See "Opposed Skill Rolls" (page 173) for ways to handle skill vs. skill contests.

To make a resistance roll, compare the active factor to the passive factor on the resistance table. The active factor is the party or force trying to influence the passive factor. The following circumstances are all good examples of resistance rolls:

- ❖ Potency 17 venom (active) poisons your character with a CON 15 (passive). The venom is trying to inflict damage on your character, so the venom is active.
- ❖ Your character has a STR 18 (active) and tries to move a SIZ 25 (passive) boulder. Your character is trying to move the boulder, so his or her STR is active.
- ❖ Your character with SIZ 16 (passive) tries to crawl through a crack with SIZ 12 (active). In this case, the crack's SIZ is restricting your character's movement, so it is the active force (even though it would seem to be the other way around).

The base chance of a resistance roll equals $50\% + (\text{active characteristic} \times 5) - (\text{passive characteristic} \times 5)$. If the active and passive factors are equal, the active factor has a 50% chance of success. Every point the active factor exceeds the passive factor by adds 5% to the chance of success,



*Burly Bob has humbled many a would-be adventurer.
Can YOU beat his 17 STR?*

The Resistance Table

		Active Characteristic																							
Passive Characteristic		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	1	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	4	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	Range of Automatic Success		—	—	—	—
	5	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—			—	—	—	—
	6	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—			—	—	—	—
	7	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	8	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	9	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—
	10	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—
	11	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—
	12	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—
	13	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—
	14	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—
	15	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95
	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
	18	—	—	Range of Automatic Failure		—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
	19	—	—			—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75
	20	—	—			—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70
	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65
	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50

For success, roll D100 equal to or less than the indicated number.

while passive factors higher than active factors reduce the base chance by 5% for every point of difference. Differences of 10 points or more result in automatic success or failure, though the gamemaster may allow a roll of 01 or 00 to succeed or fail, respectively, where results would otherwise be automatic.

Some specific uses of the resistance table include:

Power Points vs. Power Points: Powers that attempt to influence or control a target's actions often involve contests of power points: your character's power point

total must overcome the target's power points for the power to take effect.

Potency vs. CON: All diseases and poisons are measured in terms of Potency (POT), and match this rating against the target's CON to determine the effects. Depending on the venom or illness, even a failed roll can impair the target

POW vs. POW: The classic contest of wills, also common in magical duels, psychic battles, or martial arts

stare-downs. In addition to winning the resistance roll, success in a POW vs. POW contest gives the active character an opportunity to raise his or her POW score.

STR vs. STR: Used in arm wrestling, as well as attempts to force open a stuck door or bend an iron bar. These contests involve inflexible obstacles, not heavy ones.

Damage vs. CON: Knockout attacks and blows to the head match the rolled damage against the CON of the target to determine if the target is stunned or knocked out. See **Chapter Six: Combat** for more details.

STR + SIZ vs. SIZ: Overbearing attacks attempt to use the mass and strength of the attacker to knock down the target. See **Chapter Six: Combat** for more details.

The gamemaster may wish to allow for a chance of failure when a result of 00 is rolled, regardless of skill level. Similarly, the gamemaster may allow any roll a

chance of success when a 01 is rolled, though this should be at the gamemaster's discretion and within the character's reasonable capabilities for failure or success.

For example, your character could feasibly make a 'one-in-a-hundred' guess at a correct answer for an obscure and difficult Knowledge topic, but it is extraordinarily unlikely that he or she could suddenly be able to fly on a roll of 01, if he or she had no powers or equipment granting that ability.

Critical Results, Special Successes, and Fumbles on Resistance Rolls

Though these rules do not cover the near-infinite number of possibilities for anything beyond simple success and failure on resistance rolls, the gamemaster may wish to allow characters the advantage of exceptional results when the dice would yield a critical result or a special success, and penalize the characters when the dice end up a fumble. The nature of this is up to the gamemaster, but the guidelines for these levels of success and failure are presented on the next page, following, and may be of use.

Special Skill Rolls

Special circumstances warrant special variations on the standard skill roll. These cases arise when two characters work together, work against each other, or attempt to do two things at once.

Cooperative Skill Rolls

Two or more characters can attempt to work together on an action, at the gamemaster's discretion. Whenever characters work together on an action, all of the characters involved should make a skill roll. The character actually utilizing the skill receives a 10% bonus to his or her skill rating for every helper who succeeds in his or her skill roll. Special or critical successes grant bonuses of 15 and 20% at the gamemaster's discretion, while fumbles incur a -10% penalty. If the helpers fail at an assisted skill roll, there is no bonus or penalty. The maximum bonus your character can receive from helpers is an amount equal to his or her own skill rating. The gamemaster may impose restrictions on how many characters can contribute to a particular activity, as it may be limited by physical or other practical concerns. Some tasks cannot be assisted, at the gamemaster's discretion.

One reason for cooperative skill use is to increase the chance of the primary character's success.

For example, your character has Research 75%, and an assistant has Research 40%. The assistant makes a successful Research roll to help your character. Now your character has an effective skill of 85%. This raises the chance of a special

Skill Results Table

The following table provides a quick reference for determining the thresholds for critical success, special success, and fumbles. The results for special successes incorporate the number range for critical successes. Whenever a die result is in the range of both a critical and special success, the results of the critical success (if appropriate) should be applied, not both of the results.

Base Chance	Critical	Special	Fumble
01-05	01	01	96-00
06-10	01	01-02	96-00
11-15	01	01-03	96-00
16-20	01	01-04	96-00
21-25	01-02	01-05	97-00
26-30	01-02	01-06	97-00
31-35	01-02	01-07	97-00
36-40	01-02	01-08	97-00
41-45	01-03	01-09	98-00
46-50	01-03	01-10	98-00
51-55	01-03	01-11	98-00
56-60	01-03	01-12	98-00
61-65	01-04	01-13	99-00
66-70	01-04	01-14	99-00
71-75	01-04	01-15	99-00
76-80	01-04	01-16	99-00
81-85	01-05	01-17	00
86-90	01-05	01-18	00
91-95	01-05	01-19	00
96-00	01-05	01-20	00
101-105	01-06	01-21	00
106-110	01-06	01-22	00
111-115	01-06	01-23	00
116-120	01-06	01-24	00
Each +5	Etc.	Etc.	00

success from 15% to 17%, a critical from 04% to 05%, and the fumble chance drops from 99-00% to just 00%.

Another reason for cooperative skill use is when direct assistance is not possible.

For example, your character (Pilot 25%) is at the controls of a small airplane, trying to land it after the pilot was shot in a hijacking attempt. An ally on the ground with Pilot 65% is in an air traffic control tower. Over the radio, he offers advice to your character on the situation, giving your character advice on piloting and landing. This ally makes a successful Pilot roll, raising your character's effective Pilot skill from 25% to 35%.

Opposed Skill Rolls

Sometimes the skills of two opposing characters are used in direct opposition to each other. *For example, your character hides in a thick hedge while attempting to break into an enemy outpost. An alert sentry passes by, searching for intruders. Will your character elude notice? In this case, the sentry's Sense skill is pitted against your character's Hide skill.*

In situations where two skill rolls are opposed, both characters roll against their respective skills. The character that achieves the highest degree of success wins the contest. However, if the loser's skill roll was successful, he or she can modify the winner's degree of success, shifting it downward one degree for every degree of success he or she achieves above failure. In the event that both parties achieve the same degree of success, the higher die roll wins the contest, giving the advantage to characters with higher skill ratings.

For example, your character's Hide skill is 65, while the sentry has a Sense skill of 78. You roll a 47, a success. The sentry rolls a 13, or a special success! The sentry wins the contest, so he or she is alerted to your character's presence. Your character's successful roll downgrades the sentry's result from a special success to a normal success. In this case, the gamemaster rules that the sentry catches a glimpse of your character, but does not pick out any of his or her identifying features. If the sentry had rolled a 30, your character would have eluded notice: both had successes, but your character's normal success beats the sentry's normal success when it comes to using Hide versus Sense.

Combined Skill Rolls

In some cases, your character's actions can be complicated by having to do two things at once. Trying to spot a tiny detail while driving a car, shooting a bow from horseback, or climbing a tree without making a sound are all examples. In such cases, the gamemaster can link two skills together in one roll, using the lower skill rating as the base chance. If the roll succeeds, your character accomplishes both tasks. A failed roll that is below the second skill rating can be treated as a partial success. Using the examples above, the driver might miss the detail but avoid a driving mishap, the horseman stays in the saddle but misses his shot, and the tree

climber reaches the upper branches but makes noise. If both rolls fail, the consequences can be more extreme.

Evaluating Success or Failure

Sometimes your character's efforts in performing an action can have very different results: a good toss at darts will hit the board, while a lucky or exceptional throw hits the bull's-eye. There are five degrees of success for any type of action roll. Ranked from worst to best, they are as follows:

Fumble

(roll > or equal to top 5% of the chance to fail)

Bad luck, incompetence, or Murphy's Law sometimes conspires to produce the worst possible result. Spectacular failures are called fumbles. The chance of fumbling an action roll equals 5% (1/20th) of the chance of failure.

For example, a base chance of 68 equals a 32% chance of failure (100-68=32). Action rolls against this number fumble on a roll of 99 or 00 (32/20=1.6, round up to 2; 99 and 00 total a 2% chance).

Fumbled actions never yield any beneficial results, and always end up impeding or harming your character (or his or her friends) through disastrous or unintended results. **Chapter Three: Skills** and **Chapter Six: Combat** contain more information about specific consequences of fumbled rolls.

Failure

(roll > target)

Die rolls that are higher than the base chance fail. Some failures cost your character nothing more than perhaps a little dignity, while others can be costly in terms of time, money, or physical damage. See **Chapter Three: Skills** for the consequences of failed rolls. Unless an action is deemed automatic, there should always be some chance of failure: no matter how high the modified base chance, action rolls fail on results of 96 or higher. This differs from resistance rolls, where usually a difference of 10 characteristic points is enough to make only a result of 00 a failure.

Success

(roll < or equal to target)

Any roll with a result in the upper 4/5 of the base chance qualifies as a success. Successes accomplish the action with average results. Weapons that hit in combat with a success inflict the listed damage dice, and other skills have the results described in **Chapter Three: Skills**.

OPTION

Opposed Skill Roll Systems

Previous versions of the *Basic Roleplaying* system have used other methods of handling opposed skill attempts. A gamemaster who dislikes the standard system can use one of these alternates instead, or use these as inspiration for an alternate system.

Opposed Skills Using Highest Successful Result

The easiest of the methods of attempting to adjudicate a case of opposed skills is to simply let everyone involved in the opposed check roll his or her chances for success as normal (any normal modifiers apply) and compare the results. The highest successful result rolled that is not a critical or special success is the winner. *For example, if two characters have the same skill rating of 87% and one rolls an 86 and the other rolls a 22, the roll of 86 is the winner. Both rolls are successful, but one of them had a higher result than the other.* Using this method, generally the higher a character's skill at an attempted action, the greater the chance he or she will defeat less skilled (but still successful) opponents. This is a departure from the standard "roll low" paradigm, but allows for quick reading of results. Using this method of determination, ties are resolved with comparing the raw unmodified skills, with the character with the higher skill level being the winner.

For example, your character's Hide skill is 65%, while the sentry has a Sense skill of 78%. Each rolls against their skill. Your character is successful with a roll of 47, and the sentry is also successful with a roll of 35. Neither roll is a critical or special success. Your character's roll is higher than the sentry's, so your character is successful in his or her attempt at Hiding.

This method can also be used to compare the results of two failures, with the higher of the two failing rolls doing worse. If one of the rolls is a fumble, that character has automatically done worse. If both of the rolls are fumbles, the character with the higher skill rating has done less badly than the other(s).

For example, your character and the sentry each roll abysmally in the skill attempts. Your character rolls a 94 while the sentry gets a result of 87. Both skill attempts are failures, and they manage to cancel each other out, though your character's roll indicates a more significant failure. He or she makes plenty of noise (perhaps attracting the notice of others, making some indelible trace of the intrusion, or breaking something significant in the process of sneaking around) while the sentry is distracted, but the sentry's result is not enough to warrant such extra circumstances of failure.

An alternate, but more math-heavy variant of this system is to make rolls as normal and then take the result of the successful roll and subtract it from the modified chance. This is a more cumbersome to do quickly unless you and the gamemaster are adept at and willing to do frequent subtraction of results. This system has the advantage of continuing the "roll low" paradigm. A cal-

culator and/or piece of scratch paper would be useful tools for this system.

For example, your character rolls a 47 on his or her Hide attempt with a skill of 65%. Subtracting this indicates a success of 18 ($65 - 47 = 18$). The sentry rolls 35 with his Sense skill of 78%. His success is a 43 ($78 - 35 = 43$), much higher than 18, so the sentry is the winner, and sees your character.

Opposed Skill Subtraction

In an opposed skill roll, the gamemaster designates one skill as the attacking skill and the other as the defending skill. The defending skill makes a skill roll; if the roll is successful, subtract the full value of the defending character's skill rating from the attacking skill. If the defending skill fails, the attacking skill is unmodified. A defending fumble turns the attacker's roll into an Easy action. If the defending skill is higher than the attacking skill, the attacker will still have a default 5% chance for success on any skill with a 5% or greater minimum rating.

For example, your character's Hide skill is 65%, while the sentry has a Sense skill of 78%. Your character rolls a 47, succeeding at his or her attempt to hide. After subtracting your character's Hide rating, the sentry has a modified Sense skill of 13% of finding his quarry. Even if circumstantial imposed penalties of 20% or more to the sentry's Sense, the sentry would still have a base 5% chance to notice your hidden character. The sentry rolls a 13, barely noticing your character.

If your character's Hide roll had fumbled, the sentry would almost certainly have found him or her: the sentry makes an Easy Sense attempt at a modified skill of 156%. Even if circumstantial imposed penalties of -20% or more to the sentry's Sense, the sentry would still have a base 5% chance to notice your character.

Opposed Skill Rolls Using the Resistance Table

As an alternative to the system detailed above, actions involving two opposing skills can be resolved using the resistance table. Divide the attacking and defending skill ratings by 5, rounding to the nearest whole number; and then resolve it as a single-roll contest on the resistance table.

For example, your character's Hide skill reduces to a passive value of 13 ($65 / 5 = 13$), while the sentry's Sense yields an active value of 16 ($78 / 5 = 15.6$, rounded up to 16). Comparing the two values on the resistance table, the sentry has a 65% chance of finding your character ($50 + 80 - 65 = 65$). Your character gets no skill roll. The sentry rolls a 13, easily noticing your character.

This method can generate very different results from the others, and denies the defending party any die roll at all. One means of offsetting this would be to allow the player to make the rolls whenever possible, with the non-player characters being the default "passive" role.

Special Success

(roll < or equal to 20% of target)

Some skill attempts are better than average, and yield extra benefits for your character. Actions achieve special success if the die roll is equal or less than 1/5 your character's skill rating. Round fractions using normal rounding.

For example, a roll against a skill rating of 68% yields a special success on a 14 or less ($68/5=13.6$, rounding up to 14).

In combat, an attack that scores a special success can inflict a knockdown or impale based on the type of weapon (see **Chapter Six: Combat** for additional detail), while the skill roll descriptions provide results for special successes. Refer to **Chapter Three: Skills** for detailed descriptions of these results.

Critical Success

(roll < or equal to 5% of target)

Sometimes your character will perform an action so well that the results are truly extraordinary. Rolls that are equal to or less than 1/20 of the skill rating are a critical success. Round fractions using normal rounding.

For example, a roll against a base chance of 68 yields a critical success on a 3 or less ($68/20=3.4$, rounded down to 3).

Critical successes yield the best of all possible results. Weapons that critically hit utterly bypass the target's armor and do maximum damage (plus the normally rolled damage modifier); while skill rolls may yield double the average results or other benefits. Refer to **Chapter Three: Skills** to see which skills qualify for critical successes, and suggested results.

OPTION

Skill Ratings Over 100%

Some versions of the *Basic Roleplaying* system allow PCs and non-player characters to have skills in excess of 100%. While this might seem like overkill ("How much better do you need to be than always successful?"), it allows for greater chances of critical results, special successes, and success even when significant negative modifiers have lowered the chance of success. Additionally, skill ratings over 100% can make determining opposed rolls much easier (see "Opposed Skill Rolls Systems" on page 173). Skill ratings over 100% are especially significant in combat, and are covered in that section. More details can be found in "Attack and Parry Skills Over 100%" on page 198.

Modifying Action Rolls

Some actions are easier or harder than others, and sometimes trying circumstances or lucky breaks help or hinder a character in the course of an adventure. The following systems provide guidelines for modifying the

skill chance of an action roll under extraordinary circumstances.

Action Difficulty

It is one thing to lift a heavy boulder, but quite another to heft it using only one hand. Some actions are so simple even an unskilled person will succeed without much effort, while others are difficult enough to give an expert pause. When the gamemaster deems that the action itself is more or less difficult than average (regardless of any other circumstances), the following difficulty levels can be used to modify the chance for skill, characteristic, or resistance rolls before the percentile roll is made. The gamemaster is the ultimate arbiter of whether an action is *Automatic*, *Easy*, *Average*, *Difficult*, or *Impossible*.

Automatic Actions

Anyone can walk across a room, see or hear, or communicate in his or her native tongue; as described above, no D100 roll is necessary for any action the gamemaster deems simple or routine. These actions are *Automatic*. Routine physical and intellectual actions attempted under mundane conditions always succeed. *For example, the gamemaster might say that it is an Automatic Search check to find your keys when they've been misplaced, on a normal day with plenty of time to search.* In this case, the only reason to bother defining this action is to determine the time spent performing the action. The gamemaster should allow characters to perform *Automatic* actions at reasonable levels of competency in their chosen professions without needing to roll each time they wish to succeed in a task—dice rolling for skills are at dramatic or difficult times, when success or failure is of importance to the character's survival or destiny. *Automatic* skill use never yields an experience check.

Easy Actions

Some actions are *Easy*, even for the untrained. Shooting a target at point blank range, climbing a tree with many handholds, or recalling the most fundamental points of an academic discipline are all *Easy* actions. For an *Easy* action, you can double the skill rating or resistance table value. *Easy* characteristic rolls use a multiplier of 10, or double the normal characteristic roll. However, characters succeeding at *Easy* skill rolls cannot use those rolls for experience checks. See "Experience" on page 182 for more details on this.

For example, if your character has a Ride skill of 25%, he or she will have a 50% Ride chance if attempting an Easy riding action.

Average Actions

Most actions fall within this category. If a skill or characteristic roll doesn't have a modifier before it (such as an *Easy* Listen roll), assumed to be *Average*. Use the

Fate Points

Sometimes, you and your gamemaster are not willing to let the results of a dice roll be the ultimate arbiter of your character's fate. If your gamemaster wishes to allow you more freedom and power about what happens after the dice hit the table, he or she may allow you to use power points as a resource to affect the results of dice rolls and the game itself. This can be the equivalent of a "get out of jail free" card, allowing you to break the rules in a limited fashion during the course of play, and potentially increasing your character's effectiveness as well as his or her chances of survival.

Your character can use his or her power points for something other than to simply fuel powers. Here are a few ways power points can affect game play other than as a power source:

- ❖ You can spend five power points to re-roll any percentile dice roll when the results are unfavorable. This can be declared after the initial roll is made, though the results of the second roll are considered final. You cannot re-roll a re-roll. Success in this re-roll does not count as a successful skill use for the purpose of gaining an experience check.
- ❖ You can spend five power points to ignore a skill and trust fate, using your Luck roll as if it were *Difficult* to determine the chance of success or failure, rather than the relevant skill. This can only be used for skills, not resistance or characteristic rolls, and cannot be re-rolled using the guideline presented above. This does not count as a successful skill use for the purpose of gaining an experience check, and cannot be used for increasing POW.
- ❖ You can ignore damage taken from a single attack at the cost of three power points per point of damage. This is the equivalent of armor, and any damage points thus absorbed are simply ignored; they do not count towards knockback or other effects. If this use of power points is allowed, the gamemaster should require you to make up an excuse for how the damage was shunted away, such as the old "bulletproof whiskey flask in the front pocket" or some other dramatic explanation.

Any use of power points in this manner are handled like any other power point expenditure, so if your character is reduced to 0 power points, he or she is exhausted and will faint until regaining a power point value of at least 1.

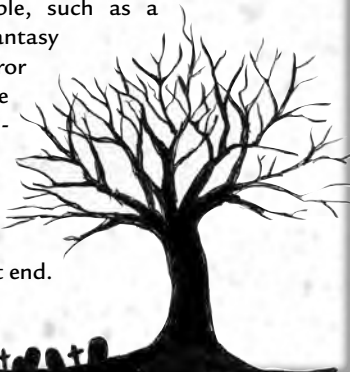
This is intentionally a basic system, and can be expanded as the gamemaster sees fit with some of the additional uses described here:

- ❖ You can spend six power points to shift the result of one dice roll you make towards a more beneficial result, such as turning a fumble into a failure, a failure into a normal success, a normal success into a special success, or a special success into a critical success. This can only be used on dice you roll for your character, and cannot be applied to dice that have been re-rolled. You do not need to declare a dice shift before the dice are rolled, and can

shift the result by as many categories as you have power points to spend. Use of power points to shift a skill roll result does not count as a successful skill roll, despite what the initial roll was, and cannot be used for an experience check.

- ❖ You can spend a number of power points equal to the entire damage range of your weapon to inflict maximum damage upon an opponent in a single successful strike. *For example, a short sword that does 1D6+1 damage normally would, at the cost of seven power points, do 7 points of damage (no roll required), plus the damage bonus if applicable.* This does not affect damage bonus, which is rolled normally.
- ❖ At the gamemaster's discretion, you can spend a variable number of power points to add some details to the surroundings, or to your character's background or resources. This can range from only a single power point for a tiny detail to 10 or more power points for a significant advantage. *For example, if your character 'remembers' to have brought a book of matches when it would be useful, this might only cost a single power point. However, a significant advantage such as finding a rusty but usable dagger in the pile of the bones of previous victims of a horrible monster after escaping weaponless from the its pit might cost a number of power points equal to the dagger's damage total (in this case, 5 points).* Other costs are variable and should be based on the gamemaster's discretion, such as having a contact in a city that owes your character a favor (1-3 power points, depending on the size of the favor), or being able to find clean clothing unattended hanging on a line (1 or 2 power points), or even finding the keys of a car badly hidden under the floor-mat when your character needs a set of wheels in a hurry (10 power points).

As a note to the gamemaster, this system has not appeared in any previous editions of the *Basic Roleplaying* system. It is presented here as an optional rule set to allow greater player control over dice results, potentially making player characters more able to survive calamity and setback. Rather than create another attribute or resource, this system uses power points as its basis, allowing characters without powers to have a use for their reserve of power points, and also limiting the number of additional resources to keep track of. The gamemaster should only use this system if he or she wants to create a more action-oriented, high-adventure game where players are more durable, such as a super-heroic or high fantasy setting. A traditional horror setting should not utilize this system, as a key component of horror is the inability to control destiny, and a means of controlling fate is counterproductive to that end.



base skill or target rating, for *Average* actions. *Average* characteristic rolls use a multiplier of 5.

Difficult Actions

Fighting an opponent you can't see, climbing a sheer surface, or remembering obscure scientific minutiae are all *Difficult* tasks. To determine the skill rating or characteristic rating for a *Difficult* action, divide the appropriate skill or characteristic roll in half, rounding fractions up.

For example, if your character has a Jump skill of 50%, he or she would have a modified skill rating of 25% if the ledge he or she leaps for is only inches wide and the gamemaster announces that the attempt will be Difficult.

Impossible Actions

As described above, truly overwhelming tasks, like performing heart surgery without medical training, performing first aid on a mummy, or building a computer out of coconuts, are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. These are *Impossible* tasks. All attempts fail, no matter how well the player rolls. As noted with some skill and characteristic rolls above, the gamemaster may allow a flat 01% chance of success, depending on the action being attempted, though it is only suggested if the chance of success is within reason, however improbable.

Any temporary modifiers to skills, such as described in "Circumstantial Modifiers" (following), are applied after a skill is modified due to being *Difficult* or *Easy*. This way, the modifiers are not doubled or halved. However, any modifiers that are "permanent", such as the bonus to the Brawl skill from the Unarmed Combat power (on page 167), are figured into the skill total before it is doubled or halved. These sorts of modifiers are considered integral to the skill and are modified for difficulty along with the rest of the skill percentage.

Circumstantial Action Modifiers

At the gamemaster's discretion, circumstances can affect any skill rating for better or worse. Dim light, loud noises, distractions, rain, or a lack of proper tools provide penalties to skill ratings, while exceptional tools or ideal conditions might provide a bonus. Whenever external factors might affect your character's performance of an action, the gamemaster should weigh the circumstances and apply one or more modifiers to the base chance.

Minor circumstances impose a modifier of 5 or 10%, moderate circumstances modify base chances between 15 or 20%, while extreme conditions impose modifiers of 25 or 30%. If several conditions apply to a given action, consider them all when judging the severity of the circumstantial modifier. Circumstantial

modifiers should be applied after the base chance has already been adjusted based upon action difficulty, as described above. As a rule of thumb, if circumstantial modifiers would modify a base chance up or down by more than 30%, shift the difficulty of the roll up or down one level instead.

Some examples of circumstantial modifiers could include:

- ❖ **Rain or drizzle makes the flooring slick:** -5% to a physical action.
- ❖ **Loud noises or distractions:** -10% to Sense rolls or skills requiring concentration.
- ❖ **Poor or inadequate tools or weapon:** -5 to -15% to any skill that requires them, depending on how poor and unreliable to tool or weapon is.
- ❖ **Poor lighting:** -10% to any skill requiring sight. Total dark makes all actions difficult.
- ❖ **Fatigue:** -5% for being winded, -10 % for having been up all night, -25% for total exhaustion.
- ❖ **Ideal lighting (shooting a silhouetted target):** +10% for missile or firearm attacks.
- ❖ **Ideal conditions (hiding in dense foliage):** +10% for appropriate skills.
- ❖ **Superior tools or weapon:** +5 to +15% to any skill that requires them, depending on the quality of the weapon or tool, or completeness of the tools required.

Take care not to get bogged down in the minutiae of determining circumstantial modifiers. The gamemaster should assess the severity of circumstances, call for a single appropriate modifier, and move on to the action roll as quickly as possible. Circumstantial modifiers are intended to be dramatic tools that add drama to tense situations, not strict guidelines that attempt to simulate absolute realism.

Remember to apply circumstantial modifiers *after* any action difficulty multipliers have been applied, not before. Circumstantial modifiers should not be divided or doubled, and should be applied to the final skill rating or characteristic roll.

Time Scales

In-game time is usually not equivalent to time actually spent playing. Sometimes, the gamemaster may need to summarize the events of many days in a single sentence, such as "*It takes you a week to reach Constantinople,*" while at other times, particularly during combat, the actions of only a few seconds of time can take several minutes or longer to resolve. Following are the principal distinctions of game time, with descriptions of how each is utilized by the gamemaster and players during the course of play.

Narrative Time

This is the most nebulous of the time scales, due to its flexibility. It is the period of time when the gamemaster may be narrating to the players, or when you and the other players are out of character discussing your plans and the situation your characters are in. Most game play occurs in narrative scale. Unless there is a specific reason for it, most actual roleplaying takes place in the narrative time scale as well. When you and the gamemaster are roleplaying conversations, the narrative time scale most closely resembles real time, where a conversation takes as long to have as it takes to play.

If the game session includes lengthy travel, or periods of activity where exact time is not of the essence, then time is compressed greatly to a few moments of game time, generally unobserved outside of the gamemaster's narration. If large amounts of time are being dealt with in this fashion, the gamemaster should allow for the player characters to perform any activities that could fit into this time-frame, within reason. If the player characters are free to act during these shifts in time, the gamemaster should ask you to account for your character's activities during this downtime.

Scene

This is another general term describing a section of the adventure that takes place in a limited location and timeframe. A scene is an encounter or an instance of story time, where the players begin and end an activity. Scenes can be long or quite short, depending on how much happens.

Essentially, a scene begins when it is important to pay attention to combat or roleplaying (leaving narrative time), and ends when the players re-enter narrative time. Some or all of a scene can be measured in narrative time, game turns, and combat rounds (described below), or any combination of one or more of the three. Most scenes contain narrative time, while some do not necessarily need to contain game turns or combat rounds. Some scenes, however, might be nothing but combat rounds and/or game turns. For an analogy from films, a scene is one change of locale or time shift: a scene lasts from fade in to fade out.

For example, you and the other player characters break into the office of a crooked sheriff. You announce this to the gamemaster, and the gamemaster begins with your characters attempting to pick the lock. Your characters get inside, and fight a deputy inside, subduing him. Your characters then search the place for evidence that will free a wrongfully convicted friend, and escape stealthily. From the point of your arrival to the office to the point you leave is a scene. It contains game turns (picking the lock), combat rounds (fighting the deputy), narrative time (roleplaying through questioning the deputy), more game time

Significant Time Intervals

Following are useful examples of significant measures of time:

ATTEMPTING A COMBAT SKILL: 1 combat round or less.

ATTEMPTING A COMMUNICATION SKILL: 1–5 game minutes or several game hours, depending on the specific skill.

ATTEMPTING A MANIPULATION SKILL: 1–5 minutes to 10 game days, depending on the specific skill.

ATTEMPTING A MENTAL SKILL: 1–5 minutes to several hours, depending on the specific skill.

ATTEMPTING A PERCEPTION SKILL: 1 combat round to several hours, depending on the specific skill.

ATTEMPTING A PHYSICAL SKILL: 1 combat round to several Game Turns, depending on the specific skill.

COMBAT ROUND: 12 seconds.

EXPERIENCE ROLLS: 1 game week or more, at the gamemaster's discretion.

GAME TURN: 5 minutes, or 25 combat rounds.

NARRATIVE TIME: variable, time spent roleplaying or describing actions.

REGENERATE 1 FATIGUE POINT: 1 minute (5 combat rounds) of inactivity.

REGENERATE ALL FATIGUE POINTS: 10 minutes of rest and inactivity.

REGENERATE 1D3 HIT POINTS: 1 game week (7 days).

REGENERATE ALL POWER POINTS: 1 game day (24 hours, or an equivalent).

REGENERATE 1 POWER POINT AFTER REACHING ZERO: 1 power point per hour of sleep, and 1 per two hours awake.

SCENE: variable, can include narrative time, game turns, and combat rounds.

TRAINING ROLL, COMBAT SKILLS: approximately 3 game weeks.

TRAINING ROLL, NON-COMBAT SKILLS: approximately 12 game weeks or less, at the gamemaster's discretion.

TRAVEL TIME: it is assumed that characters can travel 10 hours of time without significant difficulty, this varies with method of travel and other circumstances.

TURN: see Game Turn, above.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS: usually around 1 hour except for special circumstances, depending on origin.

(using skill rolls to search the office), and narrative time to deal with the unobstructed escape.

Turns

Scenario time is measured in turns. Each turn equals five minutes (25 combat rounds). This interval is used for general movement when there is no conflict or other event that must be handled on a minute-by-minute basis. It is also a general measure for how long certain activities will take, particularly actions that are not during combat, such as picking a lock or finding a book in a library. In these cases, the gamemaster may rule that a certain task takes a number of turns to complete. **Chapter Three: Skills** discusses how long skill attempts take to complete.

Combat Round

The primary use for the combat round is obviously during combat sequences. A combat round consists of 12 seconds of fast-paced activity. When in combat (or other circumstances requiring specific determination of the order of activity), combat rounds are used. Combat rounds are repeated until the combat (and any related actions) have been completed and there is no more need for them. Usually, a character gets one active (offensive) action and one defensive action in a combat round. During a combat round, if your character does nothing else, he or she can move about 30 meters and still be able to watch what is going on nearby, parry incoming blows, and react to emergencies. See **Chapter Six: Combat** for more detail on actions allowed during combat.

The section on "Time and Movement" (following) provides more information about how fast characters can move during the different scales of game time. Other creatures move faster or slower during a combat round. Their exact speeds are provided in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**.

Skill Time

Following are some examples of the typical amount of game time required to perform a single use of the skill. Actual extent varies widely during the course of play, and the skill descriptions provided in **Chapter Three: Skills** may indicate more specific durations. Sustained skills (those that can take a variable amount of time) are listed in each appropriate time category.

A Few Seconds to a Combat Round: Most attacks and parries, Artillery, Brawl, Dodge, Drive, First Aid, Heavy Machine, Hide, Jump, Listen, Pilot, Ride, Sense, Shield, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Stealth, Swim, Throw, some characteristic rolls.

1–5 Minutes: Appraise, Art, Artillery, Bargain, Climb, Command, Demolition, Drive, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, First Aid, Fly, Gaming, Insight, Heavy Machine, Hide, Knowledge, Language, Listen, Literacy, Medicine, Navigate, Perform, Persuade, Pilot, Repair, Ride, Sense, Stealth, Strategy, Swim, Technical Skill, Track, some characteristic rolls.

5–30 Minutes: Appraise, Art, Bargain, Climb, Command, Craft, Demolition, Disguise, Etiquette, Knowledge, Language, Medicine, Navigate, Perform, Ride, Science, Sense, Status, Strategy, Swim, Teach, Technical Skill, Track, some characteristic rolls.

30–60 Minutes: Appraise, Art, Climb, Command, Craft, Demolition, Drive, Etiquette, Fine Manipulation, Fly, Heavy Machine, Knowledge, Language, Medicine, Navigate, Perform, Persuade, Pilot, Psychotherapy, Repair, Research, Ride, Science, Status, Strategy, Swim, Teach, Technical Skill, Track.

One Hour to Many Days: Art, Craft, Psychotherapy, Repair, Research, Strategy, Teach, Technical Skill. For research or study for some very special or important task, the gamemaster may require multiple successful skill rolls.

Time and Movement

It is often important to know precisely how far your character can travel in a game month, a week, a day, an hour, a turn, and most importantly, a combat round. Movement is classified into three categories: combat round movement, local movement, and regional movement.

Combat round movement is relatively concrete. It is simply the amount of time your character can move in 12 seconds of game time. Combat round movement rates are described on the chart nearby and are rarely variable.

Local movement is the amount of time it takes for your character to move from one place to another, and this is most likely best represented by the *Turn* and *Hour* movement rates from the chart nearby. This amount of movement is used to describe how long it takes to get across town; or from upstairs to downstairs of a high building.

Regional movement is movement from one distinct area to another, and is usually abstracted and handled through narration rather than actual game play. Generally, any amount of movement requiring more than an hour is best handled in regional movement. Sometimes it is important to determine exactly how much time regional movement takes: for this purpose

OPTION

Encumbrance

Encumbrance is the measure of how much weight your character can carry. If your character is unencumbered, he or she can move faster and will lose fatigue points more slowly. If your character is over-encumbered, he or she is slowed down and loses fatigue points faster. Encumbrance is measured in encumbrance points (ENC).

Things

Any item which can be held easily in one hand (a sword, an axe, a pistol, a shield, a rock, a rope, etc.) is considered to be a "thing." Most such one-handed items have a weight of one or two ENC. Though they may have very different weights, they take up the same amount of space on your character, and are about the same difficulty to handle. Every item has an ENC value, measured more by how difficult it is to handle, rather than by its true weight. *For example, most two-handed weapons (spears, bows and arrows, etc.) are considered to weigh 3 to 4 ENC, no matter what their actual weight.*

In many cases, you can use the SIZ of an item as its ENC if it does not have a ENC value attributed to it. **Chapter Eight: Equipment** lists the ENC of all weapons, armor, and shields, and provides the SIZ values of many other commonplace objects.

How Much Is An ENC?

For general purposes, one ENC point equals one kilogram. In human scale, one ENC is generally equal to up

to 1 SIZ point. More accurately, 1 ENC is equal to 1/6 of a SIZ point. On the resistance table, your character has a 50% chance of lifting ENC of up to his or her STR x 6. While he or she could probably lift much more than this, ENC really measures how much he or she can do with the weight lifted, such as being able to carry it for a while and still function normally. Your character cannot carry an amount of ENC equal to his or her STR x 6 for very long and still be able to fight, climb, or run.

The gamemaster may decide that some items have a higher ENC value than their weight indicates. This represents awkwardness in handling the particular item, such as additional SIZ or bulk.

Non-Human Encumbrance

To determine the effects of ENC on any animals larger than human (SIZ 20 or more) with more than two legs, refer to the "Size Comparison Chart" on page 26. Find the SIZ equal to the creature's STR on the chart, then divide the kilograms beside the number by 3. The result is the number of fatigue points the creature will lose each turn while carrying the ENC in weight. For creatures larger than human with only two legs, divide the equivalent weight in kilograms by 6.

Consequences of Encumbrance for Dodging

Your character may Dodge at his or her full value minus 1% per point of ENC carried. Armor encumbrance is not included in Dodge penalty calculations as this is already factored into the armor's Skill Modifier (see Armor Table on page 259).

there is a *Days* column on the "Movement Rate Table" nearby.

The movement rate table includes many popular modes of travel, with additional detail being provided in the vehicles section of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. The following movement rates for these vehicles are extremely general—for specific movement speeds consult the relevant equipment entry.

For reference; a combat round is 12 seconds long; a turn is 5 minutes; an hour is 12 turns; and a game day is assumed to involve 10 hours of travel. Based on player actions (riding hard and taking few rests, for example), the gamemaster can base most other durations of time on these guidelines.

These estimates are not exact, with any looseness attributable to things like brief stops for rest, variances in movement rates due to terrain or other factors, or even breaks for rest or sustenance. Some values have been rounded for gamemaster convenience, and obviously, some are speculative or achievable only under ideal conditions. These values are also representative of the vehicle traveling at the full speed during the entire duration—the gamemaster

may wish to alter the speeds upwards or downwards for alternate modes, such as takeoff, slowing for landing, atmospheric flight for spaceships, etc.

Combat Round Movement

Characters have a movement rate (MOV) of 10 units per combat round. A unit can represent several to 10 meters, depending on the situation. If the gamemaster needs an exact measurement, he or she might use 3 meters per unit, but the relative distance between combatants is usually more important than their literal distance.

Ten units represent the maximum sustainable rate of movement for a normal human being. Other creatures will have different MOV rates, as described in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**. When distance and rate become important, the gamemaster can provide a specific measurement, but should try to answer such questions in game terms, such as "*It takes you two combat rounds to get there.*"

The gamemaster can also lower your characters' MOV attribute temporarily based on circumstances,

such as being overburdened, fatigued, cautious movement, etc. "Terrain and Weather Modifiers" (nearby) presents guidelines for how movement might be affected by these factors. The spot rules for "Chases" on pages 216-217 provide information on handling situations where one being pursues another.

The following rates of movement are approximate and generalized. Each of them also involves a 10-hour travel day. Vehicles with crews working in shifts, or manned by beings that do not get tired and need to take breaks, can travel 24 hours uninterrupted.

To get a movement rate for a mode of transport not listed, determine the movement rate for that mode for a combat round. Once you have that value, it can be used to determine the rest of the movement rates:

- ❖ Multiply a combat round movement rate by 25 for a turn.

- ❖ Multiply a turn movement rate by 12 for an hour.
- ❖ Multiply an hourly movement rate by 10 for a day.
- ❖ Multiply an hourly movement rate by 24 for an uninterrupted day of travel.

Terrain and Weather Modifiers

The above travel rates assume reasonable road or trail conditions. The following modifiers apply to unusual or differing types of terrain. Powered vehicles may be exempt from some of these modifiers, with common sense and the gamemaster being final arbiters. Rain does not unduly slow cars, while thick snow does.

- ❖ Unless bridged or fordable, a major river takes an entire day to cross. A minor river reduces movement by a negligible amount to 1/3.

- ❖ Unless on roads or trails, crossing through a forest reduces land travel rates by 1/3.

- ❖ For rolling hills, reduce movement rate by 1/3.

- ❖ For deserts, reduce by 1/3.

- ❖ For heavy storms, reduce by 1/2 to 4/5, depending on the severity of the storm. Air vehicles are only reduced by 1/5 their normal speed, though many fly above storms, and are unaffected.

- ❖ For mountains, reduce by 2/3.

- ❖ For marshes and swamps, reduce movement by 2/3.

- ❖ For ice and snow, reduce movement by 4/5, but sleighs or skis might reduce it to only 1/3.

- ❖ Heavy fog reduces the movement of most human-guided vehicles to 2/3, but does not affect walking or riding speeds.

- ❖ Travel on a river is 1/2 the speed of open water.

- ❖ At night, a ship's speed is 1/4 the daytime speed.

These modifiers accumulate, but are applied separately in order of severity rather than added together. When the reductions differ, such as 2/3 and 1/3, apply the more severe movement penalty first, then the second and subsequent penalties. They should never be added together, as this will potentially eliminate the movement rate altogether.

Movement Rates

Rate	Combat Round	Turn	Hour	Day
Walking	10 meters	250 meters	3 kilometers	30 kilometers
Marching, forced*	12 meters	300 meters	3.6 km	36 km
Running, normally**	30 meters	750 meters	9 km	90 km
Running, sprinting**	50 meters	1,250 meters	15 km	150 km
Swimming	5 meters	125 meters	1.5 km	15 km
Riding, walking speed	12 meters	300 meters	3.6 km	36 km
Riding, gallop*	60 meters	1.5 km	18 km	180 km
Land vehicle, drawn	10 meters	250 meters	3 km	30 km
Land vehicle, vintage	200 meters	5 km	60 km	600 km
Land vehicle, modern	400 meters	10 km	120 km	1,200 km
Land vehicle, future	1.2 km	30 km	360 km	3,600 km
Boat, small rowed	40 meters	1 km	12 km	120 km
Ship, ancient rowed	10 meters	250 meters	3 km	30 km
Ship, vintage sailing	20 meters	500 meters	6 km	60 km
Ship, modern cruise	200 meters	5 km	60 km	600 km
Ship, future	600 meters	15 km	180 km	1,800 km
Train, steam engine	200 meters	5 km	60 km	600 km
Train, bullet	1.1 km	27.5 km	330 km	3,300 km
Train, mag-lev	1.6 km	40 km	480 km	4,800 km
Air vehicle, dirigible	400 meters	10 km	120 km	1,200 km
Air vehicle, propeller	600 meters	15 km	180 km	1,800 km
Air vehicle, jet	3.25 km	81.25 km	975 km	9,750 km
Air vehicle, future	1.75 km	43.75 km	525 km	5,250 km
Space vehicle, modern	100 km	2,500 km	30,000 km	300,000 km
Space vehicle, future	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies

* **Optional Rule – Fatigue Points:** Each of these speeds of travel costs a fatigue point per game hour, and requires a daily Stamina roll or your character loses a hit point daily. If your character is mounted, both mount and rider lose the hit point.

** **Optional Rule – Fatigue Points:** Running costs 1 fatigue point per game turn, and requires a successful hourly Stamina roll or your character loses a hit point each hour. "Fatigue Points" on page 32 covers this in more detail.

For example, riding horseback through forested mountains reduces your character to 2/3 normal movement rate for mountains. Thus, 36 kilometers of normal horseback movement rate is reduced 12 kilometers per day. This total is then reduced again by another 1/3 for the forest terrain, ending up at around 8 kilometers per day of travel.

Character Improvement

There are a number of ways in which your character's skills and characteristics can improve during the course of play. These can be raised through training and research, and can even improve through successful use in hazardous situations.

Skill Improvement

Successful use of a skill indicates that your character might be able to improve his or her ability in that skill. An experience roll made at the end of the adventure determines whether or not actual improvement has been realized.

Whenever your character successfully uses a skill and the gamemaster agrees that the success is worth an experience roll, you should place a checkmark in the small box next to that skill on your character sheet. If a skill roll was *Easy*, no experience roll is allowed. If there is no box next to the skill percentile, then the skill cannot be increased through normal experience. This checkmark is called an *experience check*. An experience check for a particular skill is made only once per adventure, no matter how many times the skill is successfully used. Skills used before an adventure starts, such as Status rolls to determine initial equipment during character creation, are not eligible for experience checks.

In addition to earning experience checks through successful rolls, the gamemaster may tell you that your character automatically earned a check in the experience box, usually through significant exposure to the skill being used successfully.

For example, your character spends a week in Moscow, living day to day in the city and attempting to speak with a number of Russians, few of whom speak fluent English. Though your character has a phrasebook and a guide, he or she frequently needs to communicate and does so, though the course of each conversation is not role-played out. At the end of the week, the gamemaster tells you that your character has earned an experience check in Other Language (Russian). Later, you can see if your character improves in the skill.

The outcome of an action or situation cannot remove an experience check.

For example, if your character successfully makes a Hide roll and is then found with a Sense roll, you can still put a check on your character sheet for a successful Hide.

The gamemaster should allow experience checks whenever skills are successfully used in stressful situations. An attack against a helpless target is not a stressful situation and does not deserve an experience check. Likewise, taking an hour to pick a lock (using the Fine Manipulation skill) is not a stressful situation—but doing the same task in one combat round, as guards approach, is a stressful situation, and deserves a check.

What Does “After An Adventure” Mean?

The gamemaster determines when experience checks are made; generally allowing them after the characters have had quiet time to ponder recent events. This is conveniently judged to be a game week or so, but may be more or less than a week. During a long evening's play the characters may earn several moments where they can see if their skills improve. A gamemaster may disallow experience rolls if this reflective time is interrupted by another adventure, but character growth and learning is an important element of *Basic Roleplaying*, and should be encouraged. In fast and loose campaigns, gamemasters may allow for skill improvement at the end of each session instead of the end of an adventure, if that better fits the style of the genre.

If enough time has passed, you may make an experience roll for each experience check on your character sheet. Only skills that have experience check boxes next to them can be increased in this manner.

Making an Experience Roll

The experience roll is a normal percentage die roll. If the result of an experience roll is higher than the character's current skill percentage, then the experience roll succeeds. Your character's experience bonus adds 1/2 of your character's INT to the actual dice roll when determining whether the experience roll succeeded, but this value is not added to the actual skill points gained. See “Experience Bonus” on page 30 for details.

Increasing Skills by Experience

Add 1D6 percentiles to a skill after a successful experience roll. The result of experience varies—your character may learn much from one incident and little from another, no matter how successfully he or she performed either time. Based on the level of the campaign, the gamemaster may increase the experience roll to 1D8 or

OPTION

Aging and Inaction

Older people get wiser and more experienced (as measured by skill increases), but their physical abilities may decrease. Step Eight of character creation on page 24 covers the loss of characteristics after the age of 40 in a superficial fashion. The rules provided here are alternatives to that rudimentary system, taking the control of degeneration out of your hands and making them random and unpredictable. The gamemaster should determine whether to use these rules or the basic rules provided in character creation before allowing you to create characters over 40 years of age.

To simulate the degeneration of age, after your character has reached the age of 40, each year, on your character's birthday (or at the end of the year, at the gamemaster's discretion) you must roll 2D6 on the following table to determine how many rolls on the tables to the right.

After determining the points lost, you should roll 1D10 for each point lost. If the second roll equals "No loss", your character does not lose that characteristic point. "Doubles" for a characteristic are combined, so losses might be -2, -3, etc.

If a characteristic is lowered to 0, your character dies, even if the characteristic is APP. It's possible for your character to simply "ugly away"—this represents general deterioration and aging. INT does not decrease with aging. It is assumed that senility or diseases such as Alzheimer's will damage a character's raw INT, but it is better for the gamemaster to make this decision, rather than leaving it to a random roll. It is recommended that your character not suffer from this debilitation. POW and EDU similarly do not decrease with aging, as POW remains a spiritual attribute and often increases with age, while EDU actually increases.

For every 10 years of game or between-game time since your character is created, you should increase the character's EDU characteristic by 1 to represent experience learned through general living. This modifies the Knowledge roll (EDU x 5) but does not affect overall

skill points or any skills based on EDU. If the time is spent in some fashion where your character does not interact with the outside world (imprisoned, cryogenically frozen, a magical trance, etc.) the EDU characteristic is not modified.

At the gamemaster's discretion, if your character does not train or participate in any adventures in a game year, he or she may incur the same penalty as that for aging. The gamemaster may decide that inactive characters over 40 may be ruled to doubly risk their characteristics. Depending on the setting, your character may also be exempt from the aging rolls. These rules assume human characters with life spans of roughly 80-100 years. If your character takes exceptional care of him- or herself, or has access to sources of longevity (exceptional medicines, longevity treatments, magic potions, etc.), he or she can disregard these rules, at the gamemaster's discretion. Alien or other nonhuman creatures may experience the effects from aging and inaction differently: later, earlier, not at all, or may have different effects other than characteristic degradation.

Lose this many points . . .

2D6	Points Lost
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1
6-8	No loss.
9	1
10	2
11	3
12	4

From these characteristics:

1D10	Characteristic
1-2	-1 STR
3-4	-1 CON
5-6	-1 DEX
7-8	-1 APP
9-10	No loss

even 1D10, though this will generally mean meteoric increases in skill percentiles for characters.

If you do not feel lucky rolling randomly for a skill increase, you can choose to add a default of 3 percentiles to your character's skill without making the 1D6 increase roll. This option must be announced before attempting the skill increase roll, and cannot be chosen if the roll is below 3. Similarly, if the die for skill increases is higher than D6, increase this base amount—for a D8, the amount should be 4 skill percentiles, and for D10, the default increase is 5 skill percentiles. The rule of thumb is 1/2 the die's total value.

Exceeding 100% in a Skill

Your character may improve his or her skills beyond 100%. The effects of such increase is mainly in improving critical and special success chances, but certain skills provide special benefits for someone over 100% in them. The optional rules for "Skills Over 100%" on page 175 cover this in depth.

Except for certain knowledge skills, only successful experience rolls can increase skills beyond 100%. The system for the experience roll changes once the threshold of 100 is reached. If your character is 100% or better in a skill, you must roll over 100 on D100 in order for your character to succeed at an experience roll.

Remember that your experience modifier can boost the D100 result to over 100. This rule applies at any time, no matter how much over 100% the skill has risen.

Skill Training

Though often the best teacher, experience is not the only teacher. Instruction from masters of a skill can also increase your character's ability with a skill, or decrease it. Your character can train to improve a skill by getting instruction in it from another character with a higher percentage in the same skill. This other character can belong to another player but is usually a non-player character. Each skill takes a different sort of teacher and costs different amounts of time and money to learn. Training to high ability can be costly in time and money.

Skill Training Increases and Decreases

At the end of the training session, the gamemaster should have the teacher make a Teach skill roll (as described on page 82 of **Chapter Three: Skills**). As the student, your character does not need to make an experience roll—completion of a unit of training always allows a skill increase roll. Following is a summary of the results of the teacher's skill roll:

A **FUMBLE** indicates that your character can possibly lose 1D2 skill points from the relevant skill—your character must make a successful Idea roll ($\text{INT} \times 5$) to avoid this loss. No benefit is gained to the skill in any case.

A **FAILURE** indicates no skill improvement.

A **SUCCESS** indicates your character gains 1D6-2 points in the skill being studied. The maximum increase possible is 4 percentiles, and there is a chance that your character will learn nothing ($2 - 2 = 0$) or even lose ground ($1 - 2 = -1$). You can instead choose to add 2 percentiles to your character's skill, instead of a die roll. However, this choice must be made before you roll 1D6-2 for skill increase after training and after you have allowed the skill increase roll.

A **SPECIAL SUCCESS** indicates that your character learns 1D6 points in the skill being studied. You may instead choose to add 3 skill points instead of rolling, though this choice must be made before the skill point die is rolled.

A **CRITICAL SUCCESS** indicates that your character learns 1D6+2 points in the relevant skill, or you may opt to instead choose to automatically add 5 skill points rather than rolling randomly. This choice must be made before the skill point die is rolled.

The gamemaster may choose to use a different die roll to indicate better or worse training opportunities, or even choose to automatically grant a fixed skill increase based on factors appropriate to the setting, such as auto-

mated memory downloads of selected skills, mind reading, etc.

For example, if your character spends a month working at a garage, observing, listening, and learning from the mechanics, the gamemaster may announce that this is worth an experience roll of 2D10 points in Mechanical Repair. In a futuristic setting, a neural skill download might simply grant +20% in the relevant skill if your character succeeds in an Idea roll to make sense of it all.

Limits of Skill Training

Your character can train indefinitely in selected skills, relying on the law of averages to eventually boost his or her skills over 100%. This way your character can improve without much risk, though the privilege would be expensive in time and money. Training a skill to 100% or more is possible only for skills on the character sheet which have no experience checkbox: they are academic and informational in nature (your character either has or doesn't know the information). These skills can only be learned through training and research.

Mastery in most skills requires actual experience outside of the "classroom". Any skill listed on the character sheet with an experience check box has a training limit of 75%. Any increase above this threshold must come through successful use of the skill in challenging situations, such as in the course of adventure.

Required Skill Training Time

To learn the additional 1D6-2 percentiles of a skill, your character must train for hours equal in amount to his current percentage ability with the skill. An average character has 50 hours of time per week available for training. Your character may divide this time among as many courses of instruction as he or she wishes, at your discretion. Depending on your character's profession or current circumstance, this may be greater or lower—you and the gamemaster should determine how much time is actually available if this default value is not acceptable. More than double this amount is grueling, and you may rule that such extended studying hours are counterproductive, or have negative effects on other skills.

Skill Training Costs

In most circumstances, a teacher must be paid in some fashion, or he or she will not be willing to teach. Payment can be in money, goods, favors from the character or his or her patrons, or in any other item or service satisfactory to the instructor. There can also be a wide range of teachers—from college professors to instructional holographic tutors. This section assumes an independent instructor, but the gamemaster may allow for such widely varied teachers.

On a full-time basis, a single teacher can train 16 students in the 01-25% skill percentile range, eight stu-

dents in the 26–50% skill range, four students in the 51–75% skill range, or two in the 76–100% skill percentile range. In return, those students (or some other benefactor or organization) must pay the teacher his or her normal living expenses, at the very least. *For example, the training expenses are split between 16 students for 01–25% training, eight students for 26–50% training, etc.* If enough students aren't available for a normal class, the remaining students must make up the difference. As your character's skill improves, he or she must pay more per hour—the teaching must be more personalized and individual.

The exact costs of training are not provided, as they vary tremendously by setting. However, the teacher profession (described in “Professions” on page 42) is listed as having a wealth level of Average to Affluent, with Average being more common. The teacher should then charge whatever appropriate amount allows for that wealth level or sustenance, perhaps modified by the teacher's Teach skill level. If the teacher likes lavish living, he or she will charge lavish prices to get it. You should understand that the teacher is teaching in order to maintain a standard of living. Teaching must support a teacher in the style to which he or she has become accustomed, or the teacher will find something else to do if able. If the teacher is the only one available who can teach a popular skill, he or she has no competition and may raise prices to take advantage of this exclusivity. Furthermore, popular and especially good teachers may be in high demand, and could have lengthy waits before admitting prospective students.

It may be even possible that a suitable teacher is coerced in some fashion, and is not being paid for his or her efforts. In such cases, the gamemaster should double the amount of time it takes for such a teacher to teach students—a threat is a poor motivator, and more likely than not, the teacher will attempt to mislead or even teach erroneous information to students, or plot against students. This is subject to the gamemaster's interpretation, but a teacher can easily reduce his or her Teach skill voluntarily to prevent knowledge from being passed to students. Such a teacher may even wish to automatically fumble such a roll, causing skill loss among his or her students.

Still other teachers, like the aforementioned instructional holographic tutor, may not require payment, and their efforts do not need to be rewarded. They may also possibly be duplicated, providing instructions to greater numbers of students simultaneously. This is up to the gamemaster and should be based on the setting and resources available to your character.

Researching Skill Increases

Any skill that can be increased through training can also be increased through research. Research is best

described as either self-help or self-tutoring. Knowledge skills are researched by delving into ancient tomes, wandering about the countryside observing, spending time scouring databases, utilizing instructional software, etc. Agility skills are researched by practicing the skills without benefit of instructor, perhaps in a gymnasium. Or this can be explained by your character spending time in a holographic dojo or high-tech training facility where muscle memory is directly programmed into him or her at a genetic or neuromuscular level. Other skill types are learned in equally appropriate ranges of activity. In most settings, some form of research is possible for any trainable skill.

Dedicated research takes exactly the same time to accomplish as training, though it does not incur the same costs as it is entirely provided by your character, and the only costs are research materials or access to appropriate facilities. You should determine this based on the setting and the type of training being undertaken—and can vary by any number of factors specific to the setting.

The gamemaster may require additional rolls during the course of research—appropriate skills required might be Language, Literacy, and most likely Research. Your character may even need to make a successful roll in the very skill being researched, to find relevant resources and to be pointed in the right direction. Unless these skills are being performed during challenging or hazardous circumstances, it is recommended that no experience checks be allowed for skills utilized while researching other skills.

Successful Skill Research

By definition, your character has no source of instruction during research. After the minimum time required completing the research, you must make an experience roll, trying to roll over the relevant skill value on D100, adding the experience bonus of 1/2 INT (rounded up).

If the experience/research roll succeeds (meaning that your character managed to learn something from the research), you can then choose to increase the skill by 1D6–2 points, or simply add 1 point, and add the result to the current skill rating. This is lower than actual training or experience. In the *Basic Roleplaying* system, guided instruction and experience are superior means of learning than self-guided research. The possibility of a point of skill loss reflects that there is still a chance that no improvement occurs or incorrect information is gleaned through research. This new information or practice might be misinforming or misleading—and will result in slight degradation of the skill itself.

Increasing Characteristics

Your character can increase his or her characteristics themselves through a variety of means. POW can be increased through a form of experience. STR, CON, DEX, and APP can increase through training and research. The INT and SIZ characteristics increase only through rare means, and in most settings, do not change overmuch, though the gamemaster may allow for increases based on the campaign's setting or actions taken in the course of (or between) adventures.

POW Gain Rolls

When a character matches his or her POW against an opponent with equal or greater POW on the resistance table, the attacker's POW (the source of the active influence) has a chance to increase if the attack succeeds. If the resistance table indicated a 50% or better success chance, there is no chance to increase, but for any chance less than 50% there is a possibility of a POW increase.

You should check for POW gains as you would check other experience gains for your character. To determine if your character's POW is altered, add together his or her maximum possible rolled POW (18 for humans) plus his or her minimum rolled POW (3 for humans if the standard character creation system is used—consider each bonus of +6 as a single die for other character creation systems). The result is 21 for most humans ($18 + 3 = 21$). Subtract the amount of your character's current POW from that total. Multiply the remainder by 5, and try to roll that result or less on D100.

For example, your character has a POW 13 and makes a successful POW vs. POW roll during the course of adventure, where the chance of success was 50% or less. This qualifies for a POW improvement roll. The normal human maximum is 21, so your character's chance for a POW improvement is 40% ($21 - 13 = 8$ and $8 \times 5 = 40\%$).

If the roll is successful, you should roll 1D3-1 and change your character's POW by the result. This might mean no gain at all if the roll was a 1 ($1 - 1 = 0$), or as much as a 2 point increase in POW ($3 - 1 = 2$). Alternately, you can choose not to roll 1D3-1, and simply add 1 to your character's POW. Like an experience check, this decision must be made before the 1D3-1 roll is attempted.

Characteristic Increase

Your character can train his or her characteristics to improve them. The exact method varies by the setting—a medieval world might require your character to increase his or her STR by lifting heavy weights, doing manual labor, etc. while a futuristic setting may utilize muscular augmentation surgery. Increasing STR or CON through training or research is limited by the

highest value of the character's original STR, CON, or SIZ. *For example, if the highest value of the three is a SIZ of 14, neither STR nor CON can be increased past that number through training.*

Any attempts to train or research an increase to the DEX or APP characteristics are limited to half again your character's original characteristic, rounded up. *For example, your character with DEX 13 can train or research his or her DEX up to 20 ($1/2$ of 13 rounds up to 7, and $13 + 7 = 20$).*

Characteristic Increase through Training

The gamemaster may allow your character to attempt to train up his or her characteristics at a rate of a number of hours based on the value of the current characteristic—just as advancement in a skill by training depends on the current skill percentage. For characteristics, establish the number of hours by multiplying the current value for the characteristic $\times 25$. At the end of a training period, roll 1D3-1 and add the result to the current value of that characteristic. *For example, if your character's STR is 12, the total number of hours required to increase his or her STR is 300 hours ($12 \times 25 = 300$). At the end of 300 hours of study, roll 1D3-1, with a result of 1 (the roll is a 2, $-1 = 1$). Your character's STR characteristic is now 13.* You and the gamemaster should work together to determine the exact type of training required to gain this increase. The gamemaster may allow SIZ to be trained, representing a radical change in diet or exercise to increase or decrease mass (if not height, which is usually unable to be modified without surgery).

Who Does the Training?

Only someone who has already increased a personal characteristic through training may train another character to increase a characteristic (and then, only the relevant characteristic). Initially, your character will have to seek out a non-player character for such training, though once your character has trained a characteristic; he or she can train other characters in that characteristic. Your character may help train another characters' characteristic only to the amount by which his or her own was increased. *For example, if your character has increased his DEX by 2 points through training, he or she can train another character up to a 1 or 2 point increase in DEX.* Any points in excess of this limit are lost.



CHAPTER SIX

COMBAT




Combat is often an inevitable part of most adventures. While the basic game system allows for loose determination of times and order of activity, in combat it is often essential to know exactly what happens when, who can act at a particular time, and what actions are capable in the amount of time provided. This section addresses the wide variety of actions that occur during a combat round.

As described in “Time Scales” (page 177), a *combat round* is the default measure of the passage of time in a combat or action situation. A combat round is 12 seconds long, and in it, your character can perform actions and react to other actions in an order usually determined by his or her DEX characteristic; higher DEX characters acting before characters with lower DEX. As with skills, actions in combat are usually determined by rolling D100 to determine the success or failure of attacks, defenses, and other activities.

Order of Actions in a Combat Round

A combat round consists of four phases. These always occur in the same order, and are repeated with each new combat round until the combat is over. These are described below.

- Statements**
- Power Use**
- Actions**
- Resolution**

Statements

This phase consists of the gamemaster and the players involved in a combat round announcing what everyone will do. The order that actions can be attempted is determined by your character's DEX characteristic. You do not need to announce that you are



OPTION

Eliminating or Reversing Statement of Intent

The "Statement of Intent" phase is often dispensed with entirely with during the course of play. Usually, the gamemaster counts down from a high DEX rank and has each player make statements of action at the same time he or she rolls to determine the outcome. This streamlined style of play works well, and in most non-combat situations there is little worry of confusion. The rationale for this is that characters who move faster than others (*i.e.*, have higher DEX characteristics) can simply move faster than slower characters, and make their actions before noticing what their slower opponents and allies are doing.

On the other hand, the gamemaster may wish for a more tactical approach, allowing DEX some measure of reflexive response to the actions of other characters, whether opponents or allies. To simulate this, the gamemaster should begin with the lowest DEX rank (1) and count upwards, letting each involved character (player character and non-player character) announce their actions. This allows the higher DEX characters the ability to act with full knowledge of what is going to happen in the combat round, enabling them to make tactical decisions accordingly. When the statement of intent phase is over, the gamemaster counts the round down normally, allowing the higher DEX characters to go first, potentially interfering with the actions of slower characters. This method creates the opportunity to integrate feints and other potential fake-out maneuvers into combat, allowing for a richer and more tactical environment for any player or gamemaster who enjoys that style of game play.

However, neither method is better than the other. The first is much faster than the other, but sacrifices much of the tactical aspects of the latter. The gamemaster may even choose to utilize the normal statement system at times, and then eliminate statements during some action sequences, and utilize the reverse statement method at other times, depending on the situation. The most important thing is to match the level of complexity to player expectations and preferred play style.

going to attempt defensive actions (parries, dodges, etc.) during this phase, unless you opt for a completely defensive stance.

Statements of intent should be limited to actions that are reasonable and based on knowledge your character should have. *For example, you should not be able to declare an attack upon an opponent your character is unaware of, no matter what you know as a player.*

Statements of intent should be handled in order of the DEX characteristic of all involved characters—

OPTION

Initiative Rolls

Normally, initiative in a combat round is determined directly by all participants' DEX characteristics, so that characters with higher DEX scores go before those with lower scores. This system is both basic and inflexible: everyone at the gaming table knows exactly when they can perform an action during a combat round, and these actions will occur in the same order, combat round after combat round, without variation until the combat is over. It's fun for players if their characters have got high DEX characteristics, less fun for those who have low DEX scores and are resigned to always going last.

A commonly-used optional rule allowing for an element of randomness is the *initiative roll*. With the initiative roll, all player and non-player characters roll a D10 and add their DEX characteristics to the result. This total is the DEX rank the character can act within the combat round. The order that actions occur within a particular DEX rank is unaffected. This initiative roll can be extended to the use of powers, with a D10 being added to the INT characteristic to determine a variable INT rank.

For example, your character with a DEX 13 will roll a D10 and add the result to 13. With a result of 7, it means that your character will act on DEX rank 20.

The gamemaster rolls the D10 for each non-player character involved in the combat round. For groups of non-player characters, the gamemaster can usually simplify matters by having them act on the same DEX rank, modified by the D10 roll. The gamemasters may wish to break large groups of non-player characters into smaller groups and have them use different initiative rolls, or may allow a separate initiative roll for leaders or otherwise exceptional non-player characters.

For simpler combat, it is recommended that the result of DEX+D10 roll be maintained throughout the entire combat, though a gamemaster wanting more variety may choose to re-roll initiative each combat round. The main virtue of this is that it greater simulates the chaotic and shifting environment of a combat, where opportunity to act can change depending on the actions of the participants.

A main effect of higher DEX ranks during combat rounds is that characters will likely be more able to perform second or third actions in a round. It also makes it less likely that there will be ties during DEX ranks, as the range of DEX ranks has increased. The previously mentioned optional rule for reversing the DEX ranks for determination of actions can easily be utilized with the initiative roll system.

The initiative roll can also be applied to INT ranks for powers, creating more variety in determining when powers can be utilized.

player character and non-player characters alike. This value is called the *DEX rank*. The player of a character with a high DEX rank makes his or her statements of intent before a character with a low DEX rank. Usually the gamemaster will count down, from the highest DEX rank to the lowest, calling on each player to state his or her intended actions at the appropriate times. The gamemaster is not required to state how non-player characters will act in a round, but it is considered fair to do so if the actions are physical in nature or otherwise might affect the behavior of PCs during the combat round. *For example, if a group of non-player characters is going to withdraw peaceably, a player should know this before his or her character attacks.*

Both player- and non-player characters can choose to delay actions until later in the DEX rank, with the last chance at action occurring on DEX rank 1. If you delay longer than this, it is assumed that your character takes no actions during that particular combat round. The same is true for non-player characters.

If there is a need to determine who acts first when DEX ranks are tied, use the relevant skill to determine who acts first. The character with the higher skill rating goes first. If these are still tied, the actions occur simultaneously.

Power Use

While there are many different ways that powers operate, these rules are fundamental and should be considered the default. Powers used in a previous round will “go off” at the beginning of a new combat round if their effects are not instantaneous. If your character is using an instantaneous power, the power will activate during this phase, in order of your character’s INT characteristic. This is called the INT rank.

Your character may delay the use of powers until a later INT rank. The last INT rank is 1, and as with DEX rank, if an action is delayed past this rank, it does not occur in this particular combat round. If there is a need to determine which power occurs first when INT ranks are tied, use the relevant skill as the tiebreaker, with the character with the higher skill rating going first. If there is no relevant skill, use POW as a tiebreaker, with the higher POW going first. If this is still tied, the powers go off simultaneously.

Your character can activate one power per combat round. Using a power in the powers phase of a combat round counts as your character’s action for a round. He or she cannot attack with a weapon, for example, during his or her DEX phase, but can certainly move, dodge, or parry throughout the round if required, as allowed for all characters. Most powers require exactly

OPTION

Power Use in the Action Phase

Normally, power use is handled during the powers phase, before any physical action can be attempted. Power use is assumed to be instant, occurring at the speed of thought, despite any gestures or incantations required. However, this places non-powered characters at a disadvantage, as powered adversaries will be able to launch attacks before they can be countered, regardless of DEX rank. For some settings, this is entirely appropriate, while others it may be less than ideal.

To offset this disadvantage, the gamemaster may choose to have any power usage occur during normal DEX ranks, just as with a normal attack. The powers phase of the combat round remains in effect as the period where non-instant powers cast during the previous round go into effect. Alternately, the gamemaster may choose to have INT ranks and DEX ranks occur simultaneously. *For example, if your character is using a power and has an INT rank 13, he or she will go after a character with a DEX rank 16, but before a character with a DEX rank of 12.* In the case of a tie, use the other characteristic (if INT is tied, the higher DEX goes first) or the higher skill/power level if applicable. If still tied, the powers go off simultaneously.

one full combat round to prepare and use, with their effects occurring at the beginning of the next combat round during the powers phase. Exceptions to these are presented in **Chapter Four: Powers**.

Power points used for powers are spent on the INT rank they are used.

Actions

A character in combat is assumed to be in one of two states; *engaged* or *unengaged*. An engaged character is in close proximity (melee) with his or her enemies, and is ready to attack or defend when possible. Usually, anyone engaged in the same fight can take actions against any other character in the same fight without penalty or requiring any movement. An unengaged character is subject to the combat round timeframe, but is performing other actions and is not in range of hand-to-hand combat (or he or she is not aware of the danger).

As with statements, actions occur on your character’s DEX ranks. These actions consist of attacks, parries, dodges, or other actions performed by unengaged characters.

Within a particular DEX rank, attacks usually go in order of weapon type. Attackers armed with missile weapons (bows, guns, etc.) are considered to act before

those in hand-to-hand (melee) combat. After these go characters armed with long weapons (spears, lances, etc.), then those with medium-length weapons (swords, axes, etc.) and finally those with short weapons (daggers, etc.) or who are unarmed. Parries and attack-related dodges occur in the same DEX rank as the original attack.

If your character can perform more than one action in a round (some weapons allow for multiple attacks, and combat skill levels in excess of 100% also allow multiple attacks), each attack should be separated by 5 DEX ranks. The first action is at the full DEX rank; the second is at DEX rank -5; the third at DEX rank -10; etc. Your character cannot act on DEX rank 0 for any actions, so any actions that would occur below DEX rank 1 are lost.

For example, if your character has a DEX characteristic of 1-5, he or she can only take one action per round. If your character has a DEX of 6-10, he or she can only act twice. If his or her DEX is 11-15, he or she can act three times, etc.

Following is a brief summary of the results of combat actions within a round. Later in this chapter the results for different levels of success (critical and special successes) and different types of attacks will be described in additional detail.

Combat Actions

During a combat round your character can perform **any one** of the following actions on his or her DEX rank:

Move
Attack
Non-Combat Action
Disengage From Combat

At **any time** during the combat round, your character can:

Parry OR Dodge
Fight Defensively
Speak

Move

If your character is unengaged, he or she can move around 30 meters in a combat turn if he or she performs no actions other than to defend him- or herself (a parry or dodge attempt). Moving between 6 and 15 meters means that your character acts at 1/2 his or her normal DEX rank. Moving between 16-29 meters in a combat round means that your character acts at 1/4 his or her normal DEX rank. These modified DEX ranks are cumulative with penalties for additional actions, with movement modifiers to DEX rank being applied first.

Attack

Your character can make an attack against a target on his or her DEX rank, in addition to moving up to 5 meters. Unless modified otherwise, this attack is performed at the

full skill rating. As noted above, if a particular weapon allows for multiple attacks, each successive attack should be at 5 DEX ranks lower than the previous attack.

Non-Combat Action

An unengaged character can attempt the use of a skill or power, or do some other action not requiring a skill check, such as drawing a weapon or opening a door. Use common sense as to what actions can reasonably be performed in this amount of time and within the degree of movement allowed. It is suggested that these actions, if potentially combined with combat actions or multiple non-combat actions, incur a DEX rank penalty of 5 per action.

Engage in Combat: An engaged or unengaged character can move up to 5 meters and make an attack and/or defensive action without penalty.

OPTION

Melee Hit Location Table

As described in "Hit Points per Hit Location" on page 29, your character's hit point total is divided among his or her body parts, rather than in a single total. When an attack is successful, you should roll a D20 and use the result to consult the appropriate hit location table. Humans use the standard hit location table, and other body types have their hit location tables provided in "Nonhuman Hit Location Tables" in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**. If your character is not humanoid, your gamemaster should indicate the correct hit location table you should use.

Hit Location Table

D20 Roll	Result	Description
1-4	Right Leg	Right leg from hip to bottom of foot
5-8	Left Leg	Left leg from hip to bottom of foot
9-11	Abdomen	Hip joint to bottom of rib cage
12	Chest	Rib cage up to neck and shoulders
13-15	Right Arm	Entire right arm
16-18	Left Arm	Entire left arm
19-20	Head	Neck and head

Missile fire (projectiles, firearms, powers, etc.) can be less precise than hand-to-hand attacks, and uses this hit location table:

Missile Fire Hit Location Table

D20 Roll	Result	Description
01-03	Right Leg	Right leg from hip to bottom of foot
04-06	Left Leg	Left leg from hip to bottom of foot
07-10	Abdomen	Hip joint to bottom of rib cage
11-15	Chest	Rib cage up to neck and shoulders
16-17	Right Arm	Entire right arm
18-19	Left Arm	Entire left arm
20	Head	Neck and head

Some situations, such as cover or mounted vs. unmounted characters, modify what hit locations are available to be hit in combat. **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** covers these situations.

Disengage From Combat

An engaged character can choose to leave the engagement by declaring during the statement phase that he or she is disengaging. Generally, he or she does not take any attack actions, but instead is limited only to dodges, parries, and movement actions. If your character is successful in all dodges or parries made during this combat round, he or she has successfully disengaged from combat and may move his or her full movement rate away from the battle. If any of these rolls fail, your character is still engaged in combat. Other options are covered in “Disengaging” in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Parry

If your character is armed with a weapon or shield that could parry an attack, he or she may roll against the relevant weapon skill to parry the blow. You do not need to announce this beforehand, and it is done in reaction to a successful attack roll from another player or non-player character. Each successive parry attempt after the first is at a –30% modifier to the skill rating, cumulative. If the chance to parry an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot attempt to parry. Under most circumstances, your character can only parry missile weapons with a shield, at the shield's base chance (see “Shields and Missile Fire” on page 231). If attempting to parry a thrown weapon with a hand weapon, the chance of parrying must be a special success (1/5 the normal skill rating).

For example, if your character has a 58% chance of parrying with a sword (usually, the skill rating is the same for attacking) attempts to parry a thrown knife, his or her chance to do so is at 12%.

Similarly, if your character is using improvised weapons or weapons not generally used for parrying, the parry chance is half of his or her normal weapon skill rating, or a flat 20% for missile weapons. Based on training and background, the gamemaster may allow the skill to be based on 1/2 of the attack chance, if it is more appropriate.

For example, when firing a rifle, your character has a 58% attack chance, but when parrying an attack with the rifle, his or her chance is Difficult, or 29%, because most military rifle training encompasses using it as a parrying weapon. Another character, such as a hunter, on the other hand, with the same attack skill of 58%, would have a 20% chance to parry with a rifle, the default chance to parry with a missile weapon. Similarly, if your character is a soldier, he or she may be able to use an entrenching tool (a small collapsible shovel) as a parrying weapon at 1/2 his or her skill with an axe, a weapon roughly similar in size and shape.

One option is to split attacks and parries into separate skills. This is discussed in “Combat in Different Genres” on pages 198-201.

The gamemaster may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender's SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack. *For example, a character with SIZ 15 cannot parry an attack from a brontosaurus of SIZ 72. Instead, the attack must be Dodged or otherwise evaded.*

Dodge

Some weapons and attacks cannot be parried and must instead be dodged. As with parries, dodges do not need to be announced prior to the attack roll, but are attempted in reaction to a successful attack roll from another character (see “Dodge” on page 55). Each successive dodge attempt after the first is at a –30% modifier to the skill rating, cumulative. If the chance to dodge an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot roll for the attempt. Dodges can be attempted against all melee attacks or thrown weapons. Normally, your character cannot actually dodge against bullets or high-speed projectile weapons (arrows, lasers, etc.). Instead, it is assumed that he or she is dodging out of the direction the weapon is being pointed. In this case, your character is only able to attempt dodging the first such missile weapon in a combat round, and only if the attacker and weapon are visible. Such attempts are *Difficult*. Ultimately, the gamemaster is the arbiter of whether an attack can be dodged, and certain genres may affect the use of this skill. See the optional rules in “Combat in Different Genres” on pages 198-201 for more details.

Fight Defensively

Using this option, your character forfeits any offensive action during a round get an extra dodge attempt. This dodge does not incur the subsequent cumulative –30% penalty for further dodge or parry attempts. “Fighting Defensively” is covered in detail on page 202 of this chapter.

Speak

Speech is considered a free action, and normal conversation or shouted commands do not penalize your character any DEX ranks or limit his or her actions in any significant manner. However, this is within reason, and if your character is speaking for some time, or a conversation between two characters is ensuing in the midst of action, the gamemaster may choose to disallow excessive speech, asking to keep conversations brief during combat rounds or action sequences. This may vary by setting: while it is perfectly normal for soliloquies to be delivered in the midst of a fistfight in a super hero game, they would be out of place in a western-style gunfight.

Parries and Dodges

Parries and dodges cannot be combined in a round, unless your character is in a completely defensive state.



The combat round is structured to organize complex combats. Statements of Intent let the gamemaster know the players' intentions. Then Powers are initiated or spells begun. The gamemaster compares the DEX values of the characters and monsters; higher DEX fires first, or flees, stabs, bites, or grabs.

In this case, the -30% modifiers for successive defensive actions include both parries and dodges.

For example, if your character announces a completely defensive stance, he or she parries with an unmodified skill, then dodges at -30%, parries again at -60%, then has a -90% chance to dodge or parry a fourth attack.

Resolution

To make an attack, parry or dodge, roll percentile dice and compare the result to your character's skill with the weapon or shield being used. Attacks may provoke a dodge or parry, rolled in the same fashion. The success or failure of these rolls is compared to the "Attack and Defense Matrix" (nearby) to see the result of the combined actions of the attacker and defender.

Levels of Success and Failure

As with skill usage, in combat it is often essential to know not only whether an attack or parry succeeded or failed, but also to what degree it succeeded or failed. Following are descriptions of the levels of success and failure.

Critical Success

The best possible roll! A D100 result equal to 1/20 of your character's skill rating. A critical attack means that the weapon does the maximum possible damage for the weapon used (6 for 1D6, 9 for 1D8+1, etc.) plus the normal rolled damage bonus. Unless countered with a spectacular parry, a critical attack result always ignores

armor, even if that armor is all-encompassing. A critical parry can damage the attacking weapon.

For example, if your character has a weapon skill rating of 60%, he or she will achieve a critical success on a roll of 01-03. When this is rolled, your character rolls the weapon's full damage, rolls for the damage bonus as normal, and ignores any armor the target may be wearing, whether natural or powered. If the critical success is with a shortsword that does 1d6+1 damage, and your character's damage bonus is 1d4, the damage is 7+1d4 (7 = 6+1) and ignores the target's armor. If the weapon is a pistol that does 1d10 damage, the damage is 10 and ignores the target's armor.

GM NOTE: Gamemasters should allow characters to inflict a special success (below) upon a foe in place of a critical success if the foe is unarmored.

Special Success

An exceptional roll. A D100 result equal to 1/5 of your character's skill rating. Often, a special attack

Combat Summary

Attack Roll	Parry or Dodge Roll	Result
Success	Success	Attacker's blow is deflected or dodged.
Success	Fails	Defender is hit and may lose hit points.
Fails	No roll required	Defender maintains guard, does not need to roll.
Fumbles	No roll required	As per attacker's miss above, plus attacker rolls on fumble table.

Attack and Defense Matrix

Attack Roll	Parry Roll	Dodge Roll	Result
Critical	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges damage, no other result.
Critical	Special	Special	Attack partially deflected or dodged and achieves a success. Attacker strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Critical	Success	Success	Attack marginally deflected and achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 4 points of damage.*
Critical	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value is bypassed.
Critical	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value does not apply. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Special	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges attack; no other result. If attack is parried, attacking weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Special	Special	Special	Defender parries or dodges attack, no other result.
Special	Success	Success	Attack partially parried or dodged and achieves a normal success. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Special	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Special	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Success	Critical	Critical	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 2 points of damage.*
Success	Special	Special	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Success	Success	Success	Defender blocks or dodges damage, no other result.
Success	Failure	Failure	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Success	Fumble	Fumble	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Failure	—	—	No damage; no effect.
Fumble	—	—	Attack misses completely and attacker rolls on the appropriate fumble table. Defender unharmed.

* If the parrying weapon or shield is destroyed, the defender takes the remainder of the damage rolled (to a random hit location if that optional system is utilized). If the attacking weapon is destroyed during a successful attack, damage is still inflicted on the defender but the weapon is broken at that moment.

means that the weapon does normal damage in addition to a special result based on the weapon's type (for example, a bludgeoning weapon, like a club, has a knockback/down effect). A special parry can do damage to an attacking weapon.

For example, if your character has a skill of Firearm 60%, he or she will achieve a special success on a roll of 04–12. This does normal damage (1D8, for example), but in the case of a firearm, will do impaling damage.

Success

A good roll. This is a D100 result equal to or less than your character's skill rating but higher than the result needed for a special or critical success. Attacks are successful if not parried, and damage is rolled normally, with no damage done to either attacking or parrying weapon.

For example, with a skill of Firearm 60%, your character with a will achieve a "normal" success on a roll of 13–60. In the case of a firearm that deals 1D8 points of damage, the normal amount of damage is rolled.

Failure

A poor roll. A D100 result greater than your character's skill rating but less than the highest 1/20 of chance of failure (see "Fumble", below). Failing a combat roll means that the attempt did not succeed, but your character can try again later in the same or a following combat round.

For example, with a skill of Firearm 60%, your character will fail on a roll of 61–97. No damage is rolled, and your target does not need to attempt to dodge or parry the attack.

Fumble

A disastrous roll! A result of the highest 1/20 of the chance of failure, usually ranging from 96–100 for lower skill levels to a roll of 100 when character skill levels are over 100%. Often, a fumble indicates a dramatic mishap of some sort, and often forces a roll on the relevant fumble table. "The Melee Weapon Attacks", "Melee Weapon Parries", "Missile Weapon Attacks", and "Natural Attacks and Parries Fumble Tables" are on page 194–195.

For example, with a skill of Firearm 60%, your character will fumble on a roll of 98–00. No damage is rolled, though you must roll on the Missile Weapons Fumble Table on page 194 to determine the result of this botched attack.

Melee Weapon Attack Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-15	Lose the next combat round and are effectively helpless.
16-25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds and are effectively helpless.
26-40	Fall down.
41-50	Drop the weapon being used.
51-60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61-65	Lose 1D10 points of weapon's hit points.
66-75	Vision obscured, lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 41-50 if no ally nearby.
86-90	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 51-60 if no ally nearby.
91-98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage, or use result 61-65 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Melee Weapon Parry Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-20	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken), and are effectively helpless.
21-40	Fall down.
41-50	Drop weapon being used.
51-60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61-75	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Wide open; foe automatically hits with normal hit.
86-90	Wide open; foe automatically hits with special hit.
91-93	Wide open; foe automatically hits with critical hit.
94-98	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
99-00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Some weapons have the chance to malfunction (jam, lock up, etc.), expressed as a high result (for example, a musket always malfunctions on a roll of 95-00, regardless of the user's skill). As a result of the same roll, it's possible for your character to fumble *and* have a weapon malfunction; to have a weapon malfunction without fumbling; or to have a fumble without a weapon malfunction.

For example, your character has a skill of 60% with a musket, and rolls 99 while firing it. Because the weapon malfunctions on a roll of 95-00, and your character normally fumbles on a roll of 98-00, this attack is unfortunately both a fumble and a weapons malfunction. If the roll had been a 95, 96, or 97, it would have only been a weapons malfunction.

Missile Weapon Attack Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-15	Lose the next attack or other activity.
16-25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds or other activity.
26-40	Fall down.
41-55	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
56-65	Drop weapon; which slides or bounces 1D6-1 meters away.
66-80	Do 1D6 damage to weapon's hit points (or use result 81-85 if the weapon has no hit points).
81-85	Break weapon; regardless of weapon's current hit points.
86-90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 56-65 if no ally nearby.
91-95	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 66-80 if no ally nearby.
96-98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage, or use result 81-85 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

If the result of a fumble specifies an attack on a target other than the intended one, and a malfunction causes a jam, the attack happens before the malfunction. More information on malfunctions can be found on page 254 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Special Successes

Following are rules covering the additional effects of special successes, divided by weapon damage type. There are five types of special damage inflicted by special successes: *bleeding*, *crushing*, *entangling*, *impaling*, and *knockdown*.

Bleeding: A wound resulting in a deep tissue cut into arteries or major organs. Weapons with a sharp edge inflict bleeding damage.

Crushing: A wound involving a blunt trauma to the victim, often breaking bones and stunning the target. Clubs, unarmed strikes, and other blunt weapons can cause crushing damage.

Entangling: Pinning or otherwise ensnaring the target's limbs or body. Flexible weapons, nets, ropes, and those with short jagged points inflict entangling attacks.

Impaling: A deep wound that pierces vital organs or passes entirely through the body of the target. Firearms, arrows, and other pointed weapons inflict impaling damage.

Knockback: A wound that unbalances and possibly sends the target sprawling backwards. Some forms of unarmed attacks and shield attacks cause knockback.

Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-25	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken).
26-30	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds (this includes this one if no action has yet been taken).
31-50	Fall down.
51-60	Fall down and twist ankle; lose 1 meter/DEX rank of movement for 1D10 full turns (and all combat turns within them).
61-75	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Miss and strain something; lose 1 hit point (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
86-90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 76-85 if no ally nearby.
91-94	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 76-85 if no ally nearby.
95-98	Hit hard surface; do normal damage to self (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

These five types of damage are described in the sections below.

Bleeding

If your character achieves a special success with a slashing weapon, he or she has inflicted bleeding damage upon the target. This does 1 additional hit point in damage at the end of each round after the round in which the wound is inflicted. Thus, a target suffering bleeding damage has had a vein or major artery severed and is losing blood rapidly, in a greater amount than a normal wound. While armor protection is allowed against the initial attack, the extra points of general damage and fatigue are applied directly to the target's hit points. If the optional fatigue point system is being used, the target loses 1 additional fatigue point each round he or she is bleeding.

Each round a target suffers bleeding damage, he or she may make an attempt to staunch the bleeding. If he or she is in combat, the only way to staunch the wound is to place an open hand on the injury and press it closed to seal it. This activity causes any attacks, parries, or physical actions, attempted during the round to become *Difficult*. Attempting to dodge negates the attempt to stop the bleeding. If the target is attempting to staunch the bleeding, he or she will not take any bleeding damage during each complete round he or she has a hand over the injury. At the end of each round, the target may attempt

a Stamina roll to determine if the bleeding stops. If successful, the wound has closed and the target will not suffer any more bleeding damage. If unsuccessful, the bleeding will continue the moment the target's hand and the pressure is removed from the injury.

The easiest way to stop bleeding damage is to make a successful First Aid check on the injury. Success means that the bleeding stops and will not begin anew. Failure for this First Aid check means that the bleeding continues until the target receives successful medical attention (in the form of a power or another skill like Medicine), or dies from blood loss when he or she reaches 0 hit points.

Crushing

If your character achieves a special success with a crushing weapon such as a club, staff, mace, or a particularly lucky unarmed strike, he or she inflicts crushing damage upon his or her target. This is a particularly powerful blow, often causing massive bruising or even broken bones, frequently stunning the target of the attack.

A crushing special success allows your character to increase the damage bonus that is normally applied to the attack. In this case, the attacker's damage bonus is increased by one step up the Damage Bonus chart on page 29.

For example, if your character has a -1D4 damage bonus, he or she will not receive any damage bonus (it increases to +0), but if your character has a +1D4 damage bonus, his or her damage bonus is increased to +1d6. If your character has a +1D6 damage bonus, this will be increased to +2D6, etc.

A target suffering a crushing special success must also make a successful Stamina roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds. Being stunned is a dizzying, disorienting experience, as stars dance in the target's eyes and his or her head swims from the pain of the sudden blow. A stunned target cannot attack while stunned, and can only attempt to dodge or

OPTION

Random Armor Values

In genres emphasizing random chance, sometimes armor is not as reliable and may not protect your character at a dependable amount each time he or she is struck in combat. Using this system, armor has a range of armor value that is rolled whenever an attack that would do damage successfully strikes your character. The armor value is rolled and subtracted from the damage received. Armor value is rolled separately for each attack landing on your character, even in the same round or strike rank. **Chapter Eight: Equipment** (page 258) covers armor in detail and provides ranges for random armor values. In games using random armor value, it is recommended that armor be generic rather than hit location-specific.

parry an attack if he or she makes a successful Idea roll for each attempt. Furthermore, all attacks against the target are made as if *Easy* actions. The stunned target can attempt to flee, but to do so requires a successful Idea roll to discern an escape path and a successful Agility roll to get out of danger.

If the target successfully parries an attack scoring a crushing special success, he or she risks his or her weapon or shield breaking. The attacker rolls his or her damage as above, with the increased damage bonus dice, and compares the damage rolled to the parrying item's current hit points on the resistance table. The value of the active roll is the damage inflicted, and the passive value is the item's normal hit points. If the active roll is successful, the parrying item is automatically broken and the crushing blow will continue on to strike the body of the parrying target. The target may subtract armor protection from the damage done by the crushing blow, but cannot further dodge or parry this attack—it automatically hits and the remainder of the damage is inflicted on the character.

If the passive roll of the parrying item's hit points is successful, it takes the normal attack damage directly to its hit points. If the parrying item takes more damage than it has hit points, it is destroyed by the attack—broken or shattered, whichever is appropriate—and the blow continues on to strike the target of the attack.

If specific hit locations are being used and the parrying item was a shield, this further damage is automatically applied to the arm the target wore his or her shield upon, allowing for armor protection, if applicable. If the parrying item was a weapon, the continued damage is applied to a random hit location, rolled by the gamemaster. As above, armor protection is still proof against the continued strike.

Entangling

If your character achieves a special success with an entangling weapon (whip, net, chain, rope, man-catcher, etc.), he or she has entangled the target. An entangling attack cannot be made from close range—it must be made with at least 3 meters of space between the attacker and target to properly maneuver (though the garrote can be used at close quarters). A successful entangle prevents movement by the target, for the rest of this combat round and into the next combat round. This gives the attacker time to close with the target or otherwise subdue them.

This may prevent attacks by the target if not immediately obvious. Based on the nature of the entangling attack, the gamemaster may allow an entangled target a Luck roll to determine if he or she is able to attack. For example, a whip wrapped around one arm might allow the other arm and leg free attacks, while a lasso might immobilize both arms. This should be handled on a case-by-case basis. However, there are few entangling attacks that do not allow for some method of attack, whether a kick or head butt.

If the attacker still has control over the entangling weapon (for example, a whip allows this, while bolas do not), the attacker can attempt some of the Grapple effects on the next round as described in the Grapple skill (page 60). Allowable effects include Immobilize Limb, Immobilize Target, Throw Target, Knockdown Target, Disarm Target, Injure Target, and Strangle Target, as appropriate by the weapon's type. If hit locations are being used, this might disallow particular attacks. *For example, it would be difficult to disarm someone of his or her hand weapon if a whip entangles his or her leg.*

On the round following the successful entangle attack, the entangled target can attempt an Agility roll to free him- or herself, or make a STR vs. STR resistance roll to attempt to pull the entangling weapon from the attacker's hand(s). Alternately, if the entangled target is able to, he or she may attempt an attack on the entangling weapon itself, cutting through a whip, for example.

For entangling attacks employing flexible weapons such as nets, ropes, chains, and whips, a successful STR vs. STR resistance roll allows an entangling weapon to wrench a parrying weapon from the target's grasp.

A successful Dodge roll or Wrestle roll negates a successful entangle. A critical parry negates a critical entangle, but an ordinary parry success has no effect.

Impaling

If your character achieves a special success with a piercing or pointed weapon, he or she has inflicted impaling damage upon the target. An impale doubles the weapon's normal rolled damage.

For example, a short sword normally does 1D6+1 points of damage, while an impale with the same weapon does twice that, or 2D6+2 points of damage.

Only the weapon's damage is doubled. If the attacker has a damage modifier, the damage modifier is not doubled, but is instead rolled normally and added to the damage.

For example, if the attacker above has a +1D4 damage modifier, the damage for the impaling short sword attack is 2D6+2+1D4.

An impaling weapon is considered to be still lodged in the target's body until it can be removed. If the weapon is a hand weapon, the attacker may attempt a *Difficult* weapon skill roll with the impaling weapon. If successful, the attacker can immediately pull the weapon out 3 DEX ranks after the impaling attack strikes home. Otherwise the weapon is stuck in the body of the target.

For example, your character, with a short sword skill of 84% impales a target. If he or she can immediately make a roll of 42% or less, the impaling weapon is free from the target's body. If your character fails this roll, the short sword is still stuck in the target's body and can be recovered on subsequent rounds.

If the attacker's weapon is still in the wound in later combat rounds, and the attacker wants it back, he or

she must attempt to retrieve the weapon. In this case, the attacker must totally ignore any and all attacks and focus on pulling the weapon from the wound. This raises the chance of retrieval to the attacker's full attack chance with the weapon, but any attacks against the attacker are considered *Easy*.

For example, an attacker with a short sword skill of 88% who has impaled a target with his short sword can attempt to remove the short sword on the following combat round with an 88% chance of success, but any attacks made against him or her are at double chance.

Generally, this rule applies only to hand weapons, though based on circumstances, the gamemaster may allow it for thrown weapons such as javelins, daggers, or even arrows, provided the attacker closes with the target and succeeds in a *Difficult* Agility roll to grab the weapon. The chance to remove the weapon on succeeding rounds is the attacker's full skill if the attacker wishes to ignore any attacks for that round and concentrate on retrieving the weapon, as described above.

For example, your character has DEX 16 and a 63% skill in throwing axe throws a throwing axe that impales the opponent. On a subsequent round, he or she may try to retrieve the impaling weapon by first moving to close combat range, then rolling 40% or less (1/2 his or her Agility roll of 80%) to grab the weapon, then rolling 32% or under (1/2 the attack chance of 63%).

An impaled target cannot be healed until the impaling weapon is removed, if it is larger than a knife. Tiny items such as arrowheads or bullets can be left in the wound though this may present complications later, at the gamemaster's discretion. If the target moves in any significant fashion, he or she will take half the initial rolled damage (without armor protection) again (applied directly to the hit location if hit locations are being used) because the extruding weapon is catching on nearby walls, moving within and widening the wound, or some other painful complication.

A target impaled with a weapon and attempting to remove it must roll his or her STR versus the amount of damage dealt by the weapon on the resistance table. Success means that the weapon has been freed and is in the hands of the target, while failure means that he or she is unable to free it that combat round, and takes an additional 1D3 hit points of damage (or to the specific hit location, if that optional system is used) from the activity. This action takes a full round and ends with the target holding the weapon that formerly impaled them.

For example, a target with STR 13 who has been impaled with a short sword, taking 15 points of damage from it, can attempt to remove the weapon. The target must beat the weapon's damage of 15 with his or her own STR on the resistance table, for a chance of 40% to pull the weapon from his or her body. If the roll is successful, the weapon is in hand and out of the wound. If the roll fails, the weapon does another 1D3 hit points damage and remains firmly impaled into the target's body.

The gamemaster may impose additional difficulties or reduce the effectiveness of a characteristic, if the impaling weapon is obviously in a position that would be difficult to reach or is otherwise inaccessible.

For example, a target is impaled with a knife in the upper back, stabbed from behind. The gamemaster asks the player to make an Agility roll, to reach the knife, and then the target must reduce his or her STR by 1/2 for the purpose of the resistance table roll to remove the knife, as he or she cannot leverage full muscle strength for the task.

Another means of dealing with an impaling weapon is to break or damage it so that it will not cause further distress, but can be removed later. This is most commonly done with arrows, removing the shafts so they will not present a threat. Depending on the weapon and the method of damaging it, this will require either a resistance table roll of the wounded target's STR versus the weapon's hit points, or an outright attack on the weapon itself.

Outside of combat, any of the above attempts at removing impaling weapons are *Easy*. This is also true of situations where the victim is cooperating in some fashion (or unable to resist or move freely).

Knockback

If your character achieves a special success with an unarmed throw or a shield attack, he or she has knocked back the target. In this case, the target's SIZ is rolled against the total damage rolled (before armor is subtracted) on the resistance table. The gamemaster may lower the chance of the resistance roll to reflect unevenness of ground, slope, or previous degree of damage the target has already taken. If unsuccessful, the target is knocked back one meter for every five points of damage rolled, and the attacker must once again close and engage the target in melee combat if previously knocked out of melee combat range. If the knockback target also hits an obstacle in his or her path, he or she will take 1D6 damage for every three meters or fraction thereof he or she has left to travel.

If the target does not make a successful Agility roll, he or she also falls prone. The following conditions apply to a prone target (this is also covered in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** on page 229):

- ❖ If a target is prone, all subsequent attacks against him or her are considered to be *Easy* actions and are at double the attacker's normal skill rating.
- ❖ All of the prone target's attacks and parries become *Difficult*, with his or her skill rating halved.
- ❖ A prone target cannot wield two-handed melee combat weapons effectively while prone.
- ❖ A prone target cannot add his or her damage bonus to attacks, though negative damage modifiers still apply.

(. . . continued on page 202)

OPTION

Combat in Different Genres

The combat rules described in this section are presented without genre conventions. Genre conventions can be understood as the rules by which genres play by, ways that they allow or disallow rules that the real world operates under. Genre conventions usually serve to make action more dramatic, and perhaps more survivable for extraordinary characters and villains.

For example, in the adventure genre, heroes often are able to jump out of the way of gunfire after a shot has been fired. In reality, the bullet is traveling so fast that normal human reflexes are incapable of moving out of the way of a bullet once it has been fired.

Following are some optional rules to modify standard combat for use in a variety of different genres, with some recommendations and advice about how these changes affect the way combat works in the game.

Attacks and Parries Over 100%

The gamemaster may choose to allow your character to have skills in excess of 100%. While this might seem like overkill (“How much better do you need to be than ‘always successful?’”), it allows for greater chances of critical results, special successes, and allows for multiple attacks in a round.

If your character has increased a combat skill rating to 100% or more, he or she can split that attack into multiple actions, providing a second major advantage beyond the increase in chance for special and critical skill results. You can divide your skill rating among multiple attacks, though each attack must be at least 50%. These totals do not have to be equal. *For example, with a skill rating of 101%, your character can split attacks into one attack at 51% and one attack at 50%. With a skill rating of 151%, your character can split attacks into two attacks at 75% and 76%, one at 92% and another at 59%, or three at 50%, 50%, and 51%, etc.* You cannot create fractions—assign any remainder skill points between the split skill ratings.

Your character can then make separate attacks with the same weapon, resolving each using one of the chances for success. The DEX rank for the first attack will be the normal one for the weapon; the DEX rank for the second will be at 5 DEX ranks lower, the third at 5 DEX after that, etc. If an attack is at DEX rank 0 or below, no further attack can be made. An attack cannot be split to attack the same target twice—the attacks must be against separate targets.

Theoretically, this can be expanded to any relevant skill—a Physical skill in excess of 100% may allow for multiple skill attempts during a round (such as multiple Jump or Throw attempts), and a Manipulation skill such as Sleight of Hand could be attempted more than once in a round. This is subject to the gamemaster’s approval, and is only recommended for skills whose durations are such that simultaneous attempts at a skill make sense.

“Exceeding 100% in a Skill” on page 183 of **Chapter Five: System** provides information about how your character can achieve skills in excess of 100%.

Dodging Missile Weapons

In campaign settings emphasizing extraordinary action (super hero, pulp adventure, thriller, etc.), your character should be allowed to attempt to dodge gunfire, lasers, and slower-speed missile attacks such as javelins, thrown weapons, or arrows. Generally, slower-moving missile weapons must be parried with a shield (at default chances), or in the case of energy weapons and gunfire, your character must hope that the attacker misses.

In a game more grounded in realism, your character may only be able to dodge these sorts of attack at half his or her normal skill (as if it were a *Difficult* action). However, a lenient gamemaster can allow your character to dodge at his or her full skill rating in almost any genre, assuming that he or she has a chance to see the attacker and can get out of the way of the direction of the attack. A gamemaster wishing for a more cinematic flavor to combat allowing for extraordinarily rare feats of combat may even allow your character to parry missile weapons with hand weapons. To even attempt such a task, your character must first make an Agility roll before rolling for the parry attempt. A special or critical success is required to successfully parry a missile weapon with a hand weapon, and if the result is a normal success or a failure, the attack automatically strikes your character.

Your character can attempt to catch a missile weapon such as an arrow, spear, or other thrown weapon with a special or critical success on an Agility or Throw skill roll. In this case, your character has caught the weapon and escaped injury, and may dispose of it or utilize it in combat, as he or she sees fit. If the roll is successful but not a special or critical success, your character has not caught it but is uninjured. If the roll is a failure, your character must make a successful Luck check to avoid being injured, otherwise he or she takes the missile weapon’s normal rolled damage. If the roll is a fumble, your character automatically takes the missile weapon’s rolled damage (to his or her hand/arm if hit locations are being utilized). Armor protection is allowed against this attack.

By the same token, a gamemaster wishing for a more cinematic game can allow your character to parry missile fire freely with shields, though potentially reduced chances. One solution is to allow your character to use his or her shield to parry any missile weapons of SIZ 1 or larger without penalty, and any missile weapons of SIZ 0 (or immaterial) as if *Difficult*. To balance this, the gamemaster may require that your character attempt a Spot roll if attempting to parry a high-speed missile weapon. If the roll succeeds, your character may parry freely with his or her shield at full skill rating. If the roll fails, the skill rating defaults to the base chances provided in the section on “Shields and Missile Fire” on page 231.

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Dying Blows

The ability to strike one last time at a foe, despite a fatal wound, is a dramatic and often heroic finale for your character if mortally wounded. If the gamemaster allows for dying blows, when your character has received a fatal blow (described in "Damage and Healing", page 208) he or she can attempt one additional combat action if he or she is able to make a successful Stamina roll to remain focused past the pain of the injury. This action must take place on the next available DEX rank your character would normally be able to act in. If it is intended to take place later, your character must make an additional Stamina roll for each round their dying blow is deferred. Failure on any of these rolls results in your character dying before the dying blow is delivered.

Though it would be fair to assign a penalty to a dying blow, such as making a dying blow a *Difficult* action, this would be less dramatic if the dying blow fails. The gamemaster is encouraged to allow your character's dying blow to be performed at his or her full skill rating. A final-yet-solid attack is infinitely more dramatic and satisfying than a feeble one that misses the intended target.

At the gamemaster's discretion, a dying blow does not have to be a combat action, but instead can be a final use of a power, a skill, or even some mundane action. It is not recommended that a dying action be any complex task. Speaking final words to another character is a dying action, and requires a successful Luck roll for each relevant piece of information.

Once a dying blow is delivered or a dying action is performed your character promptly passes on, having performed his or her final duty in the world. In such a case, the gamemaster may rule that medical attention afterwards automatically fails. The dying blow was the final capstone on a heroic death—your character's spirit can rest easily knowing that his or her final task was accomplished.

An alternate to this system can be utilized with the "Desperate Action" spot rules on page 220.

Splitting Attack and Parry Skills

In genres emphasizing hand-to-hand combat, such as fantasy, you and the gamemaster may wish to have some variety in weapon skills by not having the attack and parry being the same skill rating. This is a relatively easy change to make. For simplicity's sake, it is recommended that whatever skill points your character begins with in each applicable weapon skill should be doubled, and the skill rating applied equally to both attack and parry skills. Successful experience checks are applied separately, as well, so a successful attack with a weapon does not allow an experience check for the parry skill. All experience rolls should be applied to each skill differently, as well. This optional system often results in attack and parry skills that are unequal. After creation, your character must seek training for each skill (attack and parry) together or sepa-

rately, if desired, and if the skills are taught together, it is recommended that the training price be doubled or the experience gained be split between the two skills. Brawl can also be split in this manner, with an unarmed attack being treated differently from a unarmed parry.

It is also recommended that the parry skill for missile weapons (parrying with a bow, for example) begin at 1/2 your character's initial attack skill rating. For shields the attack roll should begin at 1/2 your character's initial parry skill rating. *For example, most training with a rifle or longbow focuses on the proper use of the weapon, rather than hand-to-hand combat with it, while shield training similarly focuses more on parrying than attacking.* This can vary by the nature of the training, however, and the gamemaster may add additional conditions to this optional system if desired.

Strike Ranks

This optional system allows for a more detailed breakdown of what actions occur when in a combat round, taking into account the DEX and SIZ of the attacker as well as the weapon's length or means of use. It differs from the standard DEX rank system in that it utilizes the weapon length to a more detailed level, and figures a character's reach (his or her SIZ) into the mix. This system encourages your character to utilize a weapon (or weapons) in combat that allows him or her to take advantage of his or her relative DEX and SIZ.

If used, this system replaces the normal DEX rank system entirely and is not compatible with the optional initiative roll system presented on page 188. As the use of strike ranks make combat more detailed, it is suggested that this optional system only be utilized in campaigns where more detail with combat is essential.

Attack Strike Ranks

Each combat round is divided into 10 strike ranks, always counted out upwards from 1 to 10, so 1 is the fastest, 10 the slowest. The lower your character's strike rank, the faster he or she can attack, and vice versa. If two attackers have the same strike rank, the one with the higher DEX is assumed to go first. If the DEX characteristics are identical, or if multiple attackers have the same strike rank, actions are considered to occur simultaneously. If a combination of actions and strike rank modifiers equals 11 or more, the character can attempt no action during that combat round. Strike ranks do not carry over from one round to another. There are two exceptions to this rule: power use and non-combat skill actions. These are described in "Power Strike Rank Modifier" and "Other Actions and Strike Ranks", following.

For example, with a strike rank is 11, your character does not 'miss' one combat round and get to act on strike rank 1 of the next round. Your character will be unable to act unless

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his or her condition or choice of actions reduces his or her strike rank to 10 or less.

The strike rank for each attack is based on the following factors:

DEX strike rank modifier
+ SIZ strike rank modifier
+ weapon/power strike rank modifier
= attack strike rank

These values are provided below. Once these numbers are determined, list them on your character sheet in the appropriate blanks. When a combat turn begins, the gamemaster will begin to count strike ranks upwards. Your character attacks initially on the first strike ranks he or she is allowed to, and can use the remainder of the strike ranks to perform additional actions if desired.

Dodges and parries are unaffected by strike ranks—your character can dodge and parry when required without penalty to strike rank, and these actions do not cost strike ranks to attempt. However, your character is limited to a single parry or dodge (if appropriate) per strike rank, up to his or her normal limits on these actions. If two attacks are launched against your character during the same strike rank, he or she must choose which of the attacks to parry and which to ignore. The only other limitation to the use of dodges or parries is the normal modifier for subsequent usage of either skill.

DEX Strike Rank

Use the table below to determine your character's DEX strike rank. The result is the initial number of combat round strike ranks your character must wait before performing any activity.

DEX	DEX Strike Rank
01-09	4
10-15	3
16-19	2
20+	1

For example, your character's DEX 12 gives him or her a DEX strike rank of 3—not the worst possible DEX strike rank, but close. While in combat, your character can still parry a faster opponent before his or her DEX strike rank, provided that a parrying weapon or shield is in hand and ready. Your character can then attack on his or her regular strike rank.

SIZ Strike Rank Modifier

Use the table below to determine your character's SIZ strike rank modifier. The more reach your character has, the faster and easier he or she can swing at and hit a target. The SIZ strike rank modifier affects only the use of melee weapons.

SIZ SIZ Strike Rank

01-09	3
10-15	2
16-19	1
20+	0

For example, your character's SIZ 12 gives him or her a SIZ strike rank modifier of 2—not the best, but not the worst. While in combat, your character can still parry a faster opponent before his or her SIZ strike rank, provided that a parrying weapon or shield is readied. Your character can then attack on his or her regular strike rank.

The SIZ strike rank modifier is based on humanoid characters. Some creatures may have SIZ characteristics that do not necessarily reflect their reach, such as a snake, which is very long but has little mass or height. The gamemaster should adjust SIZ strike ranks in these cases, using the tables of relative SIZ values in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** to determine benchmark values.

Weapon Strike Rank Modifier

After equipping your character, turn to the weapons tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. One column in these tables provides strike rank modifiers which are added to DEX and SIZ strike rank modifiers.

For example, your character has a melee strike rank modifier of 5; one of the items he or she will be armed with is a one-handed axe. That weapon has a strike rank modifier of 2. Your character will be able to swing his axe during strike rank 7 of every melee round.

The weapon strike rank modifier is principally based on hand-to-hand weaponry. As noted in the weapon tables, missile weapons should be considered to have a default strike rank of 0, with their rate of fire being the number of times they can be used to attack in a round. Unarmed attacks for creatures much larger than human should be adjusted accordingly by the gamemaster on a discretionary basis—a giant attacking with his or her fist is more likely to land a blow on your character before a human-sized character using a shortsword.

A missile attack is made at the combatant's DEX Rank only. The SIZ of the shooter has no effect on how quickly a bullet or arrow can reach the target.

Power Strike Rank Modifier

To determine an instantaneous power's strike rank modifier, use the power's level as the default strike rank modifier. Lower-level powers are quicker to utilize than higher-level ones. If the power has more than 10 levels, using it may take more than 1 combat round to activate, as described above. If the power is not rated in levels, use the power or fatigue points being spent on the power as strike ranks. If neither applies, use the character's INT as the strike rank modifier, using the DEX table for the strike rank modifier. Powers without durations (or permanent

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powers) do not figure into the power strike rank system. Do not use the SIZ strike rank modifier in determining strike ranks for powers.

For example, your character has the Healing power at 3, or strike rank 3. If you choose to use fewer levels of his power, you can reduce the strike rank accordingly, to 2 or even to 1, but the Healing power will obviously be less effective. If, for example, your character has Healing at level 7, the power would add 7 strike ranks to his or her normal DEX strike ranks.

As noted above, the only exception to the “no strike rank higher than 11” rule is that powers can take more than one combat round (10 strike ranks) to activate. If a power’s strike rank is 11 or greater, the power does carry over into the next round, with 10 subtracted from the strike rank total until the power is ready to be activated. Powers in excess of 20 strike ranks (or levels) take two or more combat rounds to activate.

The strike rank system may conflict with some determination of actions within a combat round. The gamemaster should be the arbiter of what happens when if doubt arises, using the standard DEX rank system as a guideline if no obvious answer presents itself.

Multiple Attacks and Strike Ranks

If an attack strike rank is 5 or lower, your character can make additional attacks in a round on each multiple of his or her attack strike rank. If your character has an attack strike rank of 1 (not normally achievable) he or she will be able to go every round; with an attack strike rank of 2, your character goes every other strike rank (2, 4, 6, 8, 10); an attack strike rank 3 results in actions on strike ranks 3, 6, and 9; and so forth.

The optional strike rank system replaces the ability to make multiple attacks in a round based on weapon rate of fire or skill ratings above 100%, and it is not recommended to combine them in any fashion.

Other Actions and Strike Ranks

Not all actions within a combat round are attacks, however. There are a near-infinite amount of activities that can conceivably take place during a combat round. Following are guidelines for many such non-attack actions, and using these, the gamemaster should be able to determine the strike rank modifiers for other similar actions:

Movement: A human can move at a rate of 3 meters per strike rank, beginning on his or her DEX strike rank. Any movement before an attack should be added to the strike rank at this rate, rounded up. *For example, if your character will normally attack at strike rank 6, and he or she moves 9 meters, this movement will add 3 to his or her strike rank. Now your character will attack at strike rank 9 after movement.* Your character cannot normally combine movement during a strike rank with an attack in that same

strike rank, though the gamemaster may allow this if your character is unimpeded and the movement does not interfere with the attack itself. The spot rules on “Missile Fire While Moving” on page 227 cover this condition, though the optional rules for strike ranks supplant this if used.

Surprise: If your character is surprised during a combat round, either through ambush or an unexpected attack, he or she must spend 3 strike ranks to overcome the surprise and ready him- or herself for combat. This is in addition to any time spent drawing or readying weapons, if necessary. The gamemaster should be the arbiter of whether a situation is a surprise. The gamemaster may also allow for a successful Idea roll to eliminate this penalty, to represent quick wits overcoming surprise.

Preparing a Weapon: Changing one weapon or tool for another in the midst of a combat round takes 3 strike ranks. This usually means that the item in hand is dropped and another is withdrawn from a readily accessible location like a sheath or holster. Drawing two weapons is considered two actions, for a total of 6 strike ranks. Putting one weapon away and drawing another to replace it also counts as two separate actions. Items that are not readily accessible (such as in a backpack) take 6 strike ranks to draw or ready for combat. A weapon that needs to be prepared, such as stringing a bow or assembling the stock and scope for a rifle, may take a full combat round.

Altering Intent: If you announce an action, but change your mind due to events during the earlier strike ranks of the combat round (for example, an intended foe fleeing or dying), your character can change his or her intent at the cost of 3 strike ranks. This represents a moment of indecision or a brief shifting of focus.

First Aid: This skill takes a full combat round (10 strike ranks) to perform, and cannot normally be undertaken while either character is in the midst of combat. If your character attempts the First Aid attempt and is interrupted, the gamemaster may declare that the attempt must be restarted, or that the thwarted attempt inflicts an additional 2 hit points of damage upon the intended recipient (directly to the wounded hit location if that optional system is being used).

Combining Actions: At the gamemaster’s discretion, your character can combine actions with no additional penalty, if your character is relatively unimpeded and the combination of actions seems reasonable. One common combination might be to draw a weapon (costing 3 strike ranks) with movement (1 strike rank per 3 meters run). A gamemaster may allow your character to both prepare a weapon and run 9 meters at a cost of only 3 strike ranks rather than 6, as the actions do not interfere with one another. Such feats of coordination may require a successful skill roll or an Agility roll, as appropriate.

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- ❖ A successful *Difficult* Dodge roll gets the prone target back on his or her feet without the *Easy* modifier to attacks against him or her. The successful *Difficult* Dodge roll also allows an attack action in the combat round. Alternately, a

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Miniatures and Maps

Movement and positioning in hand-to-hand combat is a challenging element to keep track of in roleplaying games. While some players and gamemasters are less concerned with particulars during combat, some feel the need to keep track of the relative positions of the player characters and their adversaries. An easy method of handling this is to use figures, tokens, or markers to show them. These indicators answer all sorts of relational questions such as *'Who am I next to?', 'Who's first and who's last?', 'Can I move and attack this round or next?', 'Can I see him?', 'Am I close enough to overhear them?' 'Can I shoot an arrow at him?'*, and so on.

Many roleplaying games emphasize the use of miniatures. These are small plastic or lead statuettes about an inch high, cast with circular or rectangular bases for stability, available at most game and hobby stores or online. Characters are represented in an enormous variety of costumes, genres, historical periods, and poses. Many people also enjoy painting miniatures as a pleasant side hobby.

To keep track of movement, grids of squares or hexagons are often useful. These come in sheets of various sizes made of paper or sturdier materials. Stores that carry miniature figures also probably carry these. Some players dislike grids as rigid, confining, or mechanistic, and prefer to eyeball distances and negotiate movement, using rulers or tape measures as last resorts. You may want to experiment, to see what suits you. A gamemaster who uses miniatures or maps will want a few larger sheets of paper to use for sketching out floor plans and creating simple maps. Players may find graph paper an aid in mapping ruins or buildings. Recently, several quality mapmaking products have been released, specializing in use for roleplaying games. These range from simple hex-based maps, isometric cutaway floor plan creators, to fractal terrain generators and almost photorealistic representations of interiors and outdoor spaces. None of these are necessary, but can add immensely to the roleplaying experience.

Props sometimes lend drama and sometimes they look silly. If you cannot believe that a Styrofoam block could represent part of a castle wall; then it would be best to avoid props. If you like to pretend, then a new world of model railroad accessories, doll-house parts, oddities from hardware stores, children's toys, china souvenirs, and packaging await you. These things can endow any situation with intriguing possibilities for plans, surprises, and special uses for skills.

combination of successful Dodge and Agility rolls accomplishes the same but does not allow an attack action (the Agility roll takes the attack action's place).

Fighting Defensively

If your character forgoes all attacks in a round and would like to fight entirely defensively, he or she can substitute a Dodge attempt, and can continue to make dodge or parry attempts as described earlier in this section. Normally, each subsequent dodge or parry attempt is at a cumulative -30% modifier, and each previous attempt sets a new threshold for the penalty on the next attempt.

However, while fighting defensively, your character can substitute a Dodge skill attempt for an attack without incurring the -30% penalty to the next defensive action. Essentially, it is a free Dodge attempt that does not incur a penalty on the next dodge or parry attempt. The only restriction in this case is that your character cannot Dodge and parry within the same DEX rank. Under no circumstance can your character combine fighting defensively with any attack or offensive action, such as the "Desperate Action" described on page 220.

Fumbles

Fumbles in combat are unfortunate events or mishaps, attributable to bad luck or inexperience. When a fumble occurs, you must roll D100 on the appropriate fumble table and apply the result. The gamemaster rolls for non-player characters. If the result of the die roll seems inappropriate to the situation, the gamemaster should supply a similar fumble or allow a re-roll.

There are four fumble tables (pages 194-195); the gamemaster should use the one most appropriate to the action. Though the "Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Table" is intended to guide the actions of intelligent humanoids; with discretion it can also be useful for natural animals such as bears, wolves, etc. Most natural animals are far more adept with their natural weapons than unarmed humanoids are with theirs. If the result is unlikely or inappropriate, the gamemaster is encouraged to supply a more appropriate result or reroll until a more suitable fumble is determined.

Some weapons may have a chance of malfunctioning. These occur in addition to any fumbles, if the dice roll indicates an overlap. More information on malfunctions can be found on page 254 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

ARMOR

Armor is traditionally a form of clothing thick and tough enough to protect from attack. Historically, it was made from leather, bone, wood, and metal appropriate

to the period. In the modern world, armor is made from ceramic and ballistic fibers, light metals, and other tough plastic-based substances, and in future eras, armor will likely be made of similar high-tech materials, or even energy-based protection. Armor functions in much the same manner as a shield, interposing itself between an attack and your character's body, but it does not require a skill roll or effort to be utilized.

In the ancient and modern worlds, armor is never all-encompassing. By necessity, joints must be made of lighter material or have gaps within them for movement, and bodily necessities such as breathing and sight require that some parts of the body be less armored than others, or even unarmored. Futuristic armors may have this same restriction.

The most important aspect of armor is the *armor value*. This number is the amount that is subtracted from the damage inflicted from a successful attack. If an attack is not parried or dodged, armor is all that stands between a character and injury. The higher the value of the armor, the better it protects your character. Some types of armor can be layered over one another for greater effectiveness.

When an attack hits armor, the armor value of the target's armor is subtracted from the amount of damage dealt by the attacker. The targeted character takes the difference in damage. If the result is 0 or a negative number, the targeted character takes no damage. He or she *does not* gain additional hit points.

In settings where shields are also used, a successful shield parry may not be enough to stop a blow, and damage from the attack can potentially pass through the armor value of the shield and to the character. In these cases, armor values for both shield and armor are subtracted before the character takes damage.

Despite all the advantages, there are negative aspects to wearing armor. The following are the most significant disadvantages, though the gamemaster may wish to emphasize some more than others, de-emphasize some of these aspects, or even introduce new conditions based on the setting:

Skill Penalties: Armor can inhibit certain skills or functions of your character, particularly the Agility roll, or other Physical actions such as the Climb, Jump, Stealth, and Swim skills. Additionally, wearing a helmet may limit certain Perception skills. Some armor descriptions in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** include negative modifiers to these skills. Weapon skills are unaffected by the use of armor, as armor is inevitably crafted to be used in combat, and any disadvantages to combat skills would necessitate a redesign of the armor.

Physical Discomfort: Armor is heavy, uncomfortable, and inflexible, or at least more-so than normal

clothing, and the weight of armor can fatigue and/or encumber a character. The fatigue rules on page 32 and the encumbrance rules on page 180 cover the aspects of bulkiness or any physical inconvenience caused by the use of armor. In some environments, such as desert or other extremely hot areas, the use of armor may be even more uncomfortable and inconveniencing. The spot rules for environment types in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** can provide guidelines for this condition.

Social Issues: Many types of armor are difficult to conceal, and wearing armor can be interpreted as a hostile action in many societies or cultures. The gamemaster may choose to increase the difficulty of some Communication skills to *Difficult* actions, based on the situation, as it is often difficult to persuade or manipulate someone when one party gives the appearance of being ready for violence. Conversely, some skill use may become *Easy* for the same reason, particularly those where the implication of violence may aid your character. These conditions are highly subjective and should be judged by the gamemaster, as a set of hard-and-fast rules is nearly impossible to craft.

Access: Two other practical aspects limit the use of armor in a game setting: the availability of armor, and whether it fits. Availability should be judged by the gamemaster and based on the setting. *For example, a quality mail shirt might be expensive but relatively easy to obtain in a medieval historical setting, while a practical and usable mail shirt might be next to impossible to find in a prehistoric or far-future setting.* In some settings availability might seem unlimited (the modern world, for example), and access to actual armor might be as easy as an order online. The likelihood that the armor is of sufficient quality to withstand combat is not guaranteed however, and delivery may be restricted by regional laws and regulations.

Finally, not all armor is usable by everyone. Armor is rated by the SIZ it was crafted for, with the best armor being the most form fitting. Loose and ill-fitting armor is just as awkward to wear as armor that is too tight. Each armor type bears a "Fits SIZ" rating, expressed as a \pm that determines the range of character SIZ above and below the armor's default SIZ. It is assumed that a character possesses or purchases armor suitable to his or her own SIZ. If the character's SIZ is outside the range of the armor's SIZ range, the armor cannot be worn. Generally, the higher the armor value, the less likely it is to fit a character of another SIZ. If your character has an extreme SIZ one way or another (below 8 or above 16), he or she may be unable to wear much "off the rack" armor (if it exists) and may be forced to pay a premium for suitable armor, or seek alternative sources for proper defensive equipment.

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Damage and Hit Locations

If the optional hit location system (from page 29) is used, your character's hit points are distributed among various bodily areas as opposed to being a single "pool" of hit points. This system, as has been noted, is mostly incompatible with the major wound system presented in the core rules above and the two systems should not be used together.

As noted in the initial section on hit locations, your character can take up to a hit location's hit points in damage without inconvenience. *For example, if your character has 5 hit points in his or her leg hit location, he or she can take up to 4 hit points of damage in a leg without being disabled.* However, when a hit location takes all of, or more than, its hit points in damage, the effects can be debilitating or even fatal.

Damage Equal to or in Excess of a Hit Location's Hit Points

Following are guidelines if your character takes damage to a hit location equal to or in excess of the hit location's hit point total, if damage is less than double the hit location's total hit points. Taking damage in excess of a hit location's hit points is usually noted as a negative value, such as -1, -2, etc. to describe the number below the normal hit point total. *For example, if your character has 5 hit points in his or her leg hit location, the following rules apply if he or she takes between 5 and 10 hit points of damage in that leg. This would be described as 0 through -5 hit points in a 5 hit point limb.* The guidelines are organized by hit location:

ABDOMEN: If your character takes more damage to his or her abdomen hit location than its hit points (but less than double the abdomen's total hit points), the following occurs:

- ❖ Both legs become useless and your character falls down. See the spot rules for "Prone" characters on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.
- ❖ If your character has the means to heal him- or herself through the use of powers, equipment, or the First Aid skill, he or she can attempt to do so.
- ❖ Your character must make a successful Stamina roll each combat round or he or she will lose 1 additional hit point at the end of that round due to blood loss or internal bleeding. This continues until First Aid is provided successfully, the abdomen hit location is brought up to a positive hit

point total, or if the result of the Stamina roll is a special success.

- ❖ With a roll of CON x 1 (separate from the Stamina roll), your character can make a heroic effort and stand up at the ending of the combat round, or can perform some other physical task that would seem impossible in his or her condition. This has no effect on the blood loss, however.

CHEST: If your character takes more damage to his or her chest hit location than its hit points (but less than double the chest's total hit points), the following occurs:

- ❖ Your character falls down. Too hurt to fight, he or she can only crawl or lie still. See the spot rules for "Prone" characters on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**, though your character cannot make any attacks.
- ❖ If your character has the means to heal him- or herself through the use of powers, equipment, or the First Aid skill, he or she can attempt to do so.
- ❖ Your character must make a successful Stamina roll each combat round or he or she will lose 1 additional hit point at the end of that round due to blood loss or internal bleeding. This continues until First Aid is provided successfully, the chest hit location is brought up to a positive hit point total, or if the result of the Stamina roll is a special success.
- ❖ With a roll of CON x 1 (separate from the Stamina roll), your character can make a heroic effort and stand up at the ending of the combat round, or can perform some other physical task that would seem impossible in his or her condition. This has no effect on the blood loss, however, and if the blood loss has stopped, it will begin again due to the wound being reopened. Each subsequent round, your character must make another CON x 1 roll (separate from the Stamina roll) to continue acting, or will fall to the ground once more and continue to suffer blood loss as above, until it stops.

HEAD: If your character takes more damage to his or her head hit location than its hit points (but less than double the head's total hit points), the following occurs:

- ❖ Your character falls to the ground unconscious and will remain unconscious for 1D10+10 combat rounds. See the spot rules "Knockout Attack" on page 226 and "Prone" on page 229, both in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.
- ❖ Your character must make a successful Stamina roll each combat round or will lose 1 additional hit point at the end

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Chapter Eight: Equipment covers all of the specific advantages and disadvantages of armor and provides examples of many armor types, ranging from rawhide tunics to personal force fields. Additionally, several powers can modify your character's armor value. These are discussed in **Chapter Four: Powers**.

Shields

The easiest way to think of a shield is that it is armor that can be interspersed between the attacker and the parrying character. Shields do not cover the entire body, but neither are they as heavy as body armor, and they are traditionally much cheaper and more adaptable

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of each combat round after he receives the damage. This continues until First Aid is provided successfully, the head hit location is brought up to a positive hit point total, or if the result of the Stamina roll is a special success.

- ❖ With a roll of CON x 1 (separate from the Stamina roll), your character can fight instinctively for the combat round, dazed and relying on reflexes alone. This is equivalent to fighting normally, but your character will be unable to remember the fight itself and he or she will gain no experience checks from any successful skill use during the fight. Additionally, each combat round your character must continue to make the successful Stamina roll to keep from losing an additional hit point. The roll of CON x 1 must be made each round to continue fighting instinctively.

LIMB: If your character takes more damage to an arm or leg than the limb's hit points (but less than double the limb's total hit points), the following occurs:

- ❖ The limb is useless and any tasks associated with that limb are made *Difficult* or *Impossible* (gamemaster's discretion, as appropriate).
- ❖ If a leg is damaged, your character falls down (see the spot rules for "Prone" characters on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**).
- ❖ If it is an arm, your character drops anything he or she is holding in that hand.

Damage More than Double a Hit Location's Hit Points

If your character takes more than double a hit location's hit points in damage to that hit location, the situation is considerably worse. *For example, if your character has 5 hit points in his or her leg hit location, the following rules apply if he or she takes between 11 or more hit points in damage in his or that leg.* These are organized by hit location:

ABDOMEN, CHEST, or HEAD: If your character takes damage to his or her abdomen, chest, or head hit location more than double its hit points, the following occurs:

- ❖ Your character falls to the ground unconscious and will remain unconscious for 1D10+10 combat rounds. See the spot rules "Knockout Attack" on page 226 and "Prone" on page 229, both in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.
- ❖ Your character begins to lose 1 hit point per combat round. This continues until your character receives successful med-

ical treatment in the form of the First Aid skill, a power, or equipment sufficient enough to raise his or her hit points in this location to a positive number.

- ❖ Your character can take no other action until his or her head hit location hit points are at a positive number.

LIMB: If your character takes more damage to an arm or leg hit location than double its hit points, the following occurs:

- ❖ Your character's limb is considered crushed, severed, or otherwise incapacitated, based on the attack (or attacks) that caused the damage. The gamemaster should determine what the fate of your unfortunate appendage is.
- ❖ Your character goes into shock, and can take no Physical actions until healed.
- ❖ If your character has the means to heal him- or herself through the use of powers, equipment, or the First Aid skill, he or she can attempt to do so.
- ❖ Your character will lose 1 additional hit point per combat round after being injured, until the hit location is brought up to a positive hit point total.
- ❖ If the optional fatigue point system is being used, your character immediately loses all his or her current fatigue points.
- ❖ Your character can take no further damage to that hit location if it is struck again in combat, and no further hit points will be subtracted from your character's hit point total. At the gamemaster's discretion, if a hit location roll results in a limb that has been severed, the roll may continue onto the torso (in the case of a severed arm) or onto the other leg (in the case of a severed leg). However, it is advised to allow that the attack struck the limb and did no damage, or missed outright.
- ❖ With a roll of CON x 1, you character can make a heroic effort and stand up at the ending of the combat round, or can perform some other physical task that would seem impossible in his or her condition. However, this has no effect on the hit points loss described above.
- ❖ If the limb is not brought up to a positive hit point total within ten combat rounds, it is permanently gone or disabled. The gamemaster should use discretion in this, allowing for highly sophisticated medical equipment or the use of some powers. See **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more details.

for use by anyone. Different types of shields are described on page 263 in the section on armor in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. Shields and armor together offer flexible, battle-proven protection in historical settings. Shields do not generally lose hit points when struck by normal blows, and they are not very easy to

knock free from a defender's grasp. Usually, only powerful blows (special successes or better) will damage a shield, and the only way to lose one is through a fumbled attack or parry.

Unlike weapon types, shields all use the basic Shield skill, and the same skill rating applies to any shield

used. Your character parries melee attacks with his or her shield just as he or she would a hand weapon, using the same system. Against missile weapons, a half or small shield has a base 15% chance to block a missile, a full shield has a 30% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 60% chance. If your character kneels behind it, a full shield has a 60% chance to block a missile, and a large shield offers a 90% chance.

Your character can also use a shield to attack his or her foe. The normal chance is 1/2 your character's Shield skill rating, though if this attack is frequently used, it makes sense to split the shield attack and parry skills and let each progress individually. The optional rules on "Splitting Attack and Parry Skills" on page 199 describes this method of skill specialization. Shields generally use the knockback as their special success, though some types of shields are spiked and can use the impaling special successes.

Under most circumstances, shields cannot effectively parry extremely fast missile weapons like firearms or energy weapons, and are of limited use against hand-propelled weapons like arrows, sling stones, and spears. In these cases, a default chance is substituted instead of your character's skill.

For example, if your character tries to parry an arrow with a small shield, his or her chance is an unmodified default chance of 15%, rather than his or her normal skill rating.

See "Missile Weapons" below, and the spot rules for "Shields and Missile Fire" on page 231 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for additional detail.



Crackling spells, flying arrows, or sprays of bullets can end some hand-to-hand melees quite quickly. In Basic Roleplaying, even the toughest characters are vulnerable to the Critical Hit.

If an attacker wishes to destroy a foe's parrying weapon or shield, he or she should make an attack as normal if the target is attempting to parry. If the target is not attempting to parry, the attack is an aimed attack as described on page 212. If the attack is a success and is successfully parried, or if the attack successfully strikes the shield as an aimed attack, damage is rolled normally (modified if it is a special or critical success). The shield's armor value is subtracted from the damage done. Any excess damage is done to the shield. If the shield is reduced to 0 hit points, the remainder of the damage goes on to strike the defender. Armor will protect against this, and if the optional hit location system is used, the damage will be to the defender's weapon or shield arm.

Missile Weapons

A weapon that leaves the attacker's grasp, or is otherwise launched at a target, is a missile weapon. This includes javelins, rocks, throwing knives, boomerangs, darts, or even hatchets. Weapons that use some form of mechanism to project a damage-causing element at a target are also missile weapons including firearms, bows, catapults, and even energy weapons.

Missile weapons are described on the weapon tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. The spot rules for combat contain useful information, especially for volley fire. Muscle-propelled missile weapons such as bows and crossbows attack at a slower rate than your character can swing a hand-to-hand weapon, while firearms and other self-propelled weapons often attack at a faster rate. The attacks-per-round (Attk) column in the weapon tables relays how frequently attacks can be made with each type of missile weapon. For an increased rate of fire (a higher attacks-per-round), characters and the gamemaster should use the "Volley Fire" spot rules on page 235 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Following are range modifiers for missile weapons:

- ❖ Target is within the attacker's DEX/3 meters (even if the target is prone): skill is *Easy*.
- ❖ Target is within the weapon's standard listed range: no modifier.
- ❖ Target is at medium range (double the weapon's standard listed range): the attack is *Difficult*.
- ❖ Target is at long range (quadruple the weapon's standard listed range): the attack is ¼ normal skill chance.
- ❖ Target is moving fast: -50%.
- ❖ Difficult vision: light shadows -10%, light fog -25%, in darkness skills are *Difficult* (1/2 normal chance), see the spot rules for "Darkness" on page 220.

Major Wound Table

1D100 Result

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>01-10 Severed leg tendons cause limping; fused ankle bones cause limping; back muscles or spinal nerve damage bend the torso to the left or right; a shattered knee cannot bend; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 DEX. The maximum MOV is now reduced by the same 1D3 result. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>11-20 Much of the nose has been sliced away; multiple scars deface both hands; an ear has been cut off; a livid scar lends an evil cast to your character's appearance; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 APP. The visible and unappealing deformity cannot be disguised. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>21-30 Wrist or hand damage; a slab of arm or shoulder muscle has been cut away; a chunk was hewn from thigh or calf muscles; spinal nerves are damaged; several fingers or toes are severed; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 STR; this loss may change what weapons can be used. Your character is still able to fight with a weapon, but not a shield.</p> <p>31-40 A punctured lung leads to a weakened respiratory system; deep stomach wounds become chronically reinfected or belly wounds weaken digestion and general health; kidneys and liver are damaged; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 CON; maximum MOV is now reduced by the same 1D3, and hit points may be lowered. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>41-50 Concussion damages hearing and limits Listen and Insight to maximums of 65 percent; injury to the head thereafter require Luck rolls each time to use any Mental skills; blows or cuts which affect depth perception leave missile weapon skill ratings at a maximum of 65%; multiple wounds to the face and neck limit the skills of any Communication skills to 65% maximum; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 INT; this loss may affect your character's ability to use any powers. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>51-60 Refer to 01-10 for what happened, which now expands to the loss of one or both arms or legs. Lose 1D6 DEX and reduce maximum MOV by that same amount. Your character is unable to fight.</p> | <p>61-70 Refer to 11-20 for what happened, though the major wound now includes worse mutilations. Lose 1D6 APP; it creates one or more visible deformities that cannot be disguised. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>71-80 Refer to 21-30 for examples of mutilating cuts and losses. Lose 1D6 STR; change hit points and damage bonus. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>81-90 Refer to 31-40 for various wounds to the vitals. Lose 1D6 CON; may affect hit points, damage bonus, and reduces MOV by that number of units equal to the 1D6 result rolled. Your character is unable to fight.</p> <p>91-92 Bad facial and vocal-cord injuries. Lose 1D6 APP; lower the Charisma roll respectively. Your character is still able to fight.</p> <p>93-94 Broken bones and severed ganglia. Lose 1D6 DEX; from now on your character can only use one-handed melee weapons. Your character is still able to fight using his or her remaining arm.</p> <p>95-96 Nerve damage to left or right arm (roll 1D6; a result of 1-3 is the left arm, 4-6 is the right arm). Lose 1D6 DEX; hereafter your character can only wield weapons or equipment in his or her undamaged arm. Your character is still able to fight using his or her remaining arm.</p> <p>97-98 Nerve damage to both arms. Lose 1D6 DEX; though the legs are fine, neither arms nor hands can wield anything. Your character is unable to fight, unless using his or her legs or head butts.</p> <p>99 Your character is mutilated with vicious wounds. Lose 1D3 points each from APP, DEX, and CON, and describe the results. Your character is unable to fight.</p> <p>00 Your character was deliberately mutilated after collapsing. Remove 1D4 points each from any of four characteristics (gamemaster's discretion as to which) and describe the results. Your character is unable to fight.</p> |
|---|--|

- ❖ Target is covered or partially concealed: skills are *Difficult*, see the spot rules for "Cover" on page 220.
- ❖ Target is prone at a range greater than attacker's DEX in feet: the attack is *Difficult*.
- ❖ Using long-range goggles, a scope, laser sight, or other targeting system: Divides range modifiers by 1/2 if one combat round is taken to aim.
- ❖ Weapon on fixed support (a bipod or tripod): +10%.

Missile weapon fire cannot be dodged or parried with hand weapons. The only method of defense against missile weapon fire it is to parry with a shield, if the missile is slow enough to be seen as it flies towards the character. Firearms and other projectiles are too fast for this, while arrows, javelins, and other hand-propelled weapons are all able to be parried with a shield, though attempts are at the default chance provided in "Shields and Missile Fire" on page 231. However, a

gamemaster wishing to run campaigns of extraordinary heroes or a more cinematic action style should allow your character to dodge and parry missile weapon fire without restriction or hindrance, as described in the optional combat rule section "Dodging Missile Weapons" on page 198.

Damage & Healing

Hit points measure the amount of injury your character can take and survive. When your character loses hit points through injury, this is called *damage*. You start with a number of hit points based on your CON and SIZ characteristics, and these are reduced by the amount of damage you take. Wounds or other injuries, poisons, disease, and other forms of attack may cost

your character hit points in damage. You should cross off the amount of hit points lost from the current hit point total shown on your character sheet.

Poison and disease are special sorts of injury; they may attack randomly, and their effects may be delayed. Some destroy hit points, while others destroy characteristic points or (rarely) lower skill ratings of particular skills or types of skills. The First Aid and Medicine skills can lessen or heal minor wounds and injuries. The Healing powers on pages 98 and 131 of **Chapter Four: Powers** and gear described in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** can also restore hit points to characters.

Wounds are *minor*, *major*, or *fatal*, and are described below.

Minor Wounds

A minor wound is one that costs your character half, or less than half, of his or her total hit points. It might be portrayed as a sprain, a mild poisoning, a minor illness, a small break or fracture, a mild concussion, or as a wound that soon closes. Minor wounds do not impair the DEX characteristic, or affect your character's ability to think and to fight.

Your character may take several minor wounds on the same day. If the total hit points lost equal the amount of a major wound, your character must make a successful POW x 4 roll or he or she will fall unconscious. This does not imply that the total of minor wounds causes a major wound, and you or the gamemaster should not roll on the Major Wound Table (on the previous page) in this case. It means that your character has suffered an equivalent to a major wound but has not actually been inflicted with one. Additionally, if your character receives enough minor wounds to reduce him or her to 2 hit points, this will lead to an hour's unconsciousness. Each minor wound is a separate wound, and can be dealt with separately by medical treatment as described in "Healing" on the opposite page.

Major Wounds

When your character has sustained an injury equal to or more than half the character's total hit points, he or she has suffered a *major wound*. Receiving a major wound means that your character risks suffering a permanent injury. When your character gets hit with a major wound, you or the gamemaster should roll on the Major Wound Table or choose an appropriate result if hit locations are used. As noted in the optional rules on "Hit Locations" on pages 204-205, the system for major wounds is incompatible with those results, and the gamemaster should elect to use the basic hit point and damage system (incorporating major

wounds), or hit points by location as provided in the optional rules system.

The effect of a major wound is immediate. Depending on your character's wounds, he or she may not be able to fight after the round of injury. See the Major Wound Table for more details on this.

Even though your character may still be able to fight or has received some form of immediate medical attention, if he or she has suffered a major wound he or she will go into shock. Because of this, your character can fight on only for a number of combat rounds equal to his or her current remaining hit points. *For example, if your character has taken a major wound and has 3 hit points remaining, he or she will drop unconscious in three rounds.* A character possessing 2 or fewer hit points after suffering a major wound collapses immediately from shock and loss of blood and will be unconscious for an hour. The unconsciousness provoked by a major wound often offers a secure way for non-player characters to capture your character rather than killing him or her outright, or perhaps even abandon for dead. It's also a way for you to do the same to non-player characters.

Major wounds and their effects apply to player and non-player characters alike, along with animals, monsters, or other creatures. They do not apply to equipment, inanimate objects, or other beings that do not have a standard musculature (robots, immaterial, gelatinous, etc.).

If your character has suffered a major wound, you should immediately attempt a Luck roll. If successful, the major wound will heal cleanly and does not inflict any permanent loss of characteristic points. If the Luck roll fails, the injury or wound is permanent. Your char-

Conditions of Medical Care

Medical Conditions

Poorly equipped, unsanitary, and/or full of stress-inducing elements; wounded character is mobile and exerting self heavily (combat, rugged travel, etc.); or no medical care whatsoever.

Decent and sanitary conditions, restful environment, adequate care provided, moderate physical exertion.

Excellent conditions and equipment utilized, environment specifically conducive to healing and restoration, full bed rest and therapy, top-notch medical care provided full-time.

Effect on Healing Rate

Caregiver (doctor, nurse, healer, self, etc.) must succeed in a *Difficult* First Aid or Medicine roll for any healing to occur. If successful your character heals normally (1D3 hit points/week), if unsuccessful your character heals no hit points.

Your character heals 1D3 hit points naturally.

Your character heals 1D3 hit points naturally; a further successful First Aid or Medicine skill use allows possible additional healing (as described on page 209).

acter suffers the full wound as described below, subtracting the indicated characteristic points.

Each of the injury descriptions has multiple causes or specifics, allowing the gamemaster to select the most appropriate to the situation. Through training or other various means, your character can regain characteristic points lost from major wounds, but will likely retain a significant scar (if applicable). When the characteristic point loss incurred by the major wound has been regained, any effects from the major wound are eliminated. If your character does not regain the characteristic point(s) lost, the characteristic loss imposed by the major wound is permanent. You should immediately recalculate your character's characteristic rolls, hit points, damage bonus, fatigue points, etc. with the new characteristic totals.

Fatal Wound

A *fatal wound* is one that does more hit points in damage than your character has currently. If an injury reduces your character to 0 or negative hit points, he or she has suffered a fatal wound. Your character is immediately knocked prone, unable to take any action of any type. See the spot rules for being prone on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Fatal wounds obviously lead to death, though they may be averted with the successful application of immediate medical assistance. If your fatally-wounded character receives medical attention (through First Aid, Medicine, a power, an item, or some other means of hit point restoration) in the round he or she received the fatal wound or the round immediately after, and his or her hit points are brought up to 1 or more, your character has almost died, but will survive that particular injury.

Healing Naturally

Most living creatures heal naturally, given enough time and a relatively stress-free environment. Your character will normally heal 1D3 hit points per game week. This is known as the *healing rate*. Usually, the gamemaster rolls the healing rate dice and announces the results to you. Each week, a different roll is made to see how many hit points are restored. As the healing rate can vary depending on each character, the die result can change from week to week. Your character will keep healing each week until all of his or her hit points have been restored.

For example, restoring 7 hit points of damage can take between three to seven game weeks for healing. Three weeks would be two rolls of 3 on 1D3 and one roll with any result. If you were extremely unlucky and seven consecutive results of 1 were rolled on the healing rate rolls, your character would take seven weeks to heal fully from being wounded.

The result of the week's healing is granted at the end of the week (consisting of seven days), but if time is of the essence, the gamemaster may choose to prorate the healing rate across the days of the week, such as dividing the week by result of the die roll, and announcing that each hit point is restored in that many days.

For example, the gamemaster may roll 1D3 for a week's healing rate and get a result of 2. This divides easily into seven days ($7/2 = 3.5$ days), so the gamemaster declares that your character receives 1 hit point back midway through the week and another 1 hit point back at the end of the week.

Natural healing for multiple wounds is treated as one larger wound rather than the way wounds are handled individually for First Aid and Medicine skill checks. The gamemaster should allow you to add the hit points healed to your character's total current hit points rather than applying the healing rate to each individual wound.

The First Aid or Medicine skills or other remedies can speed recovery. A successful First Aid roll immediately restores 1D3 hit points per wound or injury. The Medicine skill may be used to offset the effects of major wounds (described earlier), and can be used to restore hit points lost through means other than injuries. A wide variety of medical equipment and other means (healing powers, for example) can be utilized to aid in the healing process, some of these are described in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Finally, the quality of medical care the patient receives each week may increase his or her healing rate significantly. The "Conditions of Medical Care" table offers a set of guidelines to describe various conditions and any affects they may have on a character's healing rate.



A Combat Example

The following example is drawn from a fantasy setting, and illustrates how Evard the warrior has stolen a priceless amulet from the treasure chamber of a sinister cult of demon-worshipers.

First Combat Round

Tucking the enormous jewel-studded amulet into his waistband, Evard slips out of the cult's treasure room and silently moves down the passage beyond to the chamber where he has prepared his escape.

At its door, a dagger is thrown at Evard from behind. The gamemaster rolls a hit, and says that Evard has been struck high on his left shoulder (the optional hit location system is not being used . . . this is just the gamemaster elaborating with flavor in his or her description). The gamemaster rolls $1D4+2+1D2$, the damage that the dagger does plus half the thrower's damage bonus. Luckily for Evard, the gamemaster gets a 4 on the damage roll, the lowest possible result.

Evard wears as armor a soft leather tunic and has 17 hit points. The gamemaster is using random armor values (another optional rule), so Evard's player rolls $1D6-1$ and rolls 2, for a result of 1. His armor protects him from 1 point of damage, so Evard loses 3 hit points, not 4. He is now down to 14 hit points, so his player carefully crosses out the numbers 17, 16, and 15 on Evard's character sheet.

Second Combat Round

Cursing at his bad luck, Evard enters the chamber and bolts the door behind him, then reaches around to examine his wound. Fortunately, the attack was not an impaling one, so the blade is not stuck in his shoulder. Next, he attempts to treat the wound with First Aid. Evard's First Aid skill is 47%: his player rolls a 99—a fumble!

The gamemaster nods sympathetically at the outcome. A roll on the fumble table is not necessary: the penalty for a fumble with First Aid is always the loss of 1 hit point in general damage. The gamemaster says that Evard did himself an extra point of damage in pulling at the wound, due to the difficult location. The wound is wider now, and blood from it stains his tunic (again, this is not a result of a special damage result: it's just flavor for the players to help them visualize the scene).

Evard's player sighs and crosses off another hit point. Evard now has 13 hit points.

Third Combat Round

Muffled thuds come from the bolted door. Evard wheels and goes to the window through which he entered. He takes hold of the rope, preparing to climb down. The gamemaster holds up a hand to halt the player's description and injects, "Evard notices that the rope feels very light. Does he want to see why?"

He does, the player says, and has Evard pull up the line. Evard's escape rope ends a meter beneath the sill. It has been cut.

Evard is trapped unless he decides to jump to the street. The gamemaster smiles and raises her hand again. She says, "Make a Spot roll to find out if Evard notices something." In this case, the "something" the gamemaster is referring to is a cult assassin on the rooftop opposite Evard, readying his bow for an attack.

The player rolls $D100$ for Evard's Spot skill and fails. Since Evard doesn't notice the cult assassin, the gamemaster sighs, rolls 43, a hit, and then rolls for damage, $1D8+2$. Meanwhile Evard's player gets another result of 1 for Evard's leather armor, while the gamemaster rolls 9 in damage. "Is that enough for a major wound?" the gamemaster inquires innocently. The player nods glumly. He marks off 9 more hit points on the character sheet, lowering Evard's hit points to 4.

Evard's player rolls on the Major Wound Table, getting a result of 27, and the gamemaster says that the arrow struck Evard in the left arm. Evard's Luck roll succeeds, so the wound will not become a permanent injury. Evard feels himself weakening, the gamemaster says. He'll become unconscious in 4 combat rounds, 1 round for each hit point he currently possesses.

At the other end of the room, the door to the hallway is beginning to splinter. Evard could use the next round to try to apply First Aid to this new wound, but he can't afford the time.

Fourth Combat Round

If Evard stays in the room, he'll soon be at the mercy of the demon-worshipping cult, not something to look forward to. It is 6 meters down to the ground, and Evard's player realizes that in his condition the fall could kill Evard. However, the player also knows that Evard the character would never hesitate. "I jump," he says. The Bowman takes another shot. Missile fire cannot be dodged, so Evard hopes for the best. He is in luck—the arrow misses.

"Make your Jump roll, please." The result is a 21, a success. "Okay," says the gamemaster, "Now roll $1D6$ for the damage reduction." He gets a 3, to be subtracted from any damage incurred in the fall to come. "And now roll $2D6$ for the fall damage." Her dice total 5. Evard had 4 hit points, he loses 5, but the jump preparation saves 3—Evard has 2 hit points left.

At 2 hit points, Evard automatically falls unconscious. This is not more than half his total hit points, so there is no new major wound.

Fifth Combat Round

In the night-black alley, Evard's friend Kallistor finds him motionless in the dust. Listening to the approaching shouts, Kallistor's player decides to throw Evard across the saddle of one horse, have his character mount the other, and flee immediately. The gamemaster privately notes that Kallistor's player did not state that he searched Evard to find the amulet.

Sixth Combat Round

A few streets distant, Kallistor feels safe enough to stop for a round. He uses Healing 1 (in this campaign, it's a magic spell) on Evard's knife wound. Kallistor's Healing 1 magic spell restores 3 hit points to Evard (a roll of 3 on $1D6$) and the gamemaster rules that Evard is now conscious and able to ride, but is very weak. Kallistor's player marks off 3 power points for the use of the Healing spell (which costs 3 power points per level used). Kallistor has 14 power points, so it puts him down to 11. The gamemaster privately notes that Evard's player did not state that Evard searched his pouch for the amulet.

Several Combat Rounds Later

After some evasive riding through town to prevent followers, gamemaster says that no pursuit is evident. She rules that they reach their hideout. Inside, safe for the moment, Kallistor uses First Aid to pull out the arrow and properly attend to that wound, raising Evard's hit points to 7.

Next Combat Round

Evard also took fall damage. Kallistor's First Aid fails for that, but Evard's works. The 2 points of fall damage are erased. The injury is still present, but no longer has practical consequence. Now Evard is at 9 hit points.

Next Combat Round after That

Kallistor's unsuccessful First Aid attempt fails to heal the dagger damage, as has Evard's previous attempt.

One More Combat Round

Kallistor uses Healing 2 on Evard's arrow wound, restoring 4 points out of a possible 12. Evard is now at 13 hit points, and Kallistor is now down 6 more power points, leaving him at 5 power points total. Neither of them is in dire shape, but Evard is not at full hit points and Kallistor's used up a couple of power points.

The dagger wound will heal naturally in a week, and the arrow wound will take at least two weeks. Kallistor wants to keep some power points in reserve in case of emergency. He will try the spell when he's got more power points, or when the coast is clear.

After Combat

At this point, there is little reason to continue using combat time, so play switches into the more free-form time, so the player behavior and gamemaster narration becomes more relaxed, time-wise.

His wounds and injuries attended to for the moment, Evard reaches into his waistband to pull out the amulet. "It's gone," the gamemaster smiles. "Evard seems to have lost it. Does he want to look for the amulet now?" At this, the two players groan as they realize the efforts they will have to undergo to recover the amulet.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SPOT RULES

This section contains a number of rules and guidelines for handling specific effects or occasions that are not evident from the rules. These cover the myriad conditions that may arise during combat or under particular environmental conditions. The majority of these rules are intended for the gamemaster's use. You, the player, may choose to become familiar with particular spot rules, though this is not essential for play.

Acid

Exposure to acid or corrosive substances is an infrequent hazard, but significant enough to merit rules. For all intents and purposes, treat all acids the same: the degree of acid damage is more a function of how diluted the acid is, rather than the specific type of acid. Only significant contact (the immersion of a limb or contact with the eyes) should cause serious damage.

- ❖ Weak acids inflict 1D3–1 points of damage per round.
- ❖ Strong acids inflict 1D4 points of damage per round.
- ❖ Very strong acids inflict 1D6+1 points of damage per round.

Armor does not neutralize acid, but does momentarily retard its effects. If the target is armored, reduce the step for each type of acid. Weak acids will do only 1 point of damage per round, strong acids do 1D3–1 point of damage per round, and very strong acids do 1D4 points of damage per round. Armor protection against acids lasts 1D3 rounds, and after that, the acids will inflict normal damage on the victim.

Exposure to very strong acid eats away at armor bindings and weakens the armor itself: after 1D6 rounds of serious exposure, the armor has been functionally destroyed and is useless. This occurs simultaneously with the 1D3 rounds of armor protection—the armor may have been rendered useless in combat but still be offering temporary acid protection.



Spot Rules in this Section

Acid	Firing into Combat
Aerial Combat	Fortified Position
Aimed Attacks	Improvised Parrying Weapons
Ambushes	Improvised Weapons
Area Attacks	Knockback
Armor Destroyed	Knockout Attack
Aura Attacks	Light Sources
Autofire	Mass Combat
Backstabs and Helpless Opponents	Missile Fire While Moving
Big and Little Targets	Mounted Combat
Both Sides Surprised	Natural Weapons
Broken Weapons	Point-Blank Range
Chases, On Foot	Poison
Chases, Vehicular	Prone
Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation	Pulling Blows
Close Combat	Quick-Draws
Closing	Radiation
Cold, Exposure, Hunger, and Thirst	Shields and Missile Fire
Cover	Shooting Up or Down
Darkness	Slippery or Unstable Surfaces
Desperate Action	Stunning or Subduing
Disarming	Superior/Inferior Position
Disease	Superior Numbers
Disengaging	Sweep Attacks
Drawing or Exchanging a Weapon	Thrown Weapons
Enclosed Environments	Two Weapons
Entangle	Underwater Combat
Explosions	Vacuum
Extended Range	Volley Fire
Falling	Weapon Length (Closing)
Fighting While Down	Weather Conditions
Fire and Heat	Zero-Gravity Combat

In some settings, the gamemaster may rule that holy water (or an equivalent) acts as acid against unholy creatures such as vampires or demonic entities.

Aerial Combat

The Fly skill described on page 59 of **Chapter Three: Skills** covers flight in considerable detail. Assuming that your character does not have to use both hands for flight, or to adjust mechanisms (jet-pack controls, for example), a character can make attacks while he or she is flying. As with when riding, your character's attack and other combat skills are limited by his or her Fly skill, if higher, skill ratings are reduced to the level of your character's flight skill; if lower, the skill remains unaffected.

If your character can make a successful Fly roll during a turn of combat (this does not cost an action), any attacks, parries, and other combat actions are unimpaired. The following are cumulative modifiers that may affect your character's ability to use the Fly skill. See also the rules for "Weather Conditions" on page 236, especially those for rain, hail, sleet, and snow.

- ❖ **SIMPLE STUNT (such as a barrel roll):** no penalty
- ❖ **MODERATELY DIFFICULT STUNT (roll):** -10% penalty
- ❖ **DIFFICULT STUNT (wingover):** -25% penalty
- ❖ **EXTREMELY DIFFICULT STUNT (loop-the-loop):** -50% penalty
- ❖ **LIGHT or MODERATE WIND:** no penalty
- ❖ **STRONG WIND:** -10% penalty (no penalty for strong tail wind)
- ❖ **SEVERE WIND:** -25% penalty (-10% penalty for severe tail wind)
- ❖ **WINDSTORM:** -50% penalty (-25% for tail wind)
- ❖ **HURRICANE-FORCE WIND:** -75% penalty (-50% penalty for tail wind)
- ❖ **TORNADO-FORCE WIND:** -100% penalty
- ❖ **HIGH ALTITUDE / LOW PRESSURE / BECALMED:** -25% penalty
- ❖ **WEARING LIGHT ARMOR:** -10% penalty
- ❖ **WEARING MEDIUM ARMOR:** -25% penalty
- ❖ **WEARING HEAVY ARMOR:** -50% penalty

All modifiers are cumulative.

If the roll is a failure, any attack or combat actions a flying character makes are considered *Difficult*. A critical success for the Fly roll allows your character to increase his or her damage bonus by one step for any successful attacks made during that round of combat. If the Fly roll results in a fumble, your character cannot attack or act in any fashion during this round.

If the flight is granted through a vehicle or a flying creature, your character does not have to make Fly checks—the skill required is either the Ride or Pilot skill, or the Fly skill of the being doing the flying, if applicable. Regardless, the effects of the skill roll are applied equally to the rider(s) and the flier.

Aimed Attacks

There are two ways your character can aim to improve his or her efficiency in combat. The first is to *take more time* to take a shot at the general form of the target, whereas the second method is to *target a specific area*. Each method is described below.

Taking More Time: Your character can spend time aiming a missile weapon in return for an increased chance to hit in a combat round. For every five DEX ranks your

character delays, add 10% of the actual skill rating to the chance to hit, cumulative. Round fractions normally. The missile attack must be made in the same combat round if it is a hand-propelled weapon (bow, throwing knife, etc.), or can be held indefinitely if it is a self-propelled weapon (firearm, energy weapon, etc.). However, in either case, the bonus for the aimed attack does not increase beyond that through aiming for a single round.

For example, with a DEX 11 and Bow 70%, your character adds 7% to his or her skill rating while taking more time, and fires the missile on DEX rank 6. If your character delays until DEX rank 1, add 14% to his or her skill rating for a total chance of 84% (70+7+7). At the end of this combat round, the bonus will be lost.

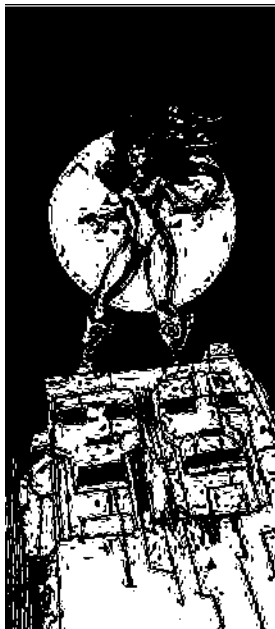
Careful aim is of no effect at ranges beyond double the weapon's base range. If aiming at a doorway or small aperture for a target to appear in, the target must be half or less of base range for the attacker to get the full chance to hit. That way the target does not have enough of a chance to get away before the missile weapon strikes him or her.

Targeting a Specific Area: This is more difficult than spending more time for a shot, and requires a more precise roll. Targeting a specific part of a victim's body is considered *Difficult*, though delaying for 5 DEX ranks (as in "Taking More Time" above) can offset this modifier. The 1/2 skill rating is figured before any adjustments for taking more time.

For example, with a DEX 11 and Bow 70%, your character targeting an enemy's unarmored head has a modified 35% chance to hit, but by delaying 10 DEX ranks, he or she can increase that chance to 49% (35+7+7).

If the gamemaster is not using the hit locations or hit point per location systems, he or she should determine the result of any successful attacks against targeted areas. One suggestion is a *Difficult* Agility roll or a characteristic vs. damage inflicted roll on the resistance table to determine if a weapon is dropped or some other ill effect is suffered. If your character targets an unarmored area and is successful, armor does not reduce the amount of damage taken, just as if a critical hit were rolled (unless the armor is such that it is entirely protective).

If your character is interrupted (attacked, jostled, etc.) while using either method of aiming, he or she must make a successful *Difficult* Idea roll to maintain the aim. If the roll fails, the benefits accrued for the aiming are lost. If the optional Strike Rank system (page 199) is being used, substitute strike ranks for DEX ranks as required.



Sometimes, you may have only one good shot. Take careful aim.

Ambushes

If an attacker (or group of attackers) is able to surprise your character (or group of characters) or otherwise create an opportunity for a surprise attack, the attackers gain an advantage in the form of attacks that cannot be countered. For an ambush to be successful, the gamemaster may call for the attacker to make a successful Stealth skill check, opposed by the intended target's Listen, Sense, or Spot skill, whichever is higher or more appropriate. Alternately, the intended target can use his or her Search skill if actively looking for a potential attacker.

- ❖ If the attackers are using missile weapons and are not seen, the attackers get a free round of attacks that are considered *Easy*. The target(s) cannot dodge or parry this initial attack.
- ❖ If the attackers are using missile weapons and are seen, the attackers get a free round of attacks that are considered *Easy*. The targets can attempt to parry these attacks using shields or the Dodge skill.
- ❖ If the attackers are using hand-to-hand weapons and have not made successful Stealth rolls, the target(s) must make a successful *Easy* Listen, Sense, or Spot roll in order to notice the oncoming attackers. If the target or targets fail to detect the attacker(s), attacks against the target are considered *Easy* and any parries or dodges the target attempts are *Difficult*.
- ❖ If the attacker is using a hand-to-hand weapon, and the target is aware of him or her prior to the attack through use of a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll (player or gamemaster's choice), the intended target of the ambush may act defensively. If the target succeeds in either of these rolls, he or she can parry or Dodge normally, but cannot strike back or move until the next combat round.

In most cases, the target's armor defends normally. The only exception to this would be if the attackers were using an aimed attack (see page 212) to bypass armor.

After the initial round of surprise, the ambush becomes a normal combat round for all parties involved, without restrictions on attacks or parries.

Area Attacks

Some attacks are not specific to a single character but are instead aimed at an area with the intent of doing damage to anyone within that area. These types of attack can range from divine wrath to grenades. If an attack would normally affect everyone in an area, allow each of the characters potentially affected to make a Dodge check to avoid damage altogether, or an Agility check to reduce damage by half. In either case, it is assumed that your character has thrown him- or herself prone onto the ground to prevent injury. Standing up from a prone position takes 5 DEX ranks. If the area attack is not avoided,

it is assumed to automatically strike everyone in its range of effect. Depending on the type of area attack, this may cause knockback, described on page 197 of this chapter. At the gamemaster's discretion shelter or cover may further reduce this damage. Armor is usually applied against damage from area attacks.

Armor Destroyed

Acid, fire, or other corrosive or highly caustic attacks can damage or destroy armor. It is possible also that a piece of armor can be destroyed by critical hits or even fumbles, though this is at the gamemaster's discretion. If it is necessary to model the effects of damaged or missing sections of armor, reduce its armor value by 1/2 or an approximation of that value, rounding down. *For example, armor worth 5 points of protection will only be worth 2 points of armor value.* If the optional random armor value system is used, armor normally protecting 1D8+1 may be reduced to 1D4 protection, which is 1/2 of 1D8, with the +1 rounded down.

Repairing armor costs as much as the fraction of damage multiplied by the armor's normal cost. *For example, armor reduced from 7 points of armor value to 3 (1/2 the armor value, rounded down) has been reduced by 57% of its effectiveness (4/7 of the armor is ineffective and damaged, or 57%). Repairing the armor to full effectiveness will cost approximately 57% of the armor's normal cost.* The gamemaster may adjust that percentage based on other factors, such as your character's relation to the craftsman, the availability of materials needed for repairs, and the nature of the damage.

Aura Attacks

Your character may attempt to command the attention of others through a display of outstanding presence and strength of will. This is called an *aura attack*. This ability may not be allowable in all campaigns or settings, and the extent of its use should be evaluated by the gamemaster before allowing it as an option. Aura attacks can also be used as an invaluable special attack in epic or super hero games. To make an aura attack, your character must measure his or her *aura total*, an average of his or her SIZ, POW, and APP characteristics. Aura attacks must have a full combat round to initiate if in combat, or they must have at least 12 seconds of preparation if not in combat. An aura attack occurs on your character's normal DEX rank.

Aura attacks do not inflict horror or intimidate most opponents—the optional “Sanity” system (page 318) is used for those techniques of dealing with non-player characters.

When your character makes an aura attack, anyone who can view him or her must make a resistance roll with his or her INT characteristic vs. the aura

total of your character. Some or all of the following factors may modify the resistance roll:

Command: Your character may attempt to make a Command roll before making an aura attack. If successful, your character is able to modify the opponent's resistance roll result as if using an opposed roll (see page 173).

Previous Success: If your character has previously succeeded in an aura attack against a target, the target's resistance roll is increased by the difficulty of the target's resistance roll. A lucky or powerful character can make continued aura attacks against an opponent to keep them at bay, or to paralyze them with fear.

Experience: At the gamemaster's discretion, a character that has long faced adversity and survived can add his or her POW in percentile points to his or her resistance roll.

Circumstances: The gamemaster may also reduce or increase the target's resistance roll by an amount of -20% to +20% based on circumstances surrounding the aura attack. This can range from possessing a powerful magic item with legendary qualities, overwhelming inferiority or superiority in firepower, death of allied combatants, or any implied threat accompanying the aura attack.

If the resistance roll fails, any target of the aura attack are considered to be mesmerized for the remainder of the turn. He or she can dodge, parry, or otherwise react to attacks against them, but cannot initiate any attack or other actions of his or her own volition. This mesmerization ends at the end of the combat round. If the resistance roll is a fumble, the target is demoralized and may surrender, or flee, as appropriate. All actions become *Difficult* for a demoralized target for the remainder of that combat round. Whether the result is a failure or fumble, all results end on the last DEX rank of the combat turn the aura attack is made in.

Autofire

Many weapons, such as machine and submachine guns, have the capability to set the trigger to fire short bursts (multiple shots) or automatic fire (abbreviated as autofire, consisting of a large number of shots as long as the trigger is held down). Unlike most missile weapon combat, autofire or bursts occur on the attacker's DEX rank, rather than at the beginning of the combat round before DEX ranks.

Against a single target, for every extra shot above the first in autofire or a burst, the attacker's chance to hit is increased by +5%, up to a total of up to double the normal weapon skill rating. The attacker should announce how many shots are being fired (bursts are usually 3 shots, while autofire can empty the whole clip), and determine the increased attack chance. The attack is rolled normal-

ly. If the shot is a failure, all shots in the burst miss. If it is successful and hits the target, roll an appropriate die based on the number of shots fired. To get an odd number, roll an appropriate dice type and divide by two (rounding up). *For example, if 8 shots are fired, roll a D8; if 5 shots are fired, roll a D10 and divide it in half, rounding up, etc.*

The gamemaster may require that all bursts or autofire occur in numbers with easy dice equivalents, such as 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, etc. The result of this die roll is the number of shots that hit the target. Only the first attack is able to achieve a special or critical success—all of the rest are normal successes.

For multiple targets, if they are spread across the field of fire, the skill rating does not improve (no +5% increases). Instead, each attack is dealt with separately, with an attack roll for each target. The attacker can allocate the number of bullets per target. In this case, each target could potentially receive a special or critical success. If multiple targets are restricted to a narrow field of fire, such as in a corridor or grouped closely together, the attacker's chance to hit is increased by +5% per extra round fired.

Backstabs and Helpless Opponents

If in the midst of hand-to-hand combat, your character is able to launch an attack at the unprotected back of a target, the chance to attack is *Easy* for this one attack. If the target succeeds in a *Difficult* Listen or Sense roll, he or she can make a *Difficult* Dodge or parry attempt, and only if he or she has any remaining opportunities for defense. No additional damage is done by such an attack—the heightened chance at inflicting a special or critical success and the lowered chance of avoiding the attack is advantage enough.

Similarly, if a target is helpless (unable to move, dodge, or parry), the chance to hit him or her is *Easy* and he or she cannot make a dodge or parry attempt against the attack. Conditions by which a target might be considered helpless are when he or she is unconsciousness or otherwise asleep, or is chained or bound firmly. In such cases, the gamemaster may wish to allow the target to make a POW x 1% roll to determine if some lucky incident occurs that stays the attacker's hand for the duration of the combat round.

Big and Little Targets

If an attacker and target are within the same relative SIZ range, there are no modifiers between them. If the attacker and the target are of vastly different sizes, however, it affects the success of attacks. If a target is of SIZ 30 or larger and the attackers are normal sized (SIZ 5–29), for every 10 SIZ above 30, add +5% to the attacker's skill rating with a melee or missile weapon. *For example, attack chances against a SIZ 60 target are at +30%.* For every point of SIZ a target that is less than

5, subtract 5% from any hand-to-hand or missile attacks against that target if the attacker is of SIZ 5–29. *For example, attack chances against a SIZ 2 target are at –15%.* Range modifiers apply in either case. These modifiers apply to inanimate objects and living beings alike.

A simpler version to handle disparate sizes between attackers and targets is as follows: if the target is more than twice your SIZ, add +20% to your attack chance. If the target is less than half your size (rounded down), modify your attack chance by –20%.

Both Sides Surprised

Unlike ambushes (described above), situations with both sides surprised are unplanned and typically involve unaware parties on either side. Situations where this might arise are two characters meeting each other around a blind corner, or suddenly being thrust face-to-face in the midst of a fight with other foes. According to the situation, the gamemaster should allow for each character to make a Sense check to detect one another, or an Agility check to see who reacts first. In situations where exceptional surprise might play a role, an Idea check could be the tiebreaker. As a last resort, use DEX ranks to determine who goes first. Generally, however, the initiative should be a matter of mental quickness rather than simple reflexes.

Broken Weapons

Equipment is often damaged or broken during combat. A weapon or shield will break if it is used to parry an attack that reduces the weapon's hit points to 0. See "Shields" on page 262 for more detail on shields. A broken weapon does half its normal rolled damage, rounded down. At the gamemaster's discretion, any attacks with the weapon might be considered *Difficult*, though if it resembles a similar weapon your character is familiar with, the skill may be unmodified.

For example, a broadsword with a blade broken in half is still useable as a short sword. However, half of a laser pistol is usable only as a paperweight.

Chases. On Foot

Chases occur when one character needs to outrun or outmaneuver another character, whether to avoid harm or to inflict it, or to prevent or instigate some action. There are endless reasons one character might chase another and what the end results can be. Furthermore, there are infinite combinations of vehicles and environments a chase might occur in. As a result, chases are handled here in a very abstract manner, allowing for improvisation and creative input of players and the gamemaster without requiring a map or detailed system. Whether in the open sky with jet fighters, on the busy streets of a major metropo-

(. . . continued on page 218)

Chases, Vehicular

These rules offer resolution for simple chases and other situations involving two entities (a pursuer and the pursued, whether vehicles or characters). They are simplified and abstract, and a gamemaster wishing for additional detail can elaborate on the results suggested. Ranges are not specific, and while the chase track specifies combat rounds, each round could instead be a longer amount of time to represent minutes, hours, or even days spent in a chase.

Relevant skills for chases include Drive, Fly, Pilot, Ride, and even Swim, and in certain circumstances, additional skill such as Climb, Jump, Navigate, Spot, or even Track may be required for the chase to continue uninterrupted. When dealing with characters on foot, the gamemaster may require successful Agility rolls, perhaps rated at *Difficult* if appropriate.

Each round, the gamemaster should determine the following:

- ❖ Participants in the chase can change speed, if possible.
- ❖ Determine the outcome of maneuvers and potential crashes.
- ❖ Individual characters can move or act on their DEX ranks.

The following concepts are used while describing chases:

Rated Speed: The maximum sustainable speed of the vehicle or character. Both may travel at the top Rated Speed, or any Speed less than this. All entities in a chase begin at Speed 0, and accelerate up to travel speed.

Range: The interval between entities in a chase. There are five ranges, as shown on the Chase Range Track (below). For every Speed faster than an opponent, a character or vehicle can move one Range increment closer to or further from the other character or vehicle per combat round—if ahead, the leader moves further away from the pursuer; if behind, the pursuer moves one Range closer.

Accelerate, Decelerate: A character or vehicle can accelerate/decelerate by X Speeds in a round. These are provided with the vehicle descriptions in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**.

Handling: This is the ease and responsiveness of a maneuver. Add or subtract the Handling modifier for the vehicle from the character's appropriate skill. A character moving under his or her own power does not have Handling modifiers.

Maneuvers

Maneuvers are described in the Skill Roll Modifier chart (opposite). When a maneuver is failed, roll on the Chase Trouble Table (opposite).

TURN: A turn may require a character or vehicle to decelerate by 1 or more Speed increments. A U-turn always requires a character or vehicle to slow to Speed 1. Success for this maneuver under normal circumstances is automatic.

HIGH-SPEED TURN: When a character or vehicle attempts this, the character must succeed in the relevant skill, with a -10% modifier applied.

"BOOTLEGGERS" REVERSE: A classic driving maneuver that can be applied to a variety of vehicles, where use of brakes (braking jets, reverse power, etc.) causes the vehicle to suddenly skid and turn to one side, eventually ending up facing the direction it came from. To accomplish this, a character must make a relevant skill roll with a -25% modifier. Success places him or her in the reverse direction, and he or she may accelerate to Speed 2 in the next round. This cannot be performed with horses or horse-drawn vehicles.

RAM/COLLIDE: The vehicle smashes into or sideswipes a moving or stationary target. A ram maneuver does 1D6 hit points of damage per level of Speed to the vehicle it collides with, and the passengers within each vehicle take 1D3 hit points of damage per level of Speed. Adequate protection (seatbelts, etc.) can reduce the damage suffered by the passengers by 1D3. Exceptional protection (shock-chairs, impact foam, etc.) can reduce the damage suffered by the passengers by 2D3.

VEHICLE DAMAGE: Hit point totals for a variety of vehicles are provided in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. When a vehicle collides or is rammed, subtract the vehicle's armor value, and subtract the remaining damage to

(. . . continued on the next page)

Vehicle Range Track

show position with coins, miniatures, or other markers

Side-By-Side	2 Lengths	Close	In Sight	Out of Sight
RANGE 1	RANGE 2	RANGE 3	RANGE 4	RANGE 5
missile weapons at normal skill percentile	missile weapons are Difficult (1/2) skill %	missile weapons at 1/4 skill percentile	only a roll of 01% hits	no chance to hit

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Skill Roll Modifiers

All modifiers from the tables below are cumulative.

CONDITIONS?	Skill Modifier
Fog	-10%
Night	-10%
Rain	-10%
Wind	-10%
Heavy Rain	-20%
Oily, Icy	-20%
Snow	-20%
MANEUVER?	Skill Modifier
At Speed 1 or 2	+10%
At Maximum Speed	-10%
High-Speed Turn	-10%
Bootlegger Reverse	-25%
TERRAIN?	Skill Modifier
Gravel Road	-10%
Long Downhill Grade	-10%
Dirt Road	-20%
Limbs, Rocks	-20%
VEHICLE?	Skill Modifier
Minor vehicle damage	-10%
Handling	per vehicle

Chapter Eight: Equipment has a Sample Vehicle Record for use in chases, and covers all manner of vehicles.

the vehicle's current hit points. When the vehicle has taken more than half its hit points, reduce its top speed by half. When it has 5 or fewer hit points, the vehicle ceases to function (and may crash as it halts). A successful Repair skill roll may restore 1D6+4 hit points to the vehicle, taking 1 hour per hit point restored. If a vehicle is damaged, the gamemaster may choose to roll on the Chase Trouble Table (below). When a vehicle's hit point total reaches 0, it is destroyed. The gamemaster should determine what happens to the passengers inside based on the nature and location of the vehicle, referring to spot rules covering explosives, falling, fire, radiation, etc. as appropriate.

Individual Actions: Side by side, characters can clamber around inside or on vehicles and attempt to move to one other or even perform skill rolls on each other. Any such movement skills should be considered *Difficult*, and the gamemaster may impose additional penalties on skills attempted while in a moving vehicle. If a character misses a skill check and could potentially be thrown off the vehicle, the gamemaster should allow the character to make Luck roll or a *Difficult* Agility roll, as appropriate, to grab something to prevent from being thrown away or falling

off the vehicle. In enclosed vehicles, this is generally not a possibility.

Chase Trouble Table

Use this table whenever a maneuver is failed or when a vehicle is damaged. It can also apply to characters that fail movement rolls, but should be modified using common sense and the gamemaster's discretion to interpret inappropriate results. Additionally, the gamemaster should personalize each result based on the type of vehicle and environment it is moving through. *For example, a hover-car flying through a ruined city may fall out of the sky or collide with a building if the engine stops working.* If a roll greater than 10 is called for, roll again and use both results.

Chase Trouble Table

Roll 1D10, and hope for the best.

- | D10 | Result |
|-----|--|
| 1 | FLAT TIRE, CRACKED WHEEL: This slows the vehicle to Speed 1 until repaired. It can also indicate minor damage to a jet, wing, or other propulsion system. |
| 2 | PROPULSION DAMAGE: This slows a vehicle by 2 additional Speeds each round until stopped. The vehicle cannot start again without a successful Repair roll being made. In the case of creature-drawn vehicles, this could indicate damage to harness. |
| 3 | PROPULSION RUPTURE: This has no effect until the vehicle takes additional damage, though long-range travel is limited severely. If this is a drawn vehicle, the horse may be considered dead. To restart the vehicle, the tank must be repaired or replaced, and the fuel must be restored. Leaking fuel may cause additional threats other than limiting travel, at the gamemaster's discretion. |
| 4-6 | SKID: Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by -20% in the next round only. |
| 7 | FISHTAIL: Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by -10% in the next round only. |
| 8 | FISHTAIL: Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by -15% in the next round only, then roll again on this table with a +2 modifier and apply the results. |
| 9 | SEVERE FISHTAIL: Lower the pilot's appropriate skill (Drive, Pilot, etc.) by -30% in the next round only, then roll again on this table with a +4 modifier and apply the results. |
| 10 | ROLL or TUMBLE: The vehicle careens widely off the intended path, rolling once per Speed traveled. Each roll does 2D3 hit points damage to vehicle if appropriate, and 1D3 hit points to each passenger (1D6 hit points to creature-drawn vehicle passengers who are hurled free on the first roll). For fueled vehicles, allow a 10% chance of a fuel explosion. |

(... continued from page 215)

lis, or in ancient ruined tunnels far beneath the earth's surface, all chases are handled with this system.

Before beginning a chase, the gamemaster should decide five elements:

- ❖ Does one party in the chase begin with a significant advantage (a head start) or does the chase begin on relatively equal footing? *For example, when confronted by a player character hero, the villain non-player character drops a smoke bomb, and unexpectedly runs out the back door. It is a full round before the player character realizes that the villain has in fact fled.*
- ❖ How difficult the course is ahead and how much leeway will the characters involved in the chase have for changing the setting? Will the environment of the chase change? *For example, is the chase going to occur somewhere relatively unobstructed, like an open field or the empty hallways of a large and modern hotel, or will it occur in an asteroid field full of debris, or on a busy street full of tourists and other obstructions? Or is it a combination of several environments, such as through a narrow and twisted cave tunnel system and then opening into an enormous, smooth cavern?*
- ❖ What skills will the characters be required to utilize for this chase, and can skills be substituted or others be called for if the conditions of the chase change? *For example, will Drive or Pilot be required? Is Navigate going to be useful for a longer chase, or could an Idea roll suffice?*
- ❖ Is there is a limitation on how long the chase will be allowed to last (such as a fixed distance before the chase will naturally end)? *For example, a chase along the deck of an aircraft hanger will probably end at the edge of the deck, unless the characters choose to fly or swim.*
- ❖ What location, change of situation, or new condition will end the chase? *For example, a character chasing a foe down in an attempt to grapple with them has a clear end goal in mind... catching the pursued character and initiating a successful grapple will end the chase.*

Between opponents of the same speed, the gamemaster should match the participants' CON vs. CON on the resistance table, or see who rolls the lower Climb, Swim, etc., to settle who wins a race. In context, several rolls may be needed. The optional rules for "Opposed Skill Rolls" (page 173) may provide more detail or a system better suited to the gamemaster and players' tastes.

If one runner is heavily armored or encumbered, and the other is lightly armored, unarmored, or unencumbered, require the more heavily burdened character to make a successful *Difficult* Stamina roll each combat round to keep up or to keep away. If both are equally burdened, utilize the basic rules above. A character that fails two rolls in a row is either caught up with, or moves out of sight and/or reach and is essentially lost unless circumstances change significantly.

Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation

The gamemaster should use asphyxiation damage to resolve situations in which your character is denied

breathable air, such as smoke inhalation, drowning, poisoning by gas, strangulation, or choking (whether inadvertent or through hostile activity from another character).

If the situation was not a surprise, you should attempt to make roll of CON x 10 (an *Easy* Stamina roll). If successful, your character can hold his or her breath during the first combat round of exposure to asphyxiation. For the next nine combat rounds, the CON success roll is successively reduced by one multiplier each combat round. Thus, in the second round the roll is CON x 9, then CON x 8 in the third round, etc.

This continues until your character is no longer able to succeed in CON rolls, or until the tenth combat round. On the tenth and following combat rounds, you must try to make successful D100 rolls equal to or less than your character's CON x 1%. When the roll fails, your character takes damage to his or her total hit points at the end of each following combat round, until he or she escapes the situation, is rendered unconscious, or dies.

The damage done per combat round depends on the substance inhaled or action being committed against your character. Inhaling water inflicts 1D8 hit points per combat round; smoke does 1D4; dense smoke does 1D6; poison gas does 1D8 plus its corrosive effect, if any. A character with powers such as Adaptation or other defenses may be immune to these effects. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information.

If your character is being deliberately choked, you must succeed in a roll of your character's CON x 1 each combat round or your character takes 1D6 damage to his or her total hit points. Your character has no chance to hold his or her breath in this situation. Additionally, a strangle cord, garrote, or even strong attackers may do basic damage while strangling. See the Grapple skill on page 60 and the weapon statistics in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for details on this.

If your character is surprised by the situation in which he or she is being asphyxiated or choked, you must make a successful Luck roll to determine if your character has been able to take a breath before being asphyxiated. If the roll is successful, follow the asphyxiation procedure described above (CON x 10, etc.). If the roll does not succeed, the asphyxiation chance is equal to your character's Stamina roll. Further combat rounds reduce this by one multiple, to CON x 4, CON x 3, etc. All further effects are identical to above.

Close Combat

When wielding a short melee weapon (SIZ 0 or 1), your character is at a slight tactical disadvantage when fighting an opponent armed with a longer melee weapon (SIZ 2+). This is called close combat, and is roughly equivalent to 5' of space around your character. For

weapons like spears and polearms, the short weapon-user must first close (move into the 5' space) on their opponent to get within striking range. "Closing" is described on page 219. The following conditions apply to close combat:

- ❖ In melee combat, if the two characters are not in close combat, the gamemaster should allow a long-weapon-user to strike first against short weapon-users, regardless of DEX rank.
- ❖ At the gamemaster's discretion, if a short weapon-user is in close combat with a long weapon-user, any parry attempts made by the long weapon-user are considered *Difficult*.

If the long-weapon-user wishes, he or she can keep one or more short weapon-users at bay. This means that in place of an attack, the long-weapon-user can attempt a normal weapon skill roll to prevent the short-weapon-user(s) from closing and being able to engage in an attack in that combat round. This roll must be made each combat round, and if successful, the short weapon-user or users do not take any damage, but cannot close during that combat round. If the long weapon-user has multiple attacks in the combat round, he or she can make them as normal. On subsequent combat rounds, the character with the higher DEX rank will go first, regardless of length of weapon.

A short weapon-user being kept at bay may have to make a successful Dodge or parry roll to get into close combat with a long-weapon-user. If the attempt succeeds, he or she slips past the guard of the long weapon-user and is able to attack normally. If the Dodge or parry attempt fails, the short weapon-user is kept away from close combat for the remainder of the combat round and cannot attack.

To summarize, a long weapon-user strikes first at the beginning of a new combat. The long weapon-user can choose to attack normally, or keep the short weapon-user at bay (which does no damage). A character being kept at bay may choose to close (see "Closing" on page 219), or attempt to dodge past the weapon and attack.

Closing

In melee combat, once an attacker closes with a target using a longer weapon (such as a spear-user attacking a sword-user), he or she will always get first strike (or action), regardless of DEX rank. After the initial attack by the long weapon-user, the short weapon-user can act on his or her normal DEX rank. To close with a long weapon-user, a character must be closing on the target during the next combat round or next available action, and may be required to make a successful Dodge roll if being kept at bay (see "Close Combat", above). Though a character with the longer weapon may parry, attack, or dodge, he or she may perform only one of these actions in that DEX rank. Normally a character may do two of those three

actions in the same combat round, but in this case, the length of the weapon makes it less wieldy against the short weapon-user once the combat becomes close.

If a long weapon-user closes with another long weapon-user, they are both limited to the limitations noted in the preceding section, but they strike at normal DEX ranks, and all subsequent combat is as normal, assuming that they find ideal space to wield their weapons. As noted in "Close Combat", above, a short weapon-user can close on a long weapon-user with a successful Dodge attempt.

Cold, Exposure, Hunger, and Thirst

Most of the time, your character will be adventuring in civilized areas, or will be prepared for their environment accordingly with protective gear and adequate food and water. Once outside civilized lands, however, or beyond the areas where food and shelter are convenient, there is a strong risk of succumbing to hazardous environmental conditions. If your character has taken steps in this direction, though purchasing appropriate supplies and preparing for the terrain and the difficulties they face while traveling, the gamemaster should assume that the environment presents no special difficulty, unless a struggle for survival is an element of the scenario or campaign. These spot rules cover extended exposure to hazardous (but not immediately deadly) environmental situations, including starvation and dehydration. Powers such as Adaptation may negate the effects of exposure to extreme environments: consult **Chapter Four: Powers** for details.

If your character suffers stifling heat or freezing cold, he or she loses two to four times the normal loss of fatigue points per combat round of activity, if the optional fatigue point system is being used. The gamemaster determines the multiplier for the situation.

A healthy character can survive up to three days without food or water without any difficulty other than hunger and thirst. A hungry character will have the same penalty for combat round activity applied to his or her fatigue points after two days without food, and a thirsty character must bear the penalty after one day without liquid. If the optional fatigue point system is not being used, any physical actions your character takes after the three-day mark are considered *Difficult*.

After a number of days equal to 1/2 your character's CON characteristic exposed to stifling heat, freezing cold, or without food or water, any physical action your character attempts must be preceded by a successful Stamina roll. Failure still allows your character to perform the action, though your character takes 1 hit point in damage from the exertion. After a number of days equal to your character's CON, all rolls (mental and physical) are considered *Difficult*.

While your character is exposed, hungry, or thirsty, simple rest will not restore fatigue points. For every day your character's fatigue points are not a positive number, he or she takes 1D6 damage directly to hit points. Furthermore, wounds take twice as long to heal after a number of days equal to your character's CON without food and/or water. In extreme cases, the gamemaster may even lower your character's SIZ characteristic by 1 or 2 points if he or she begins to waste away from starvation. If your character's hit points are reduced to 0 or less, he or she will die after that day is over. The gamemaster will decide what circumstances constitute the conclusion of a day.

Cover

If a target is partially covered by a wall, doorway, window ledge, fencepost, etc., any attacks on that target are considered *Difficult*. If the attack roll is over the adjusted amount to hit (but less than the normal skill rating), the attack has hit the obstacle or cover rather than the target of the attack.

For example, your character shoots at a foe half concealed behind a wall. His or her normal skill rating is 72%, reduced by half to 36% because the task is Difficult. The attack strikes the target if the outcome of the roll is 36 or under. If it is between 37 and 72, the attack strikes the covering wall.

If appropriate, damage should be rolled to see if it bypasses the cover and goes through to the intended target of the attack. See "Damage to Inanimate Objects" on page 276 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more information. The gamemaster should use discretion as to when damage is rolled, reserving it for when it seems sensible: rolling damage for an arrow that strikes a brick wall is a waste of time, while a bullet striking a thin wooden wall might easily bypass the wall and strike the target.

If hit locations are being used, you should announce what portions of your character's body are behind cover before the gamemaster rolls for an attack, with the gamemaster being the arbiter of how much cover the obstacle allows. The attack is rolled normally, with no skill adjustments, but any hit locations obscured by the cover strike the cover instead. As above, if appropriate, the damage rolled may pass through the covering object or structure and strike the intended target.

Darkness

If your character is fighting in semi-darkness, all Combat skills become *Difficult*. If it is intense darkness, all vision-dependent skills, including Combat skills, uniformly drop to POW x 1%. In absolute darkness or when something is invisible, successful weapon use is a matter of deduction or luck. To detect an opponent in



Scenarios sometimes present combat situations that arise infrequently. Refer to the Spot Rules to find a similar situation and adapt those instructions. Remember, keep the needs of the story foremost in mind.

complete darkness, you must make successful *Difficult* Idea or Luck rolls (whichever is higher), or suffer the POW x 1% skill rating threshold. If successful, the skills are only *Difficult*. However, if the target is giving off some sensory clue, such as a strong odor or sound, your character can substitute his or her Sense or Listen skill, as appropriate, for the same benefit.

Your character can offset the penalties of darkness by wielding a light source in one hand. See "Light Sources" on page 226 for more detail. Powers such as Super Sense can potentially offset any darkness-related penalties. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more details.

Desperate Action

If your character that has performed all of his or her actions in a combat round and you absolutely need to make one final action, at the gamemaster's discretion your character can attempt a desperate action on the last DEX rank of the round. To do so, first you must make a successful *Difficult* Agility roll. If this fails, no action is attempted. If successful, a desperate action is allowed. This final attack or action is considered a *Difficult* task. In the succeeding round, your character forfeits all attacks due to the imbalanced position that the desperate action has placed him or her in. Dodges and parries are unaffected. If the fatigue point system is being used, a desperate action costs double the normal fatigue points cost for a normal attack action or activity.

Disarming

Sometimes, the most efficient strategy is to separate a target from his or her weapon during a combat, to limit his or her ability to deal damage, and to potentially threaten the target and force a surrender. Disarming removes the target's hand weapon. Though weapons may be broken during the course of combat, through fumbles or taking excessive damage while parrying, there are two direct methods of disarming a target without harming him or her:

- ❖ An attacker who wishes to disarm a target may try to close with the target in order to Grapple with him or her. After a successful Grapple is made, the attacker can utilize a Grappling maneuver to disarm his or her target. See the Grapple skill described on page 60 for details.
- ❖ At the beginning of a round, you can announce your character's intent to disarm his or her intended target by knocking or twisting the target's weapon away. If the target has more than one weapon, the weapon to be disarmed must be specified. Attacks are made normally during the combat round, though no damage is rolled. If the result of the roll is less than $1/2$ your character's weapon skill rating, he or she has succeeded in disarming the target from one weapon he or she is holding. The target being disarmed may resist this by making a successful *Difficult Effort* roll. A special success on a disarming attack reduces the target's chance to STR x 1 to hold onto his or her weapon. A critical disarming attack always succeeds, and the target is not allowed to make an Effort roll to stay armed. While a successful Dodge negates a successful disarming attack, a parry of any sort has no effect.

Disease

If your character is exposed to a minor disease, such as a bad cold or mild flu, you should make a Stamina roll for your character to see if the disease is contracted. Success means that it is avoided, while failure means that your character catches the disease. For a minor disease like those above, the extent of the illness should merely cost 1 or 2 hit points over a few days. On the morning of the second day your character suffers from a minor disease, roll CON x 2. If the roll is successful, the character recovers. If the roll fails, the disease persists for another day. On the morning of the third day, roll CON x 3, continuing by increasing the multiplier by the roll until the disease is finally overcome.

Your character must rest and be cared for while recuperating from a disease. Less-than-ideal conditions (adventuring, combat, rough environment, etc.) reduces this characteristic roll by one multiple per outstanding condition, at the gamemaster's discretion. As a general guide, if the recovery roll normally would be CON x 5, reduce it to CON x 4 if your character is not at home in bed, reduce it to CON x 3 if he or she is hiking in the wilderness, reduce it to CON x 2 if your character is engaged in strenuous activity such as combat, and reduce

it to CON x 1 if your character is suffering from injuries or wounds inflicted before or after the disease.

Though medical attention may aid your character in recovering from the disease, he or she must normally recover naturally by succeeding in a CON roll. Simply receiving medical care will not heal the character. See the Medicine skill on page 69 for more details on how treatment will affect recovery. Some powers and equipment may help against disease: see **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for details.

A major disease such as plague might attack any characteristic, but most diseases will attack CON or hit points. Immensely powerful diseases (such as ebola) could even inflict 1 or up to 1D3 hit points per hour, enough to kill an average human in eight hours. Symptoms would vary greatly. Lesser diseases might inflict 1 hit point per day, or per week, coupled with loss of characteristic points. Cross-index the number of times your character has failed his or her CON roll on the "Illness Severity Chart" below.

Illness Severity Table

Failures	Degree of Illness
0	None
1	Mild: lose 1 characteristic point per week
2	Acute: lose 1 characteristic point per day
3	Severe: lose 1 characteristic point per hour
4+	Terminal: lose 1 characteristic point per minute

The first characteristic point is lost when your character initially contracts the disease (failing the first roll). Each successive loss is added to the total whenever a CON roll is being made to shake the disease. The type of disease dictates what characteristic points are being lost.

Following are some generic disease types (each tied to a single characteristic). The gamemaster is encouraged to develop a list more suitable to the setting of the campaign (or rename these as appropriate).

- ❖ **ATROPHY.** This affects your character's muscular system, causing the character to lose STR points. When your character's STR reaches 0, he or she dies.
- ❖ **THE CHILLS:** Chills and fever, ruining health. Affects CON (and hit points, as CON decreases). When your character's CON reaches 0, he or she dies.
- ❖ **DELIRIUM:** A state marked by muddled thought and heightened fever. Affects INT. When your character's INT reaches 0, he or she becomes a vegetable.
- ❖ **MALAISE:** A supernatural or psychic disease attacking on the spirit plane. Affects POW. When your character's POW reaches 0, he or she loses the will to live and ceases to exist consciously or spiritually.
- ❖ **THE SHAKES:** A nerve ailment affecting your character's DEX. When your character's DEX reaches 0, he or she becomes a quivering mass of ganglia and is unable to control any movement or is utterly paralyzed.

- ❖ **DISFIGUREMENT:** Any of a series of diseases affecting your character's APP, usually by deteriorating skin condition, or other visible symptoms. When your character's APP reaches 0, he or she has suffered fatal levels of disfigurement, wracked with infection or other side effects.

At the gamemaster's discretion, some diseases may combine the effects of these basic types, and have other effects as well.

Disengaging

Sometimes, your character may wish to disengage a fight while his or her opponent wishes to continue, or vice versa. To disengage, there are three courses of action:

- ❖ The most effective means is for the disengaging character to succeed in a knockback attack and then make a successful Dodge. This method does not allow any further attacks on your character, and removes him or her from close combat.
- ❖ An engaged character can choose make a fighting withdrawal. He or she does not take any attack actions, but instead is limited only to dodges, parries, and movement actions. If your character is successful in all dodges or parries made during this combat round, he or she has successfully disengaged from combat and may move his or her full movement rate away from the battle. If any of these rolls fail, your character is still engaged in combat.
- ❖ In desperation, a disengaging character can simply turn and run. This leaves the disengaging character open and defenseless—his or her opponent(s) is allowed to make one “free” attack against the character which cannot be parried or Dodged.

Drawing or Exchanging a Weapon

A sheathed weapon is not instantly ready for use. If your character is not expecting combat and does not have a weapon drawn, or loses a weapon due to circumstances during the combat round, he or she must draw another weapon. Sheathing or unsheathing a weapon takes 5 DEX ranks to perform, or 10 DEX ranks to do both. In the heat of battle, to preserve time, your character may choose to merely drop the weapon he or she is equipped with and draw another. *For example, dropping an empty pistol and drawing another with a full magazine is a common tactic.* Dropping a weapon does not cost any DEX ranks. However, if your character has 101% or more skill with a weapon, he or she is proficient enough to draw or sheath that weapon without counting it as a 5 DEX-rank action, and can perform both actions (sheathing one weapon while drawing another) as a 5 DEX rank action. If the optional strike rank system is being used, the penalty for drawing or exchanging a weapon is 3 strike ranks.

Enclosed Environments

Generally, while in combat, your character needs a radius of at least one meter of free space to fight comfortably with a melee weapon. If your character has less room than that, any attacks with a melee weapon larger than SIZ 2 are *Difficult*. If your character has less than a half meter radius of space, all weapon attacks with melee or ranged weapons of SIZ 1 or 2 are considered *Difficult*. If your character is using a SIZ 0 melee or ranged weapon, he or she is never inconvenienced by enclosed spaces, though the effects of a grapple or entangle attack may present similar challenges to his or her ability to attack and act freely.

Entangle

The entangle effect for attacks is described fully on page 196 of **Chapter Five: Combat**. Entangles can also be a special attack, the attacker declares that he or she is attempting an entangle and is armed with a suitable weapon. If an entangle attempt is made, it is a *Difficult* action. Any weapons with the entangle special effect can be used to make entangle attacks, and the gamemaster may allow other weapons to be used for this special attack if the weapon is utilized in an entangling fashion.

For example, your character might use a spiked mace to attempt to tangle the garments of a foe, though the spiked mace is not normally an entangling weapon.

An attacker must be roughly 3 meters (yards) away from the intended target to make an entangling attack, though this may vary by the weapon type. If the attack is successful, it does not do any damage, but the target is fully entangled as per the description of the special success on page 196.

Explosions

An explosion inflicts a combination of shock and projectile damage upon any caught within its range. The gamemaster should calculate the effect of an explosion in terms of the power of the blast (the damage dice) and the radius of effect in meters (the explosive's range). Most explosions decrease in damage from the epicenter to the perimeter of the blast radius. Typical damage dice for explosives are D6s, so the gamemaster should reduce the damage dice by 1D6 for each radius of effect.

For example, a stick of dynamite does 5D6 damage at the center of explosion to the first 2 meters, 4D6 for meters 3–4, 3D6 for meters 5–6, 2D6 for meters 7–8, 1D6 for meters 9–10, and no damage outside of the 10 meter radius.

To determine how much damage is dealt any character caught in the radius of an explosion, the gamemaster should first determine how far from the epicenter he or she is, and roll damage separately. Damage from most explosives is general, and not applied to any specific hit

location, if that system is being used, though the gamemaster could choose to divide the damage among 1D4 hit locations, rolled randomly. At the gamemaster's discretion, a character with the Demolition skill can adjust the strength of an explosive charge, doubling it to increase the damage and the radius by an additional 50%, or cutting the charge to decrease the damage and radius by 1/2 normal. A character in the blast radius of an explosion may also suffer the effects of the knock-back special success, as described on page 197.

Extended Range

If your character is using a missile weapon, he or she may attempt to hit a target at up to double the base range. Attacks beyond the base range are considered *Difficult*. At three times the base range, the chance becomes 1/4 of the normal skill rating. At quadruple base range, the chance decreases to 1/8 the normal skill rating.

For attacks at more than double the base range, the damage done by the missile is halved, after rolling. Damage is not reduced further beyond three or four times the base range.

Small hand-propelled weapons such as the throwing knife and the throwing axe have no chance to hit beyond double base range.

Falling

Your character may end up falling down, either from cliffs, into pits, thrown from riding animals, or through failing Climb rolls. If falling, your character will take 1D6 base damage for every 3 meters fallen. If your character is thrown with considerable velocity, the gamemaster may even double the damage dice for a fall.

A small character takes less damage when he or she falls—if the character's SIZ characteristic is 5 or less, lower the damage from falling by 1D6. The converse of this is true as well—exceptionally large characters take additional damage from falls. Add an extra 1D6 damage if the character's SIZ is over 20 and another 1D6 for every fraction of 20 after that. This is cumulative with the velocity modifier described above.

For example, a character whose SIZ is 21–40 takes another 1D6 in damage, while a character of SIZ 41–60 takes an additional 2d6 in damage from falling.

If hit locations are used, a falling character that makes a successful Jump roll can specify on which hit location he or she lands. The entire damage done by the fall applies both to the rolled hit location and to the falling character's total hit points. This is an exception to the rule that a limb may take only twice its hit points in damage.

The gamemaster may adjust the damage downward depending on the relative softness of the area a falling character falls upon. Soft grass, tree branches, or even water can soften the impact of a fall considerably. Armor may

protect against falling damage in some cases. Powers that protect a character against kinetic damage will work in lowering falling damage.

If the character falls on a stake or other pointed object at the end of a fall, then the falling damage counts as a damage modifier for the stake. Normal stake damage is 1D10+1, with the chance of hitting determined by the gamemaster when setting up the trap. Based on circumstances, the gamemaster may allow a falling character to make a Dodge roll to avoid striking a pointed object the character is falling towards. In these cases, the falling character needs to make a successful Spot check (if unaware of the hazard) before being allowed to Dodge.

Fighting While Down

If your character has tripped or fallen, or has been knocked back, he or she is considered to be down, or prone. Generally, a character in melee combat that is knocked down will fall backwards, and land on his or her back. The gamemaster may determine that your character has fallen on his or her front, such as by choice, being attacked from behind, or being knocked unconscious. Usually the knocked down character sprawls on his or her back, while the attacker is standing at the character's feet. A prone character's attacks, parries, and dodges are considered *Difficult*, while the attacker's are *Easy*.

A prone character gets no damage bonus while down, and cannot attack with a two-handed weapon. As noted above, a prone character can parry or dodge, though each action is considered *Difficult*. If attacked, a successful *Difficult* Dodge roll gets the character back on his or her feet without being hit, and allows an attack action in the combat round. Alternately, a successful Dodge roll and a successful Agility roll (both unmodified) can get the character on his or her feet, unscathed, but this option does not allow an attack action in that combat round. See also "Superior/Inferior Position" on page 232.

Fire and Heat

Your character may take damage if exposed to fire or intense heat. At the end of the combat round, fire or intense heat will damage any character it touched during that round. Armor and/or powers that offer protection will subtract their armor value from this fire damage for one combat round. See **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for more detail.

Tiny flames equivalent to a candle or lantern flame inflict 1 hit point of damage per full combat round they are in direct exposure to a character's exposed flesh.

A hand-held torch held against a target for a full combat round does 1D6 hit points of burn damage. A character who is clothed but not wearing armor may attempt a Luck roll each round to prevent being set

afire. If the character succeeds, he or she is not set on fire. Failing this roll means that the character's hair and/or clothing begins to burn, doing 1D6 hit points damage per combat round until being extinguished. This amount also applies to any fire the size and intensity of a small campfire.

A large bonfire or equivalent in size to a bonfire inflicts 1D6+2 hit points of damage per combat round. A character's hair and clothing may catch fire as well. A successful POW x 1 roll avoids this.

Being caught in a fiery boat or house can cause 1D6+2 points of damage per combat round. Each round a character is exposed to these conditions, he or she must make a successful Luck roll or begin to asphyxiate. See "Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation" on page 218 for details.

Intense fires are those too hot to approach closely: the equivalent of molten metal or lava, a jet or rocket engine, or the heat inside of a furnace. This level of heat does 3D6 hit points in damage per combat round of exposure.

Armor protects a character from fire damage for up to 1D6 points of armor protection, no matter what type of armor. The gamemaster may choose to adjust this amount up or down based on circumstances, such as fleeting contact with the flame, the character being in leather armor that is soaking wet, etc. This protection lasts 1D6 rounds, and when it ends, the armor does not protect the character any longer. This is the equivalent of metal armor heating up too much, or leather armor being sufficiently burned. The gamemaster may allow some improvised methods of fire defense (get under a wet blanket, etc.) to have some effect.

Equipment will be damaged by fire. The gamemaster should assume that every round in flame reduces armor value by at least 1 point, more if the armor is exposed to intense fire. Metal weapons and armor will not be destroyed by fire unless left in the flames for several full turns, but they may be too hot to use when withdrawn. Weapons or equipment may be damaged from exposure to intense heat or fire, however, and at the gamemaster's discretion, firearms may even have their ammunition set off by the heat and fire, calling for Luck rolls for nearby characters to avoid being hit.

If the gamemaster needs to know some examples of the heat equivalents needed to melt various items, the Burning Points table (nearby) lists some substances and their approximate melting or burning points, expressed in damage per combat round.

A character who takes more than 1/4 his or her total hit points in burn damage must make a successful Luck roll. Failure at this costs the character 1D4 characteristic points. The gamemaster should roll for this and determine which characteristics are affected, based on the nature

Burning Points

- ❖ **PAPER (burns):** 1 point per combat round
- ❖ **WATER (boils):** 1D6 per combat round
- ❖ **HOUSE (burns):** 2D6 per combat round
- ❖ **LEAD:** 3D6 per combat round
- ❖ **ZINC:** 4D6 per combat round
- ❖ **ALUMINUM:** 6D6 per combat round
- ❖ **BRONZE:** 8D6 per combat round
- ❖ **SILVER:** 9D6 per combat round
- ❖ **COPPER:** 11D6 per combat round
- ❖ **ROCK (most) or GLASS:** 13D6 per combat round
- ❖ **NICKEL:** 14D6 per combat round
- ❖ **IRON:** 15D6 per combat round

and/or location of the burns, but at least one of these points must be from the APP characteristic.

The optional hit location system may be used to determine where fire affects a character. In these cases, the quantity of hit locations affected derives from the size of the fire, at the gamemaster's discretion. For instance, a torch affects only one hit location, but if the character is tossed into the middle of a bonfire or caught inside a fire, all of his or her locations will be affected.

Extinguishing a fire is not difficult—fire on a character can easily be smothered with a cloak, dirt, water, fire extinguisher, etc. It takes one combat round to attempt to extinguish a fire. If there is any chance of failure, a Luck roll on behalf of the person attempting to smother the fire will extinguish it. This roll may be Easy if the extinguishing character is equipped with means to put out the fire in excess of the fire's relative size and/or intensity. Failure on the roll means that the fire continues to burn, while a fumble means that the character attempting to extinguish the fire has inadvertently set him- or herself aflame.

Firing Into Combat

Combat is a blur of action, complicated when some combatants use melee weapons while others use missiles. Firing a missile weapon into combat incurs a -20% penalty, while firing a missile weapon while engaged in combat is considered *Difficult*. However, if the attacker and the target are both within close combat range, the attack is *Easy* due to the rules for "Point-Blank Range" (page 229), meaning that the skill chance is unaffected.

In situations where an attacker must fire a missile weapon into (or within) close combat, the attacker cannot always be sure he or she will not accidentally hit an ally rather than a foe. The chance of hitting a particular target is divided equally by the total number of beings in the melee. If the attacker rolls a number between his or

her skill rating and the chance modified (as above) for shooting into melee, the gamemaster should randomly determine which of the targets was struck, by rolling randomly with an equivalent die roll, or by asking all potential targets to make a Luck roll and choosing the biggest failure (or most marginal success) as the unlucky target of the attack. This random determination can still result in the intended target being hit. In any case, the attacker is not eligible for an experience check, as he or she has technically missed what was being aiming at, even if chance put the intended target in the path of the attack.

If the character is using a missile weapon on a mass of targets and doesn't care who he or she hits, the chance of hitting is increased by +5% for every extra body shot at, as long as the bodies are packed closely to each other. The gamemaster should select which target in the group of combatants is struck, using the system described above. If targets are approaching in a loose skirmish line, the attacker must pick one target and attack as per normal. If targets are packed into a dense cluster (a spear wall, for example), the attacker may fire at the massed troops with the bonus to attack described above.

Fortified Position

If your character is standing or kneeling to fight, or even observing, from behind some sort of fortified position such as a stone wall or other fairly non-destructible defensive bulwark, any attacks against him or her are considered *Difficult*. This can be overcome through "Aimed Attacks" (see page 212), however. A defender who crouches or kneels entirely behind a suitable defensive structure cannot be hit by small missile fire, though he or she could potentially be vulnerable to siege weapons, explosions, or attacks involving an area of effect, such as some powers. The gamemaster should be the arbiter of whether such an attack can potentially injure a character.

Improvised Parrying Weapons

Most missile weapons can be used to parry with if the need arises. The few exceptions are those that are simply too small to make much of a resistance, such as slings, throwing darts, or handguns. Weapons on the weapon tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** that are listed as having no armor points or are SIZ 0 cannot be parried with—they are either too soft and pliable, or too unsubstantial and small to present adequate resistance to attack. In most cases, an improvised parrying weapon loses 1 or more hit points each time it successfully parries an attack. When consulting the Attack and Defense Matrix on page 193, assume that improvised weapons always take at least 1 hit point of damage if successfully used to parry. Some exceptions may exist, such as an item made of steel being used to parry wooden clubs or unarmed attacks, but these should be handled at the gamemaster's discretion.

The basic chance to parry with a missile weapon is 20%. This skill is never trained, but it can be increased through experience. If the optional rule for splitting attack and parry skills is being used, the initial chance for parrying is instead half of the weapon's basic attack chance (or 20%, whichever is higher). It is assumed that in a character's career prior to play, he or she has had to use the weapon to parry out of necessity and learned from the experience. This can vary by the weapon type and the style of training. *For example, basic military training in hand-to-hand combat includes the use of the rifle as an improvised club, including parrying. Experience hunting rarely includes such uses for a rifle.*

If the armor points of a missile weapon are exceeded by the hit, the missile weapon takes 1 hit point damage (or more, depending on the quality of the attack and parry), but if it takes any more damage than 1 hit point, it is rendered useless as a missile weapon until it is repaired. This can be as simple as adding a new bowstring or some minor battlefield repair, at the gamemaster's discretion, costing roughly 10% the cost of the weapon if the required components are not at hand.

Improvised Weapons

As weapons and shields can be damaged or even destroyed in combat, characters in a combat situation may attempt to improvise weapons from items found around them. The weapon tables in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** provides suggested statistics for a variety of improvised weapons, based on sizes.

Knockback

The impact of a weapon can do more than damage a target. A sufficiently powerful blow can send a target staggering backward. This is called a knockback. If an attack is designated as a knockback attempt the final amount of damage done is compared against the target's SIZ on the resistance table. If the target loses, he or she is knocked back by 1 meter per 5 points of damage in excess of SIZ, in addition to any damage taken, and must make a successful Agility roll to remain standing. If an attack achieves the knockback special success, see those rules on page 197. The gamemaster may lower the chance of the resistance roll to reflect unevenness of ground, slope, or previous degree of damage a character has already taken, or if the character is already in mid-air, such as while flying.

If the targeted character is riding or on a vehicle, he or she should attempt a Drive, Pilot, or Ride roll, as appropriate. If successful, the SIZ of the mount or vehicle is added to his or her own SIZ. If unsuccessful, the knockback is figured only against the character's SIZ, and he or she can be knocked off his animal or vehicle, though the gamemaster may adjust this based on elements such as harness, seatbelts, cockpit configuration, etc.

An attacker can specify that his or her attack came from directly above the target, driving the target into the ground. In this case, the target is not knocked back, but must make an Agility check to remain standing. If this roll fails, he or she falls down. Generally falling from a standing position does not incur damage, but if the distance is greater, the gamemaster may utilize the rules for falling as provided on page 223.

In a setting utilizing fights where knockbacks are common, such as ones involving super heroes, the gamemaster may announce that any successful blow has the potential for a knockback, regardless of whether it does damage to the target. In such a setting, the knockback threshold may be lower, such as 1/2 the target's SIZ, to increase the number of times characters are knocked back into buildings.

Knockout Attack

Knockout attacks work only against humans and humanoids, or other living beings with clearly defined heads. To render a target unconscious, you should declare your character's intent at the beginning of the round. A *Difficult* attack roll is made as if targeting a particular body part (such as the head). The attack is non-lethal, however, and is not intending to do damage, though damage is rolled to determine the potential for a knockout. Armor defends normally in all cases. If the attack is successful and the rolled damage is equivalent to a major wound (after armor reduces the damage), the target is knocked out, but no actual damage is done to him or her. If the damage is equivalent to a minor wound, the original damage rolled is ignored and the target is dealt the minimum damage for the weapon (if it bypasses armor), but is not knocked out. A success knocks the target unconscious for 1D10+10 rounds (the gamemaster rolls secretly for this).

For example, your character makes a knockout attempt with a short sword that does 1D6 damage plus 1D4 damage bonus. The target has 12 hit points, and a major wound value of 6, with 1 point of natural armor. If the attack succeeds, the damage roll must do at least 7 hit points in damage (6 for the major wound, 1 to bypass the natural armor), at which point the target is knocked out for 1D10+10 rounds, but does not take any damage. If less than 7 points of damage are rolled, the target instead takes 2 hit points in damage for a failed knockout attempt (1 point of damage for short sword's 1D6 damage and 1 point for the damage bonus), 1 point of which will be absorbed by the natural armor.

The effects of special successes (such as extra damage or bypassing armor) apply in all cases, while other special effects (slashing damage, knockback, etc.) do not apply to knockout attempts.

Light Sources

Candles, torches, lanterns, flashlights, and other equipment provide portable sources of light, and give enough light by which to read and to use Search or Spot skills. Torches and lanterns show from a hundred meters away in darkness. At a hundred meters, your character must succeed with a Spot roll to see a candle or equivalent light source. Other light sources can range from much higher than these extremes, or fall somewhere between. Consult "Darkness" on page 220 for more detail.

A candle flickers, is easy to drop, and is easy to blow out. It is reliable within a glass-walled or punched-metal lantern. A long wax candle burns for approximately six hours; a short, pouch-sized candle burns for two hours.

A torch gives a large, bright flame, and (short of a hurricane) cannot be blown out. If dropped, a torch keeps burning with a successful Luck roll. A torch burns for approximately one hour. See "Fire and Heat" on page 223 for information on dealing with torches in combat.

Oil lamps or lanterns contain enough light for several hours, depending on the size of the tank, the type of fuel, and brightness of the flame. A rule of thumb is 12 hours. They can also be dangerous if spilled, though modern oil lamps have safeguards to prevent accidents.

Battery-powered or other charged light sources contain variable amounts of energy, but more than other sources mentioned here. Their duration can be as short as that of an oil lantern, or infinite, depending on the size and type of charge. Some chemical-based light sources can last indefinitely without being recharged, or may require recharging in the sun or some other condition when depleted.

If a light source is unstable and must be used with some care (a lamp filled with oil, for example), Combat and Physical skills are considered *Difficult*.

Chapter Eight: Equipment has many pieces of gear that provide light, with some basic rules to govern them. Additionally, many powers can provide their own light sources. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more details.

Mass Combat

Sometimes an adventure or campaign may call for a mass combat, a tactical engagement consisting of dramatically more participants than the group of player characters. Sometimes the GM may have already decided the outcome of a mass combat, and is including the engagement solely as a dramatic element, giving the player characters a chance to participate in the struggle at whatever level is appropriate, from the battlefield itself, the war room back in the capitol city, or even on the bridge of a massive vehicle.

In cases where the GM wishes simply to describe the battle in a narrative sense, he or she should summarize the events of the battle in whatever dramatic fashion as



When handling a melee in which the player characters are beset by hordes of opponents, the gamemaster might roll for the opponents in groups. Abstract the combat a bit, rather than rolling for many, many attacks and parries.

appropriate, and either allow for scenes where the player characters can play out a single engagement or hand-to-hand combat, or simply have every concerned player character make a Luck roll each turn (five minutes, or 25 combat rounds). Success means that no damage is taken. Failure means that 1D6 points of damage are taken. A fumble means that 2D6 points of damage are taken. Armor will protect against these attacks.

For a more detailed or tactical system of determining the battlefield results short of rolling each combat individually, *Basic Roleplaying* is admittedly not the ideal system for this level of detail. A GM wishing to simulate a mass combat where there is an uncertain outcome can attempt to simulate this through a several options, such as: a series of opposed Strategy rolls on the part of the opposite sides; a series of resistance rolls with each side represented with a POT value assigned by the GM; or even a symbolic combat between two representative combatants whose HP reflect troop size.

One piece of advice when handling this is to put the roles into the hands of the players, rather than simply rolling “off camera” and announcing result after result to the players. The GM may even allow players to handle the roles of enemy combatants, enforcing that they “fight fairly” according to the best of their abilities. Future *Basic Roleplaying* supplements may address mass combat in greater detail.

Missile Fire While Moving

Your character can attempt missile fire while riding, driving, or piloting a moving mount or vehicle, but any Combat skill is capped at the skill rating appropriate to the mount or vehicle he or she is directing.

For example, your character trying to fire a bow while on horseback has his or her skill rating capped at the level of his or

her Ride skill, while a character firing a shotgun one-handed while driving a motorcycle has his or her attack skill capped with the Drive skill rating. A flying character might use his or her Fly skill as a skill rating cap.

Attacking while running should be capped at the character’s Agility roll, or attacks during a mid-air leap might use the Jump skill as a cap. The gamemaster should decide whether an attack is possible or not, such as determining that it is impossible to fire a longbow while steering a jet-ski. This may vary by genre, as more action-oriented genres frequently utilize such action. See the optional rules covering “Combat in Different Genres” on pages 198-201 for more detail. Additionally, “Aerial Combat” (page 212) covers flying combat in detail.

Moving and throwing a hand-propelled weapon (spear, axe, knife, rock, etc.) or a firearm directly ahead can be attempted at the normal skill rating. Moving and throwing or firing sideways makes the attack *Difficult* due to the distraction of moving in a direction other than the one being targeted. Attacks directly behind a mobile character should be at 1/4 the regular skill rating, and should require an Agility, Ride, or Drive check, as appropriate. As noted in **Chapter Six: Combat**, a character can move for half of a combat round, and then throw, fire, or shoot a bow in the other half, at the appropriate DEX rank.

Mounted Combat

Historically, one of the most effective means of dominating a battlefield has been from the back of a mount, usually a horse. Mounted combat figures prominently in many genres and as riding was a principal means of transportation until the last century, combat while mounted was almost inevitable. Combat while upon a mount is much the same as combat on foot, though

there are several conditions that modify the experience for rider, mount, and attackers or targets on the ground. If the mount is a motorcycle or equivalent vehicle, the Drive skill should be substituted for the Ride skill. Following are modifiers to combat involving mounts:

- ❖ While mounted, none of a rider's attack and/or parry skills can be used at a skill rating higher than his or her Ride skill. Additionally, the gamemaster may restrict use of certain types of weapons while mounted, such as two-handed polearms and/or large shields.
- ❖ The lack of freedom of movement while mounted makes Dodging less easy. While mounted, any Dodge attempts a rider attempts are considered *Difficult*.
- ❖ A mounted character uses the mount's movement rate for any movement in the round, assuming he or she makes a successful Ride check.
- ❖ A mounted character is considered to be in a superior position (see "Superior/Inferior Positions" on page 232) to targets on the ground.
- ❖ A successful knockback attack dismounts a mounted target, as does a major wound. The gamemaster may decide that other special successes also may cause involuntary dismounting.
- ❖ Being dismounted forcibly does not usually cause damage, but a character falling from his or her mount must make a successful Luck roll or take 1D6 damage (to a random hit location, if that option is used). Armor protects normally from this fall but a fumbled Luck roll ignores armor and does maximum damage. In either case, the character must make a successful Stamina roll or be stunned for the next combat round. See "Stunning or Subduing" on page 232 for more information on this condition.
- ❖ A rider must dismount to retrieve a fumbled or dropped weapon. A dismount is a free action, though getting mounted again counts as a partial movement action.
- ❖ Charge attacks take place at the end of a full movement. When charging and wielding a weapon, a character should use the damage bonus for the mount instead of his or her own. Usually, a charge attack requires a successful Ride (or Drive) skill roll to maneuver the mount in the correct direction.

One means of defense against a mounted charge is a lance, spear, pike or other pointed weapon, wielded with the haft set firmly (*seated*) in the ground. This makes the weapon immobile against a charge. The attack is rolled as normal, and if it is successful, the charging mount's own damage bonus is added to the damage of the seated weapon. Avoiding a seated weapon is difficult—a mounted character must abort any combat action and make a Ride (or Drive) check to avoid being hit. If the mount is intelligent and does not wish to run onto a seated weapon, it may use its own Dodge skill in defiance of the mounted character's wishes. A character may need to make a successful Ride check and a POW vs. POW struggle resistance roll to spur a mount to injure itself. Failure of either of these

means that the mount will attempt to Dodge or will balk at any further action for the remainder of the round.

If hit locations are being used, the gamemaster may choose to make certain hit locations inaccessible between a mounted and unmounted opponent, depending on the weapons being used. For an unmounted character, small hand weapons may not be able to reach the mounted target's head, while long weapons will have no such difficulty. If appropriate, reroll any results of "head" on the hit location roll. A mounted character equipped with a medium-sized hand weapon may be unable to strike the lower abdomen or legs of an unmounted character. If appropriate, a mounted character attacking an unmounted character rolls 1D10+10 for hit locations. Additionally, based on the position of the mounted character and the unmounted character, certain hit locations (right/left) may be inaccessible. The gamemaster should assume that these attacks struck the mount instead. Two mounted characters fighting will only have the right/left limitation and are otherwise fully able to attack one another.

Natural Weapons

Natural weapons are weapons that are part of the body of an attacker. *For example, a human's fist and foot are his or her natural weapons, and your character can use hands and even legs to Grapple an opponent.* Most other creatures have natural weapons such as claws, fangs, prehensile tails, stings, and horns. Some even have natural missile weapons. As described in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**, most creatures so equipped will do 1D6 damage with claws and 1D3 damage with a bite or horn, with the creature's damage bonus added to each of these values. The Brawl and Grapple skills are described in **Chapter Three: Skills**.

Your character can use his or her natural weapons (usually fists) the way he or she can use normal weapons, attacking and parrying a target. If hit locations are being used, the hit points for the fist parry are your character's hit points in the arm hit location, and everything surpassing the arm's armor points will go directly to both your character's arm location hit points and his or her total hit points.

Most creatures with natural weapons such as claws, stings, etc. use them just as a human would use a weapon, with the same DEX ranks and same options such as grapples and Dodges. Few wild animals are able to parry attacks however, as it is not a natural tactic. The gamemaster should be the arbiter if a creature has the ability or awareness to parry attacks, based on the animal's relative DEX, INT, and any training it may have received.

Point-Blank Range

Your character's chance to hit with a missile weapon is considered *Easy* when the range to the target is less than or equal to 1/3 your character's DEX in meters. Once the range between attacker and target is within touching distance (one meter), combat changes to hand-to-hand. Some weapons (bows, thrown weapons, etc.) will be useless at this range, with their chances to hit halved or even quartered, while some weapons (firearms, energy weapons, crossbows, etc.) continue to gain the benefit of point blank range.

In this close range, parries against missile weapons are allowed, at the gamemaster's discretion and based on common sense, as the defending character can now attempt to knock or manipulate an attacking weapon out of the way.

For example, when in close combat with an attacker, your character can use an unarmed parry to deflect a firearm, by parrying the attacker's gun-wielding arm, or the gun barrel itself.

Poison

All poisons have a potency value (POT) that is matched against the CON of a poisoned character. If the poison overcomes your character's CON, then its full POT is done as damage to your character's total hit points. If the poison does not overcome the character's CON, it has a lessened effect—usually this means that half the poison's POT is given as damage to your character's hit points. Sample poisons are offered on page 272.

Poison damage is always damage to your character's total hit points, or to a characteristic. Poison damage is usually not suffered on the same combat round in which a character is poisoned. The delay before poison damage takes effect depends upon the poison. Unless otherwise specified by the gamemaster, the delay is three combat rounds for fast-acting poisons, or three full turns for slower poisons. If the gamemaster wishes to devise more complex rules involving poison administered to hit locations or onset times, he or she is encouraged to do so.

If your character takes two doses of a poison, he or she must make a separate resistance roll versus each one: two doses of a POT 10 poison are not the same as one dose of a POT 20 poison. Some powers or equipment may protect against poison: see **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for details.

Poison Antidotes

Almost all poisons have antidotes. All antidotes have a POT rating, just like poisons. If a character takes a poison's antidote no more than six full turns before being poisoned, the antidote's POT is subtracted from the poison's POT before damage is figured. An antidote for one type of poison may give a lessened benefit even when used with the wrong poison type, at the gamemaster's discretion.

For example, in a fantasy setting, the gamemaster may determine that giant scorpion venom antidote works at half POT against manticores venom, and vice versa, as manticores have a scorpion-like tail and stinger. Giant spider venom antidote may work at half POT against giant scorpion venom, and vice versa. The gamemaster may decide that due to their similarities (both are serpentine) wyvern venom antidote works at half POT against snake venom, and vice versa.

Prone

Your character is lying on the ground, either willingly or unwillingly prone. The following conditions apply to a prone character (this is also covered in the Knockback special success described on page 197 of **Chapter Six: Combat**):

- ❖ If your character is prone, all subsequent hand-to-hand or close-range missile attacks against him or her are considered to be *Easy* actions. All other ranged attacks are considered to be *Difficult*.
- ❖ All of the prone character's attacks and parries become *Difficult*.
- ❖ A prone character cannot wield two-handed melee combat weapons effectively while prone.

A prone character cannot add his or her damage bonus to attacks, though negative damage modifiers still apply.

A prone character can utilize missile weapons such as firearms, crossbows, or energy weapons at his or her full skill rating. Some archery styles allow for prone use, even when the archer is on his or her back. However, some weapons simply cannot be fired effectively while prone, at the gamemaster's discretion. If in doubt, attacks should be *Difficult*. Use common sense as a guide in this matter.

The gamemaster may allow for a bonus of +10% to use firearms or other self-propelled missile weapons while a character is prone, to simulate additional stability for the character's arms (as if using a tripod). This bonus is only applied if the character is willingly prone, and can be applied in addition to any modifiers for scopes, etc.

A successful *Difficult* Dodge roll gets a prone character back on his or her feet without the *Easy* modifier to attacks against him or her. The successful *Difficult* Dodge roll also allows an attack action in the combat round. Alternately, a combination of successful Dodge and Agility rolls accomplishes the same but does not allow an attack action (the Agility roll takes the attack action's place).

Pulling Blows

While it is assumed that most of the time attacks are performed with the intent of doing as much damage as possible, if needed, your character can "pull" an attack

with most weapons, choosing to do less damage by striking lightly or by not striking at vital body parts. During the statement of intent, you must declare that your character is intentionally pulling his or her blow to do less damage. Your character can add less of his or her damage modifier, or none of it, and he or she can roll smaller dice for the weapon damage, to a minimum of 1D2. If a weapon does multiple dice of damage, you can choose to reduce all of the dice of damage, or roll fewer dice, but you cannot split the dice and apply different reductions. *For example, a shotgun that does 4D6 in damage can have the damage reduced to 4D4, 4D3, or 4D2, or it can be reduced to 3D6, 2D6, or 1D6.* Any normal modifiers (+1, etc.) for the damage dice must be added and cannot be reduced.

For example, if your character has a +1D4 damage modifier and a sword that does 1D8+1, he or she can pull an attack to do less damage. If so, you can choose not to roll the normal +1D4 damage modifier, or you can reduce the 1D8+1 sword damage to 1D4+1. Alternately, you can choose to roll 1D6+1, 1D3+1, or even 1D2+1 for the weapon damage. However, you cannot not reduce the damage for this attack below 1D2, and could not eliminate the +1 modifier to damage.

If there is a question about the values of dice when reducing them for pulled blows, use the order they are presented in "Dice" on page 14 in **Chapter One: Introduction**. From smallest to largest, dice go D2, D3, D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, to D20.

Quick-Draws

Though history has recorded few, if any, actual contests where two gunmen waited and stared each other down, then drew their weapons and fired at one another, the quick-draw is a common genre convention to the Western. The Japanese sword technique called *iai-jutsu* involves two opponents facing off, weapons sheathed but ready, and then each moving with blinding speed to draw and strike in a single move, with the winner usually being the one to strike first. Normally, questions of who goes first for characters acting on the same DEX round are handled with skill ratings, higher going first, but for a proper quick-draw, determination is more random.

To simulate a quick-draw contest, each of the participants must hold his or her action to a later DEX rank. One of the participants should opt to fire first, or else the two characters will end up staring at each other for a long and tense time. When one of the characters in a quick-draw contest chooses to act, the other must make an *Easy Spot* skill check to notice that the other character is going to attack. If the Spot skill check fails, the character who opted to shoot first is able to make an attack against the other character before they even realize they are being shot at. The attack is considered to be an *Easy* action for this one particular attack. If the Spot

roll is successful, the participating characters must each make a DEX vs. DEX opposed roll on the resistance table. If there is only one winner on the resistance table check, that character is able to shoot first. If the characters both roll successfully, or both fail, they are each able to make an attack against the other at their normal skill rating.

Attacks in a quick-draw contest cannot easily be dodged or parried (attempts for either are considered *Difficult*), making them extremely dangerous to all participants. If a character is injured but not killed outright as a result of a quick-draw, he or she can continue to attack. After the initial exchange of attacks, combat then begins as normal, using regular DEX ranks and attack skill ratings, allowing for dodges and parries.

Larger numbers of characters can participate in a quick-draw contest, using the above rules as a guideline.

Radiation

Exposure to radiation or radioactive materials is usually harmful to living beings. The effect of radiation poisoning (properly known as acute radiation syndrome) is the equivalent of a poison and direct burns. Though radiation's intensity is measured in rads, for the purpose of simplicity it is merely classified as low-intensity through fatal-intensity (see chart below) with associated potencies. The gamemaster should assign a potency (POT) to each exposure to radiation, for use on the resistance table. If your character is exposed to radiation, he or she must make a resistance roll using CON versus the radiation's POT. Success means that your character avoids the effects for the period listed. The Radiation Effects Table provides general guidelines for different POT levels of radiation.

Radiation poisoning is clearly quite deadly. There are few means of reducing exposure to radiation in the modern world. First Aid is useless against it, and the Medicine skill can do little to stave off its effects. It is useful primarily as a diagnostic method. Various powers and equipment may protect against the effects of radiation: see **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for details.

The above treatment of radiation is based on a normal campaign-level model of its horrific effects. Genres such as super hero and post-apocalyptic adventure often feature radiation as being a source of beneficial mutation; instead of terminal cancers and irradiated tissue, exposure to radiation (say, in the form of an irradiated spider's bite) can cause super-powered mutations, and exposure to radioactive ooze can dramatically jumpstart the evolution of some lesser species (such as turtles, to pick another utterly random example) into exciting new evolutionary offshoots. The gamemaster may allow a character a POW x 1 chance of one of these

beneficial mutations from radiation exposure, modified by the genre, or you may simply state that radiation exposure figures into your character's origin, if he or she exhibits super powers.

Shields and Missile Fire

As described in the section on armor on page 256 of **Chapter Eight: Equipment**, while used in hand-to-hand combat, a half or small shield has a base 15% chance to block a missile, a full shield has a 30% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 60% chance. If your character kneels behind it, a full shield has a 60% chance to block a missile, and a large shield has a 90% chance. Only successes are blocked; special successes and critical hits are assumed to strike their intended targets. If your character is trying to parry a very fast missile weapon, such as an energy weapon or firearm, he or she has only the shield's base skill as the chance of success.

Shooting Up or Down

If firing a missile weapon at a target or an angle more than 45 degrees, the attack is considered *Difficult*. Effective and maximum ranges are halved for a target directly overhead, but are not affected for targets at the 45 degree angle or greater, up to 90 degrees (directly overhead). The gamemaster should arbitrate whether a target is directly overhead or at an angle.

Attempts to fire up at a target are at -10% to the skill rating. Attacks made at an opponent that is significantly below the attacker's normal line of sight are at a +10% bonus to the skill rating, with no modifiers to range. Damage is unaffected in either case.

At the gamemaster's discretion, some weapons might be unable to fire directly above or below, such as slings or crossbows (the bolts might fall out at extreme angles). If the nature of the weapon makes firing at these angles problematic, the gamemaster should declare that any attacks are considered *Difficult*.

Slippery or Unstable Surfaces

If your character is fighting or taking sudden action on a slippery or otherwise uneven surface, he or she may run the risk of slipping. You must make a successful Agility roll to keep your character from slipping. If the surface is especially slick (oily, in an earthquake, etc.), the skill roll may be *Difficult*. Failure means your character falls down or is unsteady enough to take any action other than trying to stay upright. If your character fumbles on this roll, the gamemaster may choose to inflict 1D6 points of damage on him or her, based on the surface. Alternately, the "Natural Weapon Fumble Table" on page 195 of **Chapter Six: Combat** may be uti-

Radiation Effects Table

Potency	Radiation Intensity	Effects
5	Low	Roll every 30 days. Failure means that your character suffers irritations such as skin rashes, headache, shedding skin, minor hair loss, mild nausea, diarrhea, etc.
10	Moderate	Roll every week. Failure means that your character suffers a bout of incapacitating illness (cannot rise from bed, tremors, shaking, etc.) that lasts 2D10 hours, in addition to the above symptoms. Two failures in a row mean that your character has developed cancer (gamemaster's discretion).
15	Medium	Roll every day. Failure means that your character suffers a bout of incapacitating illness lasting 2D10 days, cumulative with other failed rolls. Your character also suffers 1 point of general burn damage, in addition to suffering from one or more heightened symptoms of low-intensity radiation, described above. Failing this roll twice in a row inflicts 1D10 days of temporary blindness on your character. Failing this roll three times in a row means that your character has developed cancer, at the gamemaster's discretion. Other characters coming into close contact with your irradiated character are at risk for low-level radiation (see above).
20	High	Roll every hour. Failure means incapacitating illness as above, cumulative. Your character suffers 1D3 points general burn damage as above, as well as other symptoms. Blindness is automatic if roll fails. If blindness continues for ten consecutive days, it becomes permanent. A character failing a roll of CON x 1 becomes permanently sterile. Two failures of this roll indicate terminal cancer. Other characters coming into close contact with your character are at risk for moderate-level contamination (see above).
25	Acute	Roll every minute. Failure equals all of the above symptoms, though blindness and sterility are immediate. Burn damage is 1D6 points per turn, and your character will inevitably die in CON/2 hours unless provided with suitable medical assistance. All physical skills are <i>Difficult</i> and require a successful <i>Difficult</i> Stamina roll to attempt. Your character's corpse presents a health risk to others.
30+	Fatal	Roll every combat round. Failure equals all of the above symptoms. Burn damage is 1D4 points per combat round. Movement or action is impossible. Your character is wracked with excruciating pain until his or her death in 1D3 combat rounds. Your character's corpse is highly irradiated to a value equal to ½ the radiation's potency (rounded up).



When fighting a superior foe seek any advantage, such as attacking from behind and gaining up to a 20% bonus. Everyone must work together. If you attack one at a time, you might each be defeated in turn. Together you can overwhelm opposition.

lized. See “Fighting While Down” on page 223 for additional information.

Stunning or Subduing

Your character may wish to subdue an opponent rather than killing him or her outright. Being stunned is a dizzying, disorienting experience, as stars dance in the target’s eyes and his or her head swims from the pain of the sudden blow. A stunned target cannot attack while stunned, and can only attempt to dodge or parry an attack if he or she makes a successful Idea roll for each attempt. Furthermore, all attacks against the target are made as if *Easy* actions. The stunned target can attempt to flee, but to do so requires a successful Idea roll to discern an escape path and a successful Agility roll to get out of danger.

There are four principal ways to stun a character:

- ❖ A target can be immobilized using the Grapple skill, described on page 60 of **Chapter Three: Skills**, or using weapons with the entangle special effect, described on page 196 of **Chapter Six: Combat**.
- ❖ A target may be stunned by the crushing special effect described on page 195 of **Chapter Six: Combat**.
- ❖ Finally, your character may use a weapon or blunt object in an attempt to stun his or her target. This is covered in “Knockout Attack”, on page 226.
- ❖ Some weapons are designed to stun (or sometimes knock out) an opponent rather than injuring them. When successfully used, roll the weapon’s normal damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target’s current hit points. If the attack is successful, the character is stunned for a number of round equal to the points of stun damage done and suffers the effects described above, but takes no damage. If the attack fails, the character does not take any damage and is not stunned. If a stun weapon achieves a special result, it does maximum “damage”

instead of rolling. A critical result causes it to do maximum rolled “damage” plus normal rolled damage. If the stun “damage” would normally be enough to reduce the character to 2 or fewer hit points, the character is knocked out rather than stunned.

Armor will protect against general stunning damage, unless the attack is specifically targeted at the head and the target is not wearing a helmet. Energy or other weapons that do stunning damage may ignore primitive, ancient, and medieval armor entirely, though the gamemaster may rule that electricity-based stunning weapons are at full effect vs. targets in metallic armor. Advanced armor is usually insulated against energy-based stunning weapons and works at full strength against them, though a physical attack to an unarmored head always works.

Superior/Inferior Positions

If your character is standing at least half-again higher (or more) than his or her target, he or she is considered to have a superior position, an advantage over that opponent. *For example, for most human opponents, superior ground means standing higher than an opponent by one meter or more.* Standing higher than an opponent’s height negates this advantage unless the attacker is armed with a long weapon such as a spear or polearm.

A character in a superior position gains 10% to his or her attack and parry chances. If hit locations are being used, he or she adds +1 to the D20 roll for hit locations. Rolls over 20 are equal to 20. There are no penalties to being in an inferior position, as the tactical advantage given to the character in the superior position are enough of a disadvantage. The superior position bonus does not apply if the character in the inferior position is equipped with a long weapon and the character in the superior position is not. If both are

equipped with weapons of roughly the same size, the advantages are applied as described above.

As noted in the section on “Mounted Combat” (page 227), a mounted character is considered to have a superior position to a character on foot, and gains the advantages listed in this section.

Superior Numbers

In a situation with a large number of combatants, attackers and defenders alike may be limited by access to their opponents. Ordinarily, no more than five characters using melee weapons can surround a single character and all have room to attack. In close quarters, there might be room only for two characters at a time to attack if both are equipped with large weapons, while eight characters with long spears might be able to thrust at a surrounded defender. The gamemaster should evaluate the number of attackers and defenders, examine the terrain or environment, and consider the weapons being utilized when determining how many characters can attack a single target in a round. Any character above the number of those allowed to attack is considered to be crowded out and is unable to attack, but may perform other actions if he or she wishes. The guidelines above assume human-sized characters—the gamemaster may adjust these numbers for larger or smaller characters.

Sweep Attacks

A giant opponent or a character attacking with a massive or overlong weapon may attempt a sweep attack, a fairly clumsy swing across a large area to strike multiple foes. Such an attack has a high chance to succeed, but will not do as much damage as a normal attack. A sweep attack made with an appropriate weapon against a character standing in the target area is considered *Easy*, but damage is halved. A creature with a natural sweep attack should use the attack chance and damage listed in its description.

To avoid a sweep attack, your character cannot Dodge, but must instead use the Jump skill to get out of the area of the attack. Parrying a sweep attack is possible, though the parrying character must make a roll on the resistance table with his or her STR vs. the attack's damage (before being halved). A successful attack with a sweep attack using a non-edged weapon will potentially cause a knockback effect for anyone struck. See “Knockback” on page 197. Knockbacks are checked for each character in the range of the sweep attack's effect, from the first struck to the last. If one character successfully resists being knocked back, the knockback does not affect any of the remaining characters.

Sweep attacks can only cause crushing, knockback, or slashing special successes, as appropriate to the type

of weapon. Impales and entangles are not commonly possible due to the way the weapon is being utilized. If an impale or entangle special success is rolled, the gamemaster can either substitute the result with a crushing, knockback, or slashing special success as appropriate, or consider it a normal success.

Thrown Weapons

Generally, weapons are either crafted for hand-to-hand combat or for throwing, rarely both. However, in the excitement of combat, sometimes it becomes necessary to throw a weapon not meant to be thrown, or to use a thrown weapon in close combat. A few weapons, like the hatchet and javelin, are equally useful in both circumstances. When using thrown weapons, your character's damage bonus is halved. If your character has multiple dice of damage bonus, each is halved, rather than the number of dice being halved.

For example, if your character has a damage bonus of +1D4, the bonus with a thrown weapon is 1D2. If your character has a damage bonus of +2D6, it is reduced to +2D3 instead of +1D6.

Weapons meant principally for throwing are usually flimsier than melee weapons and not always balanced for hand-to-hand combat. If your character is forced into close combat wielding a throwing weapon he or she does not have an equivalent weapon skill for, all attacks with that weapon are considered *Difficult*. If combat skills are being split into attack and parry skills (an optional rule presented on page 199), a new weapon skill should be started for the melee use of the thrown weapon, based on 1/2 the current skill rating. This new skill can improve with experience, as any other skill.

Two Weapons

Your character can use two hand-to-hand (or small missile) weapons at the same time, rather than one weapon or one weapon and a shield. The weapons do not need to be of the same type, or class. For example, your character can fight with a dagger in each hand, or a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. There is no particular advantage to handedness, and any character can be declared to be ambidextrous. In genres where combat is important, oftentimes characters will opt to use two weapons. Fighting with two weapons in hand has the following benefits and conditions:

- ❖ Using two weapons in combat does not automatically grant a second attack, or more parries than are normally allowed.
- ❖ If your character has a skill of 100% or more in each weapon used, he or she can split the attack as per the optional rules for skills over 100% described on page 198 of **Chapter Six: Combat**. In this case, each attack is considered *Difficult*, with the other attack for each weapon ignored. *For example, if your character has a rapier (with a*

102% skill) in her right hand and a dagger (110% in the other) in his or her left hand. If he or she chooses to split his or her skill chances this round and attack multiple times, his or her rapier attack is 51% and the dagger attack is 55%. The second rapier attack and the second dagger attack are ignored, as the dagger attack takes the place of the second rapier attack.

- ❖ If a second attack is allowed, it occurs 5 DEX ranks after the initial attack.
- ❖ Attacks with the secondary hand are considered *Difficult* if your character is not trained in the use of fighting using that hand (see below).
- ❖ If the weapon is traditionally used in the secondary hand (such as a parrying dagger or shield), or your character has a skill of 100% or more with the weapon, he or she does not suffer this penalty.
- ❖ A primary advantage to fighting with two weapons is that your character is not defenseless if he or she loses one weapon due to breakage or a fumble.
- ❖ Fighting with one ranged and one melee weapon allows your character the advantage of being able to switch between both modes of combat. See “Firing into Combat” and “Point-Blank Range” on pages 224 and 229 for more information.
- ❖ A second weapon does not always have to be a weapon, and can be a tool or other implement that is required to be at hand in the current situation. *For example, your character may fight with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other, using the torch for light and as a potential club.* The gamemaster may require Luck rolls if the secondary item is fragile or potentially hazardous (like an oil-filled lantern).
- ❖ If attack and parry skill ratings are being split using the optional rules for such division, your character can utilize the better of his or her skill ratings for attacks with one weapon, and the better of his or her parry chances with the other weapon. *For example, if your character has a broadsword attack 93% and parry 64%, and battleaxe attack 54% and parry 87%, he or she would be well-advised to attack with the broadsword and parry with the battleaxe.*

For a quick rule of thumb, if your character has a DEX 15 or less, he or she is either right- or left-handed. If your character has a DEX 16 or more, he or she can be ambidextrous if they choose. If handedness has not been established prior and is suddenly an issue, the gamemaster may ask you to make a Luck roll. Failure causes your character to be either right or left-handed (gamemaster’s choice, though right-handedness is more common among humans), while success gives you the choice of handedness. A special success allows your character to be ambidextrous. Once handedness has been determined, you should note it on your character sheet for future reference.

Underwater Combat

There are few places where humans are less-suited for combat, but sometimes fighting while submerged

becomes unavoidable. The main problem humans have while fighting underwater is breathing, and if your character does not have equipment or some power to prevent drowning, the gamemaster should consult the spot rules for “Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation” on page 218.

Many weapons are next-to-useless underwater, such as those that do crushing or knockback damage. The effects of others are lessened considerably, and some (like firearms or energy weapons) may not function at all if submerged. The gamemaster should decide what weapons. There are a vast number of variables, and a case-by-case listing of what weapon has what effects would be impossible. The following guidelines are suggested, and should apply equally to player and non-player characters:

- ❖ A weapon that does anything other than the piercing damage type, does only half damage while underwater. Additionally, being underwater counts as having an additional 3 points of armor against these types of weapons.
- ❖ Weapons that do piercing damage (spears, daggers, etc.) or are made for underwater combat (spear guns, etc.) do not have their damage modified.
- ❖ While underwater, all attacks are capped at the attacker’s Swim skill, unless he or she is in close combat and is using a piercing weapon of SIZ 0 or 1.
- ❖ While underwater, all parries and dodges are similarly capped by the defender’s Swim skill.
- ❖ Parrying with a shield while underwater is impossible. All attempts automatically fail.
- ❖ A character attempting any sort of normal combat must succeed in a Swim skill roll each turn to maneuver into position to make an attack.
- ❖ Fighting underwater costs double the normal fatigue points per round.
- ❖ At the gamemaster’s discretion, a character or being acclimated to an underwater environment (tritons, mermaids, or all aquatic animals, for example) suffers none of the above penalties or requirements.

Other rules to consider are those for the Swim skill on page 81 of **Chapter Three: Skills**, and descriptions of powers or equipment to allow underwater survival, in **Chapter Four: Powers** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment**, respectively.

Vacuum

If your character is exposed to vacuum without some form of protection, the first course of action is to exhale all air within his or her lungs to equalize pressure within and outside. If your character does not do this, he or she will take 1D6+2 points of damage per combat round from the collapse of his or her lungs. If rapidly exposed to vacuum, a character who would know this information can remember to do so with a successful Idea roll.

The gamemaster may allow a successful *Difficult* Knowledge roll or a Science (Astronomy) roll to provide your character with this information.

Additionally, a human being will begin to hemorrhage if exposed to vacuum or near-vacuum conditions, causing 1 hit point of damage per round for the first round, then 2 points of damage at the second round, 4 points of damage after three full rounds, 8 points of damage at four full rounds of exposure to vacuum, etc. This may be delayed by 1 combat round per armor point of a protective suit, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Additionally, abrupt exposure to vacuum may cause your character's eardrums to burst (make a Stamina roll to avoid this), and after $CON \times 2$ combat rounds in vacuum, his or her vision will begin to become affected, making any rolls involving sight *Difficult*. Depending on how and where your character was exposed to vacuum, he or she may also suffer from the effects of extreme cold, extreme heat, or radiation. See those spot rules for more information. Powers and equipment are the best solution to mitigate this catastrophic situation.

Volley Fire

The attacks-per-round (Attk) for missile weapons on the weapons charts in **Chapter Eight: Equipment** are based on the assumption that your character will be launching attacks at a normal rate. However, at times, your character will wish to send as many attacks at an opponent as are possible in the shortest amount of time, perhaps as suppressing fire or in a desperate attempt at bypassing a particularly effective defense.

If your character chooses to throw, fire, or launch weapons as rapidly as possible, use the relevant weapon's attacks-per-round entry, with the first attack at the normal DEX rank and subsequent attacks happening at 5 DEX rank intervals. If the DEX ranks for any attacks are below 0, your character loses that attack. Though your character may have enough DEX ranks to attack more than the attacks-per-round, that amount is the limit and all further DEX rank attacks are not used.

For example, if your character with DEX 12 uses volley fire with throwing rocks (which get 2 attacks-per-round), the first throw will occur on DEX rank 12, and the second will occur on DEX rank 7.

There are a few drawbacks to volley fire, however. First and foremost is that it makes all attacks *Difficult*. Second is that it is (potentially) expensive in terms of ammunition expended. Another negative aspect to volley fire is that the fatigue cost is doubled for every round your character uses volley fire.

Weapon Length

On the weapon tables, all hand-to-hand weapons include an entry for the SIZ of the weapon (based on its

length). Weapons vary widely in length for good reason: the longer the weapon, the more likely the wielder of it is to be able to get in the first blow in a fight, or to be able to hold off an opponent armed with a shorter weapon and prevent him from making his own attack. On the other hand, the longer the weapon, the clumsier it is to wield effectively. See also the spot rules on "Closing" (page 219).

For long weapon against long weapon, use normal DEX ranks.

A character armed with a long weapon attacks first against an opponent using a medium or a short weapon, despite his or her DEX rank. The long weapon-user attacks at his or her DEX rank if that is higher, or just before his or her opponent in the opponent's DEX rank (if equal to or of lesser DEX than the opponent).

Armed with a medium or short hand-to-hand weapon, the attacker can parry or Dodge. He cannot attack until Dodging successfully. The player (or gamemaster) should state that the character is slipping inside the guard of the long weapon-user. *For example, if the long weapon is a spear, once inside the guard, the attacker no longer risks a wound from the spear point, and can freely attack.*

If an attacker is closer to the long weapon-user than is the striking point of the weapon (for example, a spearhead), the long weapon-user cannot attack with his or her weapon. To re-establish optimal combat distance and put the attacker in danger again, the long weapon-user can Dodge to disengage, or drop the weapon and perform one of several possible actions: Brawl, Grapple, knockback with a shield, or draw and attack with a new medium or short weapon.

The situation described above is not true of medium versus short weapons, which are easier to manipulate. These are not modified and do not require special conditions to maneuver into combat.

Some weapons such as quarterstaves are especially adaptable and may be used to attack at any of the three lengths.

Weather Conditions

Weather conditions include any atmospheric conditions that may affect characters. The primary weather conditions to consider are wind, cloud cover, and precipitation. Effects from other extremes of weather are covered in "Cold, Exposure, Hunger, and Thirst" on page 219 and "Fire and Heat" on page 223.

Wind: Wind affects several aspects of gameplay, forcing adjustments to some forms of movement and to missile fire (thrown and missile weapons, not firearms or energy weapons). These conditions can also be modeled for activities simulating extreme wind conditions, such as fighting on the wing of an airplane or atop a moving

train, etc. Movement on foot will also be affected: see “Terrain and Weather Modifiers” on page 181 for details. Following are modifiers that may come into effect on those physical activities:

- ❖ **LIGHT OR MODERATE WIND:** No penalty (STR 0–1)
- ❖ **STRONG WIND:** –10% skill or movement penalty (STR 2–6)
- ❖ **SEVERE WIND:** –25% skill or movement penalty (STR 7–9)
- ❖ **WINDSTORM:** –50% skill or movement penalty (STR 10–12)
- ❖ **HURRICANE-FORCE WIND:** –75% or movement skill penalty (STR 13–15)
- ❖ **TORNADO-FORCE WIND:** –100% or movement skill penalty (STR 16+)

Additionally, the gamemaster may choose to assign wind a STR value from the suggested ranges provided and require opposed STR resistance rolls each round for your character to continue to stand upright. Failure means that your character falls; taking whatever damage is appropriate (see “Falling” on page 223). Such requirements should only be done in extraordinary action, or when your character is directly exposed to the wind’s full force.

Cloud Cover: Cloud cover defines the amount of the sky obscured by clouds. The modifier also determines the percentage chance of rain (roll the penalty as a chance, not as a modifier). Skills that might be affected by cloud cover include Navigation or direct use of Knowledge (Astronomy or Astrology). This may incur penalties to some powers—or any conditions requiring direct sunlight. Severe or complete cloud cover may also serve as partial darkness (see “Darkness” on page 220 for more detail).

- ❖ **LIGHT OR MODERATE CLOUD COVER:** No penalty
- ❖ **HEAVY CLOUD COVER:** –25% to any relevant skill
- ❖ **SEVERE CLOUD COVER:** –50% to any relevant skill
- ❖ **COMPLETE CLOUD COVER:** –100% to any relevant skill

Rain: Precipitation chances equal the percentage of sky covered with clouds. Roll D100 each day. If the result is equal to or less than the percentage of sky covered, then rain falls. The amount of precipitation falling equals the D100 roll, in millimeters. Depending on the weather and time of year (gamemaster’s discretion), the rain may turn to snow, sleet, or hail.

- ❖ **RAIN:** –10% skill or movement penalty
- ❖ **SNOW:** –25% skill or movement penalty
- ❖ **SLEET:** –50% skill or movement penalty
- ❖ **HAIL:** –75% skill or movement penalty

Zero-Gravity Combat

In a science fiction setting, your character may be in outer space or other environments with little or no gravity. In these environments, your character must make an Agility roll each round he or she attempts to perform any Combat or Physical activities. Success indicates that your character can perform actions unmodified, while failure on this check means that all such actions are considered *Difficult*. Additionally, unless your character is braced, any impact will cause the knockback special effect to the victim and half of the knockback special effect to the attacker, as applicable. See “Knockbacks” on page 226 for more information. However, the damage from impacting other objects is reduced. In either case, the gamemaster should roll for damage normally, and reduce the number by half, rounding fractions down. The Agility roll to remain standing is required to see if your character is still oriented correctly, with failure indicating that he or she is pointed in the wrong direction, potentially facing away from an opponent, or even upside-down and sideways!



CHAPTER EIGHT

EQUIPMENT



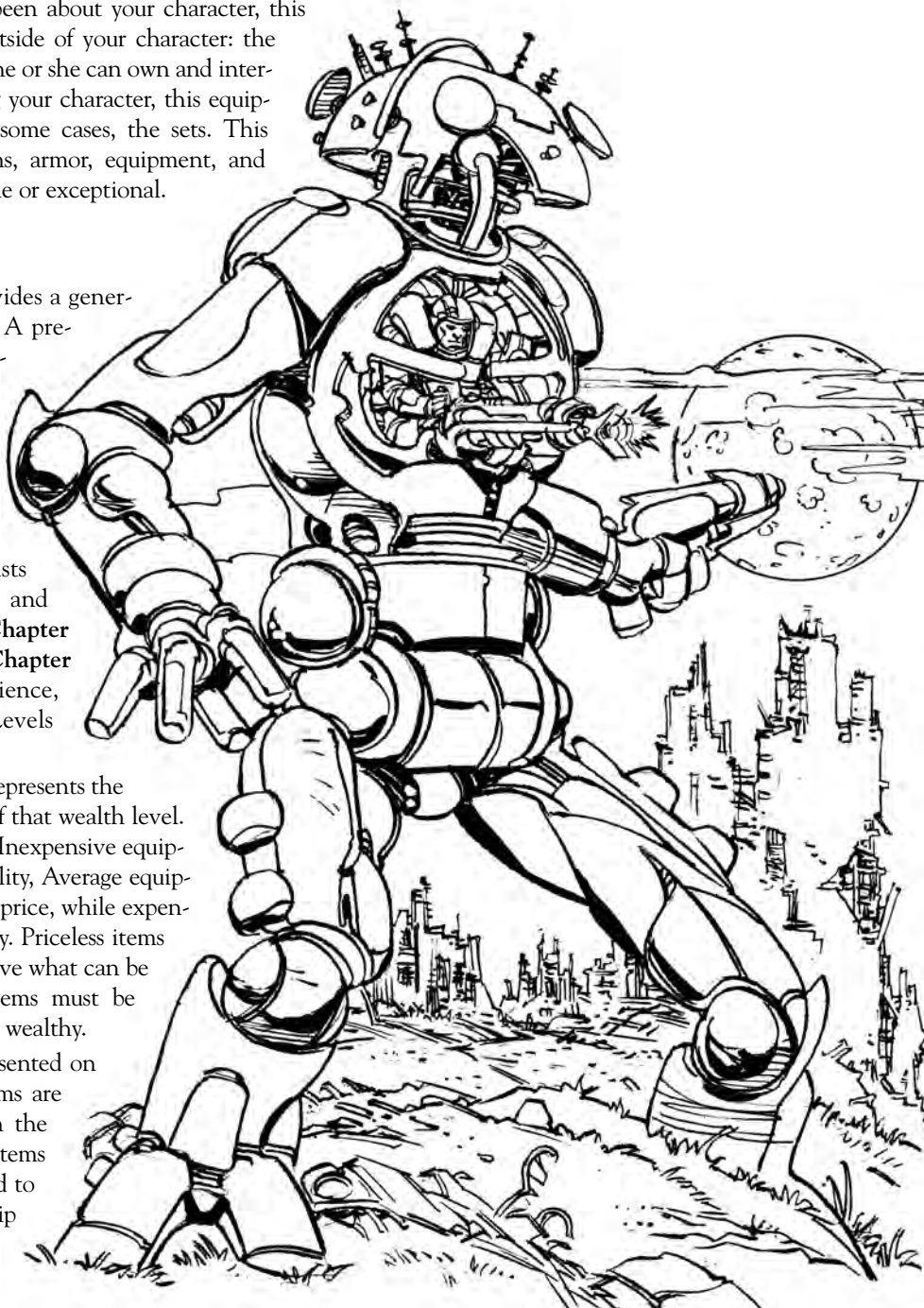
While previous chapters have been about your character, this chapter covers everything outside of your character: the items in the game world that he or she can own and interact with. If you are an actor, portraying your character, this equipment is all about your props, and in some cases, the sets. This includes elements like money, weapons, armor, equipment, and vehicles, and the environment, mundane or exceptional.

Money

The “Wealth” section on page 37 provides a general view of money in the game system. A precise set of prices, incomes, and currencies is useless due to the open setting of this game, where prices in dollars, euros, doubloons, yen, pesos, sovereigns, crowns, gold pieces, glass beads, credits, etc. useless for a setting where these are not used. In place of copious currency exchange lists or currency abstractions, the Wealth and Status rules presented on page 37 of **Chapter Two: Characters** and page 79 of **Chapter Three: Skills** are utilized. For convenience, these are summarized on the Wealth Levels table on the next page.

The second column, “Item Value”, represents the value of items available to a character of that wealth level. Cheap items are worth almost nothing, Inexpensive equipment is lower-price and usually low-quality, Average equipment is of sound quality and costs a fair price, while expensive gear is higher-quality or more pricey. Priceless items and equipment are considered to be above what can be easily purchased . . . buying these items must be arranged or negotiated, even among the wealthy.

Two additional values are not represented on this chart: free and restricted. Free items are just that—they can often be found in the world without effort, while restricted items are unavailable to anyone not permitted to carry them, and unauthorized ownership often incurs criminal charges. Additionally, restricted items may be given



an actual value in addition to the restricted quality, such as an item that is expensive as well as being restricted.

Character creation provides information about your character's beginning wealth level. The GM may use this and the Status skill as guidelines for assigning starting equipment above and beyond those guidelines presented in Step Nine of character creation on page 24.

Wealth Levels

Wealth Level	Item Value	Description
Wealthy	Priceless	Vast amounts of wealth, wanting for nothing, with any purchase within reason, and lines of credit allowing even greater financing.
Affluent	Expensive	Well-off, with the ability to spend freely without concern for poverty or budget.
Average	Average	Middle-class income. Comfortable, but not wealthy. Major purchases are weighed carefully.
Poor	Inexpensive	Life without luxury, where day-to-day sustenance is meager and any financial impact has serious consequences.
Destitute	Cheap	Penniless and without even basic pocket money. Survival is a driving concern.

Equipment

Each piece of equipment in the game has a relative value (as above) assigned to it. The gamemaster can assume that if your character is of that wealth level (or above), he or she has access to that piece of equipment without difficulty. Your character has free access to equipment with values below his or her wealth level, within reason. The gamemaster may require Status rolls if you wish for your character to reach above his or her station and possess items that are above his or her initial wealth level. This can represent saving up for something, a valuable hand-me-down, or calling in a favor.

At the gamemaster's discretion, if you wish for your character to possess more expensive gear (above his or her wealth level), a successful Status roll should be required to "purchase" items one level above the character's default wealth level. A *Difficult* Status roll must be made for items two wealth levels above, and the gamemaster may rule that items more than two levels of value above your character's default wealth level are simply inaccessible.

Alternately, if it is reasonable for your character to have the piece of equipment, the gamemaster may decide that it has been given, assigned, or loaned to the character, based on the character's profession. This

should be handled with the gamemaster's discretion and the game setting, as appropriate.

For example, a soldier's wealth level is usually poor or average, but soldiers are issued firearms and equipment far above their financial means. A soldier is expected to take care of the equipment and does not "own" any of it, but it is usually available for the purpose of adventuring. On the other hand, a character who has taken the pilot profession to represent a career as an astronaut is unlikely to own his or her own spaceship in anything other than a science fiction campaign where private ownership of spaceships is relatively commonplace.

Ultimately, the point of these guidelines is to steer the campaign away from financial bookkeeping, or dealing overmuch with coin-counting and unrealistic economic models. Keeping wealth and value as relative abstractions enables gamemasters to focus on the setting rather than niggling financial details. Future sourcebooks for Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system that deal with different genres, locales, and settings will include more specific equipment and price lists.

Starting Equipment

As noted in Step Nine on page 24 of **Chapter Two: Characters**, your character usually begins with an appropriate amount of gear and equipment suitable to his or her wealth level and profession. Usually, your average character will have:

- ❖ A complete set of clothing appropriate to his or her environment and genre.
- ❖ An amount of pocket money and personal savings appropriate to his or her wealth level.
- ❖ A personal item showing some relation to his or her family, an heirloom, keepsake, photo, etc. or some trinket.

When to Describe Equipment?

One big question gamemasters may face while running games is when a piece of equipment needs to be described in game terms, versus when it can be assumed to be a part of the background. This is essentially a question of detail: when are game effects required, and when are they unnecessary? Though this is largely a decision to be made by each individual gamemaster, and there is no right or wrong answer to this question, it is mostly a matter of convenience. Ideally, the amount of time spent figuring game specifics will be minimized in favor of maximizing the time made free for roleplaying and adventuring.

This chapter covers a variety of pieces of equipment, including weapons, armor, and vehicles. Ideally, these guidelines are enough that an equivalent to an unlisted piece of equipment can be readily found, or the piece of gear can be abstracted into a simple modifier to an existing skill.

ket of little relative value but having some emotional connection.

- ❖ Any trade tools or equipment suitable to his or her profession, if appropriate.
- ❖ Any weapon in which he or she has a skill of over 50%, if appropriate.

Each profession may have additional gear specified, such as the pilot, who may begin play with an airplane, ship, or even a spaceship, at the gamemaster's discretion, based on the setting. The gamemaster should use discretion to ensure that you are not led to choosing a profession solely for the access to equipment—your choice of profession should be based on the character you want to play, and not the most advantageous social or economic choice.

For example, if everyone in the group picks a noble (or the setting equivalent), game play might become stale if all the characters use their vast financial resources to make problems go away. A GM might disallow this, or come up with a setting and campaign where material wealth is not of significance, such as a safari into the heart of unmapped Africa.

Furthermore, you and the gamemaster should consider that the quality and appearance of your character's gear and garments are likely to reflect his or her Status skill levels and wealth as based on profession.

For example, a student's garments will be clean and probably fashionable, but not suitable for black-tie events, and will serve him or her poorly on an expedition into remote Tibet. The gear a dilettante purchases for a hunting expedition will be pristine and of the best brands, though an experienced hunter will likely have well-worn and trustworthy gear chosen for reliability over the label.

Purchasing Equipment

In almost every game session, your character will want to obtain some piece of equipment or gear he or she does not possess, cannot scrounge or loot, or is unable to take from someone. This can be handled using actual monetary value, with the gamemaster determining price lists and figuring negotiation skills such as Appraise, Bargain, and Persuade into the process, though the default is to simply use Status rolls as appropriate.

First you should determine whether the equipment can be found at all. The gamemaster may require a successful Research roll or a characteristic roll such as Idea, Luck, or Knowledge to find it. As noted above, communication skills may be required, if bargaining or negotiation is necessary. **Chapter Ten: Setting** provides some basic guidelines for availability of items in a variety of settings.

Assuming that the desired item can be found, the most direct means of handling purchases is through use of the Status skill, described on page 79. To make purchases use the Status skill, modified by these factors:



SkeleMan and Miss Tress would begin play equipped with their guns, ammo, and super-hero costumes. They would also have any items and clothing necessary to their secret identities. This is all part of the equipment natural to their characters.

- ❖ If the item has a value of two levels below your character's wealth level and it can be purchased, it is automatically available (in an appropriate number). No roll is needed.
- ❖ If the item has a value of one level below your character's wealth level and it can be purchased, a single item (or a small set of items, as appropriate) can be had without making a roll.
- ❖ If the item has value equal to your character's wealth level, no roll is required to obtain it.
- ❖ If the item is one value level above your character's wealth level, a successful Status roll is required to obtain it.
- ❖ If the item is two value levels above your character's wealth level, a successful *Difficult* Status roll is required to obtain it.
- ❖ If the item is more than two value levels above your character's wealth level, the GM may rule that no use of Status will work to obtain it.

The final means your character might utilize to obtain equipment beyond his or her initial means is theft. At the gamemaster's discretion, your character may begin play with a stolen item of almost any value. In this case, the gamemaster should determine who owned the item originally, whether they know it has been taken (and who took it), and the persistence and strength of the resources they will devote to recovering it. The theft itself may be role-played as an introductory scene or flashback, or simply assumed to have been successful. In either case, the gamemaster should make any reasonable efforts to deal with the repercussions of

the theft in a manner appropriate to the setting, potentially including the recovery efforts into the overall story or campaign. As with other skills, a successful skill roll made before an adventure begins is not eligible for a skill check.

Starting Equipment with Powers

You may wish for your character to begin with a piece of powered equipment, if powers are used in the setting. If the gamemaster approves, your character must “pay” for that piece of equipment out of his or her own starting budget for powers, whether in initial spells or psychic abilities, at the cost of a mutation, or out of your character’s power budget. You may begin with one or more pieces of equipment that utilize powers, with the following guidelines:

Magic Powers: To begin play with a magic item, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per spell invested in the magic item, plus 1 point of permanent POW per level of spell capacity the magic item can use. Additionally, your character must know (or have access to) the spell or spells the magic item can use. The magic item will have a power point reservoir equal to your character’s normal power points after the magic item is created, or the SIZ of the item. If your character did not create the magic item, the gamemaster should determine the power point reservoir. A magic items must have its initial skill rating paid for out of your character’s personal skill pool, and cannot be higher than the skill rating of the creator of the magic item. If your character did not create the magic item, the gamemaster should determine the initial skill ratings. When the magic item is created, you should determine whether it will be personal (only your character can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it. More information about the creation of magic items is found in “Magic Items” on page 245.

Mutations: If you wish for your character to have an item with mutations, work with the gamemaster to provide a reasonable explanation why such an item could exist and why mutations (vs. super powers) would be the best way to represent its abilities. The mutated item is a part of your character and must be paid for out of his or her initial characteristic and available mutations. To begin play with a mutated item, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent CON per level of the mutation (and an equal number of available starting mutations). Any characteristic rolls the item makes are based off your character’s own characteristics. A mutated item is considered to be “alive” and will heal at the same rate your character does. More information about the creation of mutated items is in “Mutated Items” on page 245.

Psychic Abilities: To begin with an item that uses psychic abilities, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per level of the psychic ability (and one psychic ability “slot” from his or her starting psychic abilities if the ability is not known). The item has a starting POW (and maximum power points) equal to your character’s. He or she must pay the skill points for the item’s psychic abilities out of his or her personal skill point pool. More information about the creation of items with psychic powers is on page 245.

Sorcery: To begin play with an artifact, your character must sacrifice 1 point of permanent POW per sorcery spell invested in the artifact, and must know (or have access to) the spell(s) the artifact can use. The artifact will have a power point reservoir equal to your character’s normal power point maximum (after the artifact is created) whichever is larger. The gamemaster should set the POW and power point value if the artifact was not created by your character. When the artifact is created, you should determine whether it will be personal (only your character can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll



The player for Bruce Bannister (above) chooses for his character to “come to” on the midst of an experiment to create the perfect soldier, and has no possessions other than what he grabbed in his escape from the lab.

if it has power points, or if anyone can use it. More information about the creation of sorcerous items is found on page 246.

Super Powers: To begin play with a gadget, you should be prepared to pay for the gadget's powers as if they are from your own power budget. It is recommended that the gadget be the same power level as the player who "owns" it, though the gamemaster may allow for a gadget more or less powerful, depending on the character concept. The gamemaster can also decide to shift the relative level of the gadget and your character for balance purposes, so if the gadget is a level higher than the campaign power level, your character's power level should be shifted one level down, or vice versa. For example, your character might be an otherwise normal human (Normal power level) who has come into possession of an immensely destructive alien super-weapon (Epic power level). Alternately, your character is a literal god of invention like Hephaestus (Superhuman power level) who creates potent (but not indestructible) gadgets of Heroic power level to do his or her bidding. You can take the Power Failing "Super-powered identity must be turned on in an obvious and preventable manner" tied to the item (page 142), usually a +1 power budget bonus. Other Power Failings may apply, such as "Power has a limited number of uses per day". Also, the gamemaster may allow you to take a new Power Failing: "Power comes from a gadget" for a +1 power budget bonus. Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on your character's relevant skill. More information about the creation of super powered items is found on page 246.

Making Equipment

It's possible that your character may want to actually build a piece of equipment, which is usually cheaper than simply buying it. A simple rule of thumb is that any item your character makes (as opposed to buying) is one wealth level lower than its standard price. This assumes that your character is skilled in the manufacture of the item (a relevant skill level of at least 75%). Such manufacturing assumes that your character knows where to find trustworthy components at good prices (this could be some black market, through mail order, or in a salvage yard), and is willing to spend the time testing and evaluating materials to make sure they will work. The gamemaster may require that this process involve some elements of communication or research, or even Status rolls as above. For example, if your character is trying to make something of two wealth levels above his or her wealth level, the cost for components is one wealth level above, and requires a successful Status roll. The amount of time and detail spent gathering parts and/or raw materials is up to the gamemaster to determine, based on the level of detail he or she wants to focus on during play.

Some items cannot traditionally be fashioned from store-bought pieces, such as duplicating unique pieces of art or artifacts as anything but replicas. Though the individual pieces may be cheap to make or find, the craftsmanship or item's rarity may limit your options. If your character is not skilled enough, or fails the relevant rolls, the cost of raw materials and components may even be more expensive than the item traditionally is.

For example, if your character attempts to build a car out of pieces purchased through retail is likely to have an extremely difficult time of it, and will likely spend much more than just buying a car outright. However, if your character is skilled and is able to use Bargain and Research successfully, he or she may find a junkyard or be able to scavenge all of the necessary elements much cheaper than paying asking price.

Ultimately, it is up to the gamemaster to decide how much time should be spent manufacturing an item. Due to the wide range of complexity, there is no hard and fast rule that is of universal utility. If some guidance is desired, the following advice is provided for the length of time to create an item, assuming that all required equipment is on hand and all relevant skill rolls are successful: if the item is relatively simple to make, each SIZ point requires 1 hour. If it is of average complexity, each SIZ point requires 1 day. If it is relatively complex, each SIZ point is 1 week. If it is extremely complex, each SIZ point may require a month. If more than one character is working on the item (at the gamemaster's discretion), divide the SIZ between them. When they have worked enough to cover all of the SIZ of the item, it is complete. Use the SIZ equivalency tables on page 277 and 296.

For example, a target shield (SIZ 3) is relatively easy to construct, and takes three hours. A SIZ 50 automobile is of average complexity, and takes a single person 50 days of work or two mechanics 25 days of work to assemble from pieces. A SIZ 110 airliner, however, is extremely complex, and would take a single character nine years to complete. The gamemaster is encouraged to modify these amounts based on equipment, facilities, and the quality of successes rolled. For such a long-term project, each period of time (1 hour, 1 day, or 1 week) requires a separate and successful skill roll, if the gamemaster deems it necessary to make the skill roll.

These values are necessarily abstract, and if the gamemaster has more accurate information on manufacturing time, he or she is encouraged to provide it.

Equipment Quality Modifiers

Remember that skills can be modified by having relevant and appropriate equipment handy. Equipment can be anything from a set of lockpicks, a machinist's tool set, a research library, a medical lab, or anything else that could be used for a skill roll. The quality of equipment can provide a modifier to a skill roll, as described in "Circumstantial Modifiers" on page 177. This modifier can range from inferior equipment penalizing your character's skill rating by -15%, to superior quality equipment offering a

+15% bonus. Obviously, most types of equipment exist in a wide variety of qualities. The gamemaster should determine whether a particular piece of equipment is available in a range of qualities and how easy or expensive it may be to obtain said equipment. Most equipment your character uses is by default of average quality. However, you may wish for your character to own or use superior quality equipment, to increase his or her chances of success with a relevant skill roll. Following is a quick guide to handling value and availability of different quality levels of equipment:

Quality	Modifier	Value and Availability
Inferior	-15%	Subtract three value levels
Poor	-5%	Subtract one value level
Average	None	As normal
Good	+5%	Add one value level
Superior	+15%	Add three value levels

To use this chart, find the piece of equipment's normal value (or consult the gamemaster for this information, as it varies greatly by the setting). Next, determine the quality of the item you would like for your character (somewhere between inferior and superior). Consult the "Value and Ability" column to determine what the final value of the equipment will be. A piece of equipment's value and availability cannot be modified beyond the limits of the normal spectrum. Normally, your character will want good or superior equipment to increase his or her skill chances, though if budget is an issue, you may choose to have your character use lower-quality though more affordable equipment.

At the gamemaster's discretion, alternate values and/or modifiers can be assigned to equipment—the values presented are a suggestion for simplicity's sake.

Having adequate gear merits no modifier at all. However, if your character does not possess the required equipment to use a particular skill, the gamemaster may make the skill's chance *Difficult*, almost impossible (only a roll of 01% succeeds), or simply rule that the skill cannot be attempted without the requisite gear. This may differ from one style of campaign to another.

For example, your character encounters a lock that must be picked. Following are some of the outcomes due to circumstances:

- ❖ *If your character has superior lock picks and other tools, he or she will gain a +15% bonus.*
- ❖ *If the tools are average, there is no bonus.*
- ❖ *If the tools are inferior (rusty, broken, or improvised), the skill chance is modified by -15%.*

The gamemaster may declare that the skill cannot be attempted at all if your character does not have even the most rudimentary lockpicking tools. The gamemaster tells you: "You cannot hope to pick the lock without a lockpick, or even an improvised one. Perhaps if you look around some more, you might find something that could be fashioned into an improvised lockpick."

Skills & Appropriate Equipment

Skill	Potential Equipment
Appraise	None, or reference materials, measuring devices (scales, calipers, etc.), magnifying glass, etc.
Art	By medium (paint supplies and brushes, computer, pencils, holo-imager, spray paint, typewriter, quill and ink, etc.).
Climb	None, or rope, pitons, crampons, etc. for complex climbs.
Craft	By medium (tools, raw materials, etc.). Almost every potential Craft specialty utilizes a set of equipment or tools.
Disguise	Makeup, wigs, costume changes, etc.
Fine Manipulation	None, or precision tools.
First Aid	None, or basic first aid kit and bandages.
Gaming	None, or cards, dice, game board, etc.
Knowledge	None, or reference materials.
Language	None, or a language dictionary.
Literacy	None, or a language dictionary.
Medicine	Varies by setting, ranging from herbalist materials to state-of-the-art hospital facilities and pharmaceuticals.
Navigate	None, or maps, astrolabe, compass, etc.
Repair	None, or tools appropriate to type of repair.
Research	None, or research library and reference materials.
Science	None, or scientific instruments and reference materials.
Teach	Educational materials appropriate to subject.
Technical Skill	None, or materials appropriate to specific skill.

In a less realistic setting, the gamemaster may allow your character a straight 1% chance of success, even without tools. If the roll is successful, the gamemaster may tell you: "You manage to wiggle the lock assembly back and forth until you hear a slight click. Either you managed to unlock it through applying the right vibrations, or it wasn't locked correctly in the first place. Either way, it was amazing luck."

Remember that temporary or situational modifiers to a skill are applied after an *Easy* skill attempt is doubled or a *Difficult* skill attempt divided in half.

Skills and Equipment

Many skills require equipment to be utilized successfully, or are greatly enhanced with equipment. As noted before, some skills are penalized for having no equipment. The equipment needed for a particular skill varies tremendously by setting, and the gamemaster may provide more details on what equipment is required for

each skill. The following table describes potential specialized or general equipment that may or may not be required to successfully use a skill (or use the skill without modifiers). If the skill is not listed here, it traditionally does not require any equipment, or it is obvious (such as weapon skills).

“Other Equipment” on page 272 contains additional information on equipment useful to skills, including some sample kits your character might use.

Equipment with Characteristics

Many pieces of equipment have characteristic values (STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, APP), just like characters. Some rare pieces of equipment have values in all of these characteristics: others have only a single characteristic (usually SIZ) or even no characteristic. The number of characteristics varies from item to item, with the only rule of thumb being that if the item has some property that may require a resistance roll, a characteristic value should be provided. Otherwise, don't bother.

For example, it's unlikely that your character will require any resistance rolls to pick up a box of breakfast cereal, unless the question is whether the box will be thrown in combat, or if your

character is extremely weak. In this case, the gamemaster may assign the cereal box a SIZ of 1, and require no further characteristic values for the item.

For gear or equipment that requires characteristics that are functional, here are notes on how the characteristic values work while applied to objects:

Strength (STR): An item with a STR value must have some means of actually lifting something. STR is not a measure of how resistant something is to your character's STR if attempting to damage it: for that value, see the item's hit point or armor value. Items that might have STR values are vehicles, construction equipment like forklifts or bulldozers, robots, or even hydraulic jacks.

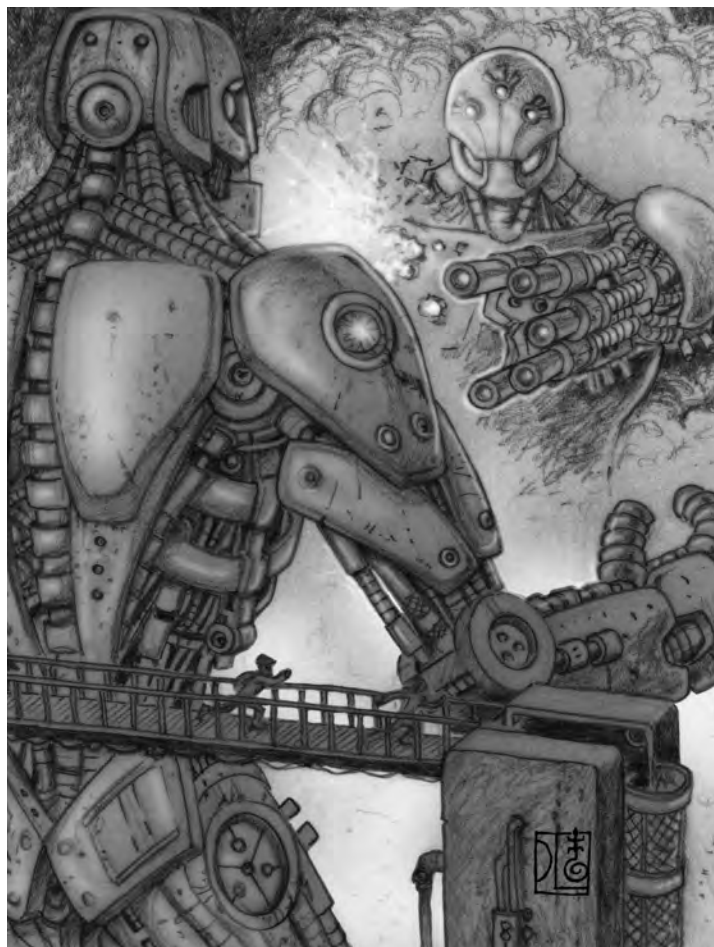
Constitution (CON): An item with a CON value is extraordinarily rare—usually hit point totals are based on raw SIZ and are modified by armor value. Unless the item can heal or can be affected by disease, poison, etc. it doesn't require a CON value. Sample items with CON scores would be humanoid androids.

Size (SIZ): SIZ is the primary characteristic for an item—almost everything in the game has some physical presence, and therefore a SIZ characteristic. As noted above, for most pieces of gear, SIZ determines hit point values. Sometimes an item will have greater hit points, based on the substance it is made of. See “General Qualities of Objects” on page 276 for more information on hit points, armor value, and other attributes.

Intelligence (INT): This is a rare characteristic for an item. Having an INT value represents thinking capabilities and implies intuition and problem solving. This characteristic is unlikely to be used for items other than computers or artificial intelligences in future eras, though the occasional thinking machine might be found in almost any era. Magic items such as talking mirrors or sentient rune-swords might have INT scores as well. It's useful for an item with an INT characteristic to actually have some means of communicating its intelligence, such as a display, screen, voice, telepathy, or other means of relaying information.

Power (POW): The POW characteristic represents spiritual energy, and as such is almost exclusive to living beings or magically endowed creations. This does not represent a power source—a feature that is either handled mechanically (the item is assigned a power point reserve) or through the Extra Energy super power on page 157.

Dexterity (DEX): An item capable of independent movement will have a DEX value, and



A giant mecha given CON, INT, and POW could be a form of weird cyborg created by a mad sorcerer-scientist, running amok and threatening humankind!

this characteristic functions for an item just as it does for a character. If the item has DEX but must be operated by your character, use the lower value of either your character's DEX or the item's.

Appearance (APP): While the APP characteristic has elements of personality and personal charisma included, the APP for an item can either be a simple relative measure of the aesthetic appeal of the item, or it can be used as with your character if the item is capable of communication and charm. *For example, an android manufactured for pleasure may have a high APP score representing physical beauty and appealing personality, while even the sleekest, most amazingly well-fashioned vehicle might not have an APP score unless it is somehow important.* The main reason the gamemaster might assign an APP value to an item is to compare the appearance of another item.

Education (EDU) (Option): Aside from representing training or downloaded knowledge for a thinking computer, this characteristic is best used for equipment with knowledge reserves. Usually, instead of an EDU score, an item either adds a bonus to your character's Research skill, or can make similar skill rolls *Easy* or *Difficult*. When assigned to an item, the EDU characteristic stands for any data it has immediate access to. This figure expands dramatically with the advent of information storage and online access to databases.

As noted above, it isn't essential for each piece of equipment or item to have all of the main characteristics unless they're needed. The equipment sheet provided in the appendix has spaces for all of the characteristics—just cross the irrelevant ones out. If in the course of play, the gamemaster or players need a value that hasn't been defined, these might be generated on the spur of the moment with a 3D6 roll (as with characters), assigned a value based on similar pieces of equipment, or even determined with a successful Status roll.

For example, a piece of gear belonging to a destitute character might be automatically given an APP 1. A poor character might get a 1D6 roll to determine APP, while the same gear might be 2D6 for a character of average wealth. This might increase to 2D6+6 for an affluent character, and 2D6+12 for the wealthy character. To use a Status roll to determine APP, a fumble equals an APP 1, a failure equals 1D6, a success equals 2D6, a special success is 2D6+6, and a critical success means the item has an APP of 2D6+12.

Equipment with Skills

Some rare pieces of equipment may even possess skills, handled in the same fashion as characters. Any piece of equipment capable of independent action may have a skill. Some examples might be automated defense systems utilizing the Artillery skill; educational programs may have Teach; diagnostic systems using Repair; etc. In general, the most intelligent piece of equipment is, the

more likely it is to have one or more skills. The gamemaster should set the values of these skills, based on the nature of the piece of equipment. If the piece of equipment has a characteristic related to the skill (for example, INT and a Knowledge skill), the piece of equipment's skill level may be a multiple of that characteristic (x 1, x 3, x 5, etc.), depending on how efficient it is. "Other Equipment" on page 272 provides examples of equipment with skills. If the item has any ability to speak or read, it should have an equivalent Language skill—usually the owner's or creator's native language.

To begin play with an item possessing skills, you should "pay" for the item's skill points out of your character's personal skill point pool (from Step Seven of character creation on page 21) or your professional pool if the item is important to the performance of your character's profession.

Alternately, you can treat the item as if it had super powers (see **Chapter Four: Powers**) and purchase the item as if it were a power. In this case, the following conditions apply:

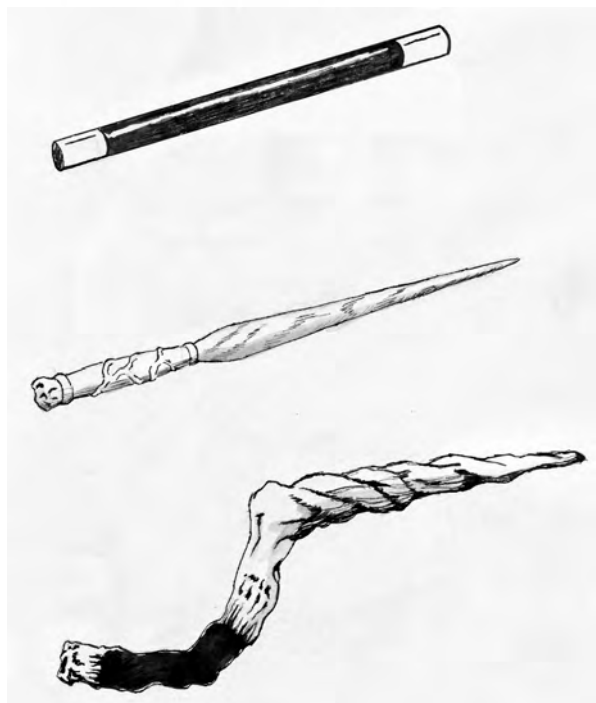
- ❖ The item has the Character Failing "Super-powered identity must be turned on in an obvious and preventable manner" tied to the item (page 142), usually a +1 Character Point Budget bonus.
- ❖ Other Power Failings may apply, such as "Power has a limited number of uses per day" or "Power cannot improve through experience".
- ❖ The skills are purchased with the Super Skill power (page 165). It is assumed that all items have a 0% starting skill level in any skill.
- ❖ If no obvious attributes exist for the item, you should work with the gamemaster to determine the power supply, range, etc. Additional super powers can be purchased to improve these attributes.

If you invest points in an item, you are naturally going to want to keep it around. The gamemaster should do whatever he or she can to make sure that your item survives with your character, is readily repairable, or a replacement can be found easily, as appropriate to its value and the setting. Despite the fact that it is a distinct item, it is considered to be a part of your character, just as another character's skill or power would be, and removing it from your character's possession should be done with extreme care, unless unavoidable.

Items with skills do not increase their skill rating through successful use of experience, unless the item has an INT characteristic and the gamemaster determines that it is capable of learning in some fashion.

Equipment with Powers

Equipment can have properties above and beyond its normal capabilities, and with the gamemaster's permission, your character can purchase an item or piece of



A wand, ring, amulet, or staff serves admirably as an enchantable object. An array of wands is shown above. The wood or metal used, and the method of construction, are important elements of the enchanting process.

equipment with a power from one of the different power systems described in **Chapter Four: Powers**. Additionally, the gamemaster may choose to represent a piece of equipment in terms of a power, rather than mechanistically, for ease in determining a power's effectiveness against a powered character, and vice versa. This is usually only necessary in campaigns using powers, as normally the base attributes for an item are enough.

Following are guidelines for incorporating powers into pieces of equipment, based on each of the power systems described in **Chapter Four: Powers**, with suggestions for appropriate powers and equipment. Later expansions of Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system will include more sophisticated rules for powered items.

Magic Items: A piece of equipment with one or more magic spells is called a *magic item*. This item will appear magical to anyone able to detect such things, and allows the owner to cast a magic spell as if he or she were able to cast it him- or herself. The magic item must have a skill rating in the spell. Most magic items have a power point reservoir of their own, while rarer magic items use the owner's power points as a reservoir.

- ❖ A magic item is useless if it reaches 0 power points, though it can be recharged. To recharge a magic item, the user can move 1 power point from his or her body into the magic item each combat round.

- ❖ A magic item can be overcharged as per a character, up to double its maximum power points. These extra power points will vanish as they do with a player character.
- ❖ Any spells cast from the item follow all of the normal rules regarding the particular spell.
- ❖ When the magic item is created, the gamemaster should determine whether it is a personal item (only the creator can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it.
- ❖ The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and attributes of an appropriate non-magical version.
- ❖ The item's hit points limit the number of power points that can be stored in it. As it takes damage, the maximum power points it can store will be reduced. The item can be repaired as a normal item, though if it is broken or destroyed it can never be restored to magic item status and remains a non-magical item.
- ❖ If a magic item is destroyed, any POW spent on it are lost.
- ❖ A magic item may have one or more permanent magic spells bound into it that are always active, but creation of such an item costs five times the normal POW expense. The gamemaster should determine whether a magic spell can be cast permanently on an item. If this item is created, it does not require power points and is simply always on at full strength.

Mutated Items: Items with mutations are fairly rare, as mutations are traditionally caused through genetic variance and few items are created through any means involving genetic manipulation.

- ❖ An item can have one or more adverse mutations.
- ❖ The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and other attributes of a normal version, unless the mutation affects these characteristics.
- ❖ Any characteristic rolls the item must make are based on the creator's characteristics.
- ❖ A mutated item is considered to be alive and will heal at the same rate as its creator.
- ❖ A mutated item can be used by anyone making a successful Stamina roll.
- ❖ Any CON points and mutations invested into a mutated item are lost if it is destroyed.

Equipment with Psychic Abilities: Items with psychic abilities are incredibly rare, even more than items with mutations. These items will inevitably be charged with immense psychic power, and should at least have the POW characteristic. A character with any psychic ability will automatically recognize that an item has psychic abilities, and with an Idea roll, will be able to utilize it. A character without psychic abilities can only determine if an item has psychic properties with a successful Idea roll, and must either defeat the item in a power point vs. power point resistance roll, or potentially a *Difficult Luck* roll. The creator of the item (or

the gamemaster, if not applicable) decides whether the item can be used or not by anyone, as above.

- ❖ The item has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and other attributes of a normal version of that item.
- ❖ Psychic items are not alive, and can be damaged. They do not naturally heal, they can be repaired with an appropriate Craft or Repair skill roll, and when they are destroyed they will cease functioning. If a psychic item is broken into more than one piece, the gamemaster will decide which single piece retains the psychic ability.

Equipment with Sorcery: A piece of equipment with one or more sorcery spells is called an *artifact*. This artifact will appear to have sorcerous properties to anyone able to detect such things, and allows your character to cast a sorcery spell as if he or she were able to cast it him- or herself, or will have the sorcery spell cast upon itself permanently. Most artifacts have a power point reservoir of their own, while rarer artifacts draw upon the user's own power points as a reservoir.

- ❖ The creator of an artifact must sacrifice a point of permanent POW per sorcery spell invested in the artifact, and must know (or have access to the spell(s)) the artifact can use.
- ❖ The artifact will have a power point reservoir equal to its creator's normal power points after the artifact is created, or the SIZ of the artifact, whichever is larger. The gamemaster should set the POW and power point value if the artifact's creator is unknown or is a non-player character.
- ❖ The artifact will either go unconscious when at 0 power points, or will be inert. To recharge an artifact, the user can move 1 power point from his or her body into the artifact each combat round.
- ❖ An artifact can be overcharged as per a character, up to double its maximum power points. These extra power points will vanish as they do with your character.
- ❖ Any sorcery spells cast from the artifact follow all of the normal rules regarding the particular spell.
- ❖ When the artifact is created, the gamemaster should determine whether it will be personal (only its creator can use it), whether it must be defeated in a power point vs. power point resistance roll if it has power points, or if anyone can use it.
- ❖ The artifact has the normal hit points (based on SIZ) and attributes of an appropriate non-sorcerous version.
- ❖ The artifact's hit points limit the number of power points that can be stored in it. As it takes damage, the maximum power points it stores are reduced. The artifact can be repaired as a normal item, though if it is broken or destroyed it can never be restored to artifact status and will remain a non-sorcerous item.
- ❖ If an artifact is destroyed, any POW spent in it are lost.

Some artifacts have permanent sorcerous spells bound into them that are always active. For these, the POW cost to create these items is doubled.

Equipment with Super Powers: A piece of equipment with super powers is called a *gadget*. Gadgets are the most flexible in appearance of all types of powered item, and can look like anything; mundane or crude to vastly advanced. A gadget's appearance is entirely cosmetic and has nothing to do with its function, and it can glow, shine, emit strange trails of energy, be carved with ancient runes, etc. A gadget does not seem unusually powerful unless the creator wants it to. The gamemaster should set the power level of the gadget using the campaign power level guidelines presented in **Chapter Four: Powers**. Ultimately, the gamemaster is free to assign any levels of super powers to any gadget he or she wishes, to suit the setting and the needs of the item.

The following rules apply to gadgets:

- ❖ The gadget's hit points, SIZ, etc. are based off a normal item of equivalent size and mass. If no obvious equivalent exists, use the "Object SIZ Examples" table on page 277 and the "Armor Tables" on page 258 for guidelines. To make it smaller or larger, use the Size Change power.
- ❖ If the gadget needs a characteristic to work (such as POW for power points) it needs to have been built with the Super Characteristic power (page 163).
- ❖ A gadget requiring a power supply greater than its POW should have the Extra Energy super power (page 157).
- ❖ To make the gadget more durable than a normal item, give it super powers such as Absorption, Armor, Extra Hit Points, Force Field, etc.
- ❖ Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on its own characteristics. For example, if a power calls for a resistance roll, the gadget's characteristic (if any) should be used. If the gadget doesn't have the relevant characteristic, it automatically fails a resistance roll.
- ❖ Whenever applicable, the gadget should rely on your user's relevant skill. For example, if the gadget is a pistol, it must be fired with the Firearm skill. If it is a cosmically powered bracelet that allows the wielder to fire radioactive blasts, use the Projection skill.
- ❖ The gamemaster should examine any super powered items to be sure that they are not overly powered or otherwise unbalancing.
- ❖ Super powers invested in a gadget are permanent unless the item is destroyed.

Equipment with Multiple Power Systems: The gamemaster may wish to create a powered item drawing from multiple power systems, such as a gadget that is also an artifact, using super powers and sorcery. These should be only available at the gamemaster's discretion. The different power systems make it impossible for one system to handle all such potential combinations, but the following general principles apply:

- ❖ Where possible, treat the item as being created as a player using multiple power systems using the suggestions provided in **Chapter Four: Powers**.

- ❖ An item must have all relevant characteristics or skills to be able to use any powers it has.
- ❖ All powers draw from the same pool of resources, whether power points or another source. Recharging the item must be handled in the appropriate manner for each power set.
- ❖ If for some reason an item has two values to choose from to perform a particular action, use the higher of the two values where appropriate.

Equipment with Requirements

Some types of equipment may have requirements that must be met or exceeded in order for your character to be able to use them. One of the most obvious examples is in the case of weaponry, where most weapons have a minimum STR and DEX requirement. Other types of equipment are limited in other ways, such as the high fatigue point demand from wearing armor, and the skill penalties associated with it. None of the pieces of basic equipment described in this section have any requirements, though the gamemaster can easily introduce a restriction on the use of an item in two obvious ways:

Characteristics: As with weapons, a piece of equipment may be restricted by your characteristics. Usually this is STR or DEX, such as with weapons, or SIZ for armor, but it could easily be POW for a magical item, INT for a computer, or some other characteristic-based minimum or maximum.

Skills: Your character may find that a specific piece of equipment is incomprehensible or useless unless his or her skill is at a certain level. Usually the skill represents an understanding of the piece of equipment and the principles it operates under. *For example, a diagnostic computer may require a skill of at least 50% in Technical (Computer Use) to operate.*

It is recommended that restrictions be used sparingly, and only if there is a legitimate reason for them to exist. Before assigning an outright restriction on an item's use, the gamemaster should determine if there is some means of enforcing the restriction, and if there are any penalties for using the item if your character does not meet the requirements. Some possible penalties include additional fatigue points to use, making any associated skill rolls *Difficult*, or requiring an associated characteristic roll to avoid mishaps.

Charges or Limited-Use Equipment

Many types of equipment run on power batteries or can be used only a limited number of times. In most cases batteries can be replaced fairly easily, ammunition replenished, and other required resources recharged or refilled. Most firearms can be considered to have "charges" in the form of ammunition,

though if it is maintained well a sword or suit of armor can be used until it is broken. Whenever appropriate, the resource required to refill or recharge a piece of equipment is either essentially free (such as electricity or solar power), or is two or three wealth levels lower than the equipment's cost. If a charging device is required, it is a part of the piece of equipment's normal value.

Usually it's easiest for you and the gamemaster to assume that given adequate time and planning your character will have adequate ammunition, batteries, refills, cartridges, power cells, etc. for all of his or her gear unless through setting or circumstance this is difficult or impossible. In these cases, the gamemaster may require a Research, Status, or Luck roll to come across the relevant type of charge. In some settings (post-apocalyptic, for example) ammunition, gasoline, and/or power cells may be extremely difficult to come by and regarded as being more valuable than the piece of equipment they are used in.

Repairing Equipment

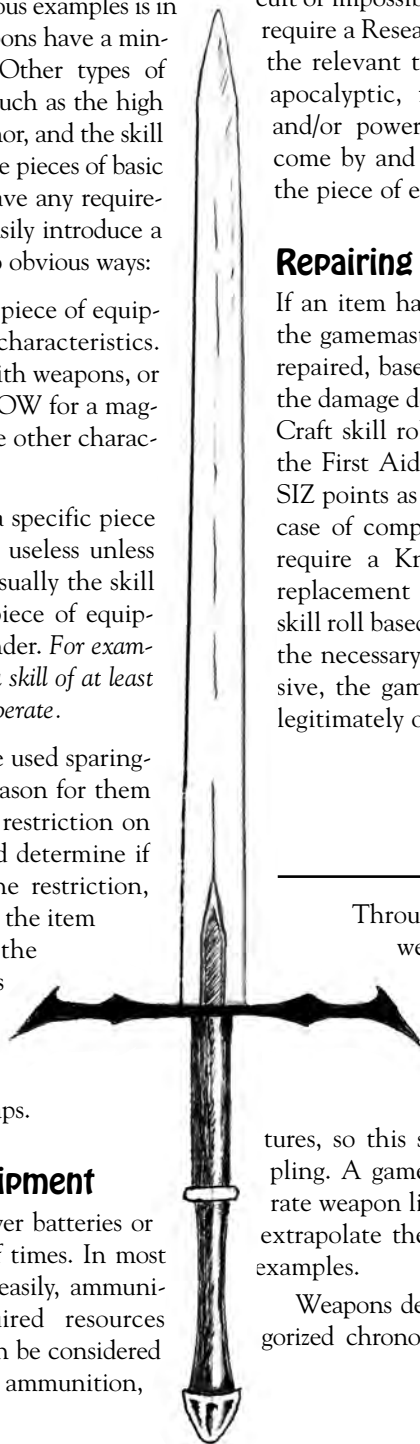
If an item has been damaged in the course of play, the gamemaster should determine if it can even be repaired, based on common sense and the nature of the damage dealt. In most cases, a relevant Repair or Craft skill roll may be used in a manner similar to the First Aid skill, restoring damaged hit points or SIZ points as per the guidelines for that skill. In the case of complex equipment, the gamemaster may require a Knowledge roll to find a resource for replacement components, or even require an *Easy* skill roll based on the repair skill being used to locate the necessary parts. If these components are expensive, the gamemaster may require a Status roll to legitimately obtain the required replacement parts.

Weapons

Throughout history, many different types of weapons have developed as a result of changes in technology, availability of materials, and changing battlefield conditions. It is outside the scope of these rules to list all these different weapons and their distinctive features, so this section presents a representative sampling. A gamemaster wishing to create more accurate weapon lists for a setting should be easily able to extrapolate the relevant attributes from the existing examples.

Weapons described in this section are loosely categorized chronologically by setting for ease of use. In

(... continued on page 257)



Primitive Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Range	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Hand	Axe	15	1D6+1+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	12	Yes	7/9	—	Cheap	0.5	2
Club, Heavy	Club	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	22	Yes	9/7	—	Cheap	2.0	2
Club, Light	Club	25	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/7	—	Cheap	1.0	2
Fist	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	—	No ¹	—	—	—	—	3
Grapple	Brawl	25	Special ²	1	Entangle	Short	2H	—	No ³	—	—	—	—	3
Head Butt	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	—	—	No	—	—	—	—	3
Kick	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	—	—	No	—	—	—	—	3
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	—	0.2	3
Net	Other	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	Medium	1H or 2H	6	Yes	12/10	96-00 ⁵	Cheap	3.0	1
Spear, Long	Spear	15	1D10+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/9	—	Cheap	2.0	1
Spear, Short	Spear	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	15	Yes	7/8	—	Cheap	2.0	2
Torch	Club	25	1D6+flame ⁶	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	6/9	96-00 ⁷	—	1.0	2

Primitive Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Axe, Hand (thrown)	Axe	10	1D6+½db	1	Bleeding	20	1H	12	No	9/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Blowgun	Blowgun	10	1D3 ⁸	1	Impaling	30	2H	4 ⁹	No	/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Bola (thrown to damage)	Bola	05	1D4+½db	1	Crushing	15	1H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Bola (thrown to snare)	Bola	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	15	1H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Boomerang	Boomerang	05	1D4+½db	½ ¹⁰	Crushing	50	1H	3	No	9/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Bow, Self	Bow	10	1D6+1+½db	1	Impaling	80	2H	6	No	9/9	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Club, Light (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D6+½db	1	Crushing	20	1H	15	No	9/7	—	Cheap	1.0	1/SR
Dart	Dart	10	1d6+½db ¹¹	1	Impaling	20	1H	4	No	/9	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Javelin	Javelin	15	1D6+½db	1	Impaling	25	1H	10	No	9/9	—	Cheap	1.5	1/SR
Knife (thrown)	Throw Knife	15	1D3+½db	1	Impaling	10	1H	15	No	7/11	—	Cheap	0.2	1/SR
Lasso	Other	05	Special ⁴	½	Entangling	10	2H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	1.0	1/5CR
Net (thrown)	Other	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	5	1H	6	No	9/12	96-00 ¹²	Cheap	3.0	1/3CR
Rock (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D2+½db	2	Crushing	20	1H	20	No	5/5	—	—	.05	1/SR
Sling	Sling	05	1D8+½db	1	Crushing	80	1H	2/12 ¹³	No	7/11	—	Cheap	0.1 (.1) ¹⁴	1/CR
Spear, Short (thrown)	Spear	05	1D6+1+½db	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	—	Cheap	2.0	1/SR
Spear, Long (thrown)	Spear	05	1D10+1+½db	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	—	Cheap	2.0	1/SR

NOTES:

1. Brawl can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks. See the Brawl skill on page 52 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
2. See the Grapple skill on page 60 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
3. Grapple can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks. See the Grapple skill on page 60 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
4. See the rules for Entangling on page 196 of **Chapter Six: Combat** for details.
5. A net malfunction means it is tangled and will take a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
6. See rules for Fire on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
7. If a malfunction is rolled, the torch goes out.
8. Usually blowgun darts are supplemented with poison. See Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
9. A blowgun has 4 HP and blowgun darts each have 1 HP.
10. If the user must wait for the boomerang to return, he or she must make an Agility roll to catch it on the second round. If throwing multiple boomerangs, the attack rate is 1 per round.
11. Darts are often supplemented with poison. See Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
12. A net malfunction means it is tangled and will take a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
13. A sling has 2 HP and a sling stone has 12 HP.
14. First number is weight of the sling; parenthetical weight is each sling stone.

Weapon Descriptions

This and the next few pages describe all weapons from the melee and missile weapon tables, organized alphabetically.

Arbalest: A very heavy crossbow that is more difficult to cock and load, often used with a device called a cranequin. It does tremendous damage when it hits.

Axe, Battle: A one-handed axe used primarily in combat. It may have one blade or two.

Axe, Great: A large, two-handed axe that either may be single- or double-bladed.

Axe, Hand: A small one-handed axe that can be thrown or used by hand. It may have one blade or two. Tool versions of this weapon are used for chopping kindling.

Axe, Vibro-: A long-handled axe with one or two blades mounted into a generator capable of making them vibrate at an extraordinary rate, capable of shearing through most substances.

Axe, Wood: A long-handled axe that can be used one- or two-handed, with one blade or two. It is not built for combat, but is sometimes utilized as home defense.

Blackjack: A small sewn leather sack, full of a heavy substance like lead shot, used to knock someone out when used from behind. Other terms for these are sap or cosh.

Blowgun: A hollow, straight pipe up to a meter in length used to deliver small darts by blowing through the pipe. These darts do little damage but usually are poisoned.

Bola: Two or three hard balls attached together by a length of cord or chain. This weapon is thrown to entangle and bring down a foe, with damage being a secondary concern.

Boomerang: A flat, angle-shaped stick made to be thrown in a curving path. It was traditionally used by aboriginal hunters to stun or kill small animals.

Bow, Composite: A bow made of materials that make it both rigid and flexible. Historical versions were made of wood and horn, while modern varieties are made with graphite and ultralight metals.

Bow, Long: A bow made either from one piece of wood (such as the famous English long-bow), or in the same fashion as a composite bow.

Bow, Self: A basic bow made of one or two pieces of wood shaped and cured to prevent breaking.

Brass Knuckles: Metal weights worn on the fist to add weight and a hard edge to punches.

Cestus: Metal boxing gloves similar to those used in ancient Greece and Rome, with a weight nestled within the glove for more

impact. Plurally called cestii. An ancient precursor to brass knuckles.

Chainsaw: A woodcutting tool consisting of a linked chain revolving around the edge of a flat metal blade, with the engine to drive it. Though noisy and unwieldy, chainsaws are popular in horror films and video games.

Claw: A bladed metal device giving the user animal-like claws. These savage weapons are most often used by secret assassin societies and by ferocious super heroes of the 1980s.

Club, Heavy: One of the most primitive weapons, a heavy club is made from a piece of wood, often with minimal alteration. This could also describe a crowbar.

Club, Light: A lighter version of the heavy club. This could also be a baseball bat, a small tire iron, a lamp, a chair leg, or a police truncheon.

Crossbow, Heavy: This crossbow must be cocked by a lever apparatus. It is easier to load than an arbalest, but is less powerful.

Crossbow, Light: This crossbow can be cocked by hand, and was mostly used for hunting small creatures, rather than the battlefield.

Crossbow, Medium: This crossbow is cocked by hooking one end with a foot and using a claw mechanism to draw the string back. It was standard issue for many medieval soldiers.

Crossbow, Repeating: A complex type of crossbow, with a "magazine" of bolts that may be fired as fast as a bow may be fired. Once the magazine is exhausted, the repeating crossbow takes at least six combat rounds to reload.

Dagger: A short-bladed weapon usually no more than 40 centimeters long. Daggers can be sharp on one or both edges, and are perhaps the most versatile weapon ever used.

Dart: These are short, weighted points suitable for throwing, sometimes feathered and sometimes plain. They are often used to deliver poison.

Detonator, Antimatter: Perhaps the most powerful personal-scale explosive, this can wipe out everything in a tight radius. These are used with timers, coded remote detonators, and magnetic bases.

Detonator, Electromagnetic Pulse: Instead of exploding, this device emits an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) designed to disrupt electrical devices and electronic circuitry. Unlike the EMP generated as a secondary effect of a nuclear weapon, this is a non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse, disruptive solely to non-living beings.

Detonator, Fusion: An extremely powerful sub-nuclear bomb, capable of immense destructive force. Comes with a timer, coded remote detonator, and magnetic base.

Detonator, Plasma: An explosive capable of generating and spraying a charge of plasma, the superheated intermediate state between gas and liquid. These come with timers, coded remote detonators, and magnetic bases.

Detonator, Sonic: A device that emits a destructive and concussive sonic pulse that can shatter glass and other brittle matter, as well as stunning any living targets caught in its range of effect.

Explosive, Blasting Cap: A small explosive used to set off a larger explosive. Older ones used fuses, while newer ones use electricity or more sophisticated methods to set off the explosive.

Explosive, Dynamite: Sticks of chemical explosive soaked into a solid like sawdust, wrapped in thick paper and ignited by sparks from a fuse or a smaller explosion from a blasting cap. This is highly dangerous, as it tends to "sweat" nitroglycerine and become unstable when left alone for too long. Popular in Westerns.

Explosive, Improvised: Usually a pipe bomb, this describes any number of small homemade chemical explosives.

Explosive, Plastic: A modern chemical explosive mixed with a substance like petroleum or wax into a malleable, putty-like plastic form, able to be molded and shaped as required. Used with a timer and often set off with an electrical charge. Also called plastique.

Fist: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill (described on page 52).

Flail: A flail head mounted on the end of a short chain connected to a haft about a meter long, or longer.

Flail, Morningstar: A medieval weapon with a handle, a length of chain, and a spiked ball at the end. Some do not have spikes and are simply weighted or studded balls at the end of the chains.

Flamethrower: A tank full of a highly combustible chemical attached to a projector/igniter that sprays cones of flaming liquid. Flamethrowers can also be used to soak an area or item in this flammable chemical without setting it afire. Flamethrowers are incredibly dangerous weapons to use, due to the short range, limited period of use, and potential for setting oneself on fire. In less realistic settings, flamethrowers always blow up when the tank is struck, causing double rolled damage to everyone within 5 meters of the user.

Garrote: A short cord used for strangling an opponent, ranging in type from thin metal cables, ceremonial ropes, to improvised uses of scarves or belts.

Gauntlet, Armored: A metal gauntlet, worn as part of armor or independently. This does additional damage to successful strikes with the Brawl skill.

Grapple: An unarmed attack using the Grapple skill (page 60).

Grenade, Antimatter: A small but extraordinarily powerful explosive device triggered and thrown at foes, items, or structures. Though containing infinitely tiny amounts of antimatter, these grenades are usually fired from launchers, as they are so destructive that it is

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difficult to throw one outside of the blast radius.

Grenade, Concussion: A small explosive device triggered and thrown at foes or into enclosed areas, where it can stun those caught in the blast radius. Sometimes called a stun grenade.

Grenade, Disintegrator: A grenade capable of disintegrating all of the matter (or shattering molecular bonds) in the target range. Highly dangerous, disintegrator grenades are generally used only as weapons of last resort.

Grenade, Electromagnetic Pulse: A grenade using electromagnetic pulse capability. When thrown at a metallic target, the magnetic surface can add +20% to your chance of hitting successfully.

Grenade, Explosive: A small explosive device triggered and thrown at foes, items, or structures, emitting an explosion of concussive force mixed with shrapnel.

Grenade, Flare: A small device triggered and thrown into darkened areas, to light the area, or to provide light-marking to assist air targeting. Technically, this is simply a flare, but in all other respects it is used like a grenade.

Grenade, Fusion: An extremely powerful sub-nuclear device, capable of immense destructive force. Fusion grenades are only fired from launchers or thrown in situations where the user has adequate time to get out of the blast range.

Grenade, Gas: A small chemical explosive device triggered and thrown at foes or into enclosed areas, emitting a toxic or otherwise harmful gas. These can be filled with a variety of gases (mustard, tear, knockout, etc.).

Grenade, Molotov Cocktail: An improvised explosive made from a bottle and fuse, lit on fire and hurled at an opponent or object, usually to set them or it afire.

Grenade, Phosphorous: A small chemical explosive device triggered and thrown at foes, objects, or structures, emitting a highly flammable chemical fire that can melt equipment and set nearby objects aflame, or simply light a darkened area for ground personnel or targeting from airships.

Grenade, Plasma: A grenade using plasma technology.

Grenade, Shock: A grenade that releases an immense electrical charge into the targeted area, equipped with magnetic surfaces to allow it to stick to any metallic surface it is thrown onto. When thrown at a metallic target, the magnetic surface can add +20% to your chance of hitting successfully.

Grenade, Shrapnel: A small explosive device triggered and thrown at enemies, set to emit a maximum amount of deadly shrapnel to pierce flesh.

Grenade, Smoke: A gas grenade (see above) that emits harmless but shrouding smoke.

Grenade, Sonic: A grenade using sonic pulse technology that emits a high-frequency sonic burst to disable or distract targets.

Grenade, Stun: A grenade emitting a mildly concussive blast designed specifically to stun or temporarily disable targets.

Gun, Machine: A rifle-shaped rapidly-repeating firearm, usually with trigger settings to allow for single-shot, short bursts, and full auto (firing as long as the trigger is depressed).

Gun, Mini: A Gatling-style heavy machine gun, often mounted on helicopters or vehicles. In addition to the STR 16 requirement, your character must be of SIZ 16 in order to use a mini gun.

Gun, Submachine: A smaller machine gun, designed for one-handed use.

Halberd: An axe head on a shaft roughly two meters long. Commonly used by medieval city guardsmen or against mounted foes.

Hammer: A common household tool, this is the one-handed version used for carpentry work and used as a weapon only in desperation.

Hammer, Great: A massive hammer used with two hands.

Hammer, Sledge: A heavy tool used by construction workers and demolition crews, used two-handed.

Hammer, War: Designed like a hammer, this weapon often has a spike rather than a flat head at one end, and so is used as a pick instead. A nasty weapon, ideal for punching through armor.

Head Butt: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill (page 52).

Javelin: A short spear suitable for use one- or two-handed, or for throwing.

Katana: A single-edged, slightly curved long-bladed sword, used one- or two-handed, of Japanese origin. Katana are famed for their workmanship and extraordinary sharpness.

Kick: An unarmed attack using the Brawl skill (page 52).

Knife: A tool suitable for eating, cutting, desperate defense, or impromptu assassination. Similar to a dagger, though lighter and less durable.

Knife, Butcher: A large heavy kitchen knife, suitable for hacking through large chunks of meat in a single blow. Used in desperate household defense or by villains in Asian action films.

Knife, Pocket: A small folding knife, often with multiple blades, not typically used for self-defense.

Knife, Switchblade: A retractable pocketknife, illegal in most countries.

Knife, Throwing: A knife balanced for throwing, usually without a full hilt.

Knife, Vibro: A high-tech weapon consisting of a knife blade set into a mechanical handle, vibrated at an extremely high rate. Extraordinarily sharp, the movement of the blade adds additional shearing force to even the slightest of cuts.

Lance: A long spear used one-handed on horseback. While used, the attacker uses the mount's damage bonus in place of the character's own bonus. Lances can also be used on foot as a two-handed spear, though the damage bonus reverts to the character's normal damage bonus.

Lance, Stun: A futuristic staff-shaped weapon with a charged electric prod at one end. Some stun lances have goads at both ends.

Lasso: The traditional American lariat, used by cowboys for cattle-wrangling. It does no damage to a target but does immobilize it using the Entangling rules.

Launcher, Grenade: A hand-held or stationary launcher designed to fire specially-shaped grenades great distances. It can be a small platform, a hand-held launcher shaped like a firearm, or a smaller launcher attached to another firearm.

Launcher, LAW Rocket: A lightweight, disposable one-shot rocket launcher, also known as the light anti-tank weapon (LAW).

Launcher, Rocket: A smallish tube and platform often assembled on the battlefield and used to target rocket fire and allow rockets to be fired with a maximum of safety to the user.

Mace, Heavy: A haft with a heavy weight at one end. The weight may be spiked, flanged, studded, or plain.

Mace, Light: A haft with a weight at one end suitable for bashing and crushing.

Maul, War: A long-handled double-headed hammer used two-handed. Favored by miners and Dwarves.

Mine, Antipersonnel: A mine set to eliminate enemy soldiers, this is primarily designed to wound rather than kill (maximizing difficulty to the enemy).

Mine, Antitank: A mine set to damage tank treads or other enemy vehicles.

Naginata: A long spear of Japanese origin with a sword-like head, capable of both cutting and thrusting attacks.

Net: A loose mesh of woven cord used historically for everything from catching game animals to being used against foes in arena conflicts. While smaller nets are used for small game, the net described here is large enough for combat use.

Pike: A long spear (3-5 meters) used in ancient and medieval battles, usually in formation combat. Also common to medieval guards from the same period, and in castle defense. Pikes were long considered the sole defense (short of a fusillade of gunfire) against a cavalry charge.

Pistol, Blaster: A pistol that emits a short burst of energy, usually a form of plasma, that burns the target with some concussive impact. Blaster pistols are usually powered by small clips containing exotic chemical fuels.

Pistol, Derringer: A tiny hand-held pistol, usually no larger than the palm of a hand. Easily concealed, with a small ammo capacity. Older ones were one- or two-shot, while later models had small clips. Sometimes called a "holdout" pistol.

Pistol, Disintegrator: A pistol capable of emitting an immensely destructive blast of energy, potentially a limited form of anti-matter that rapidly disintegrates an entire target, or large portions of that target. Disintegrator pistols can be powered with energy cells or fuel clips.

Pistol, Electromagnetic Pulse: A pistol that fires a directed electromagnetic pulse stream at an electronic target such as a computer or robot, disabling its circuitry. Some settings call this an "ion" weapon.

Pistol, Flechette: A small, light pistol powered by either magnetic charges or gas, that projects a high number of tiny, sharp needle-like blades at a target. These pistols generally have short range and are not very effective against armored targets, but to unarmored foes at short range, they are devastating. They use both clips of flechette ammunition and a gas cylinder or energy clip of some sort. Sometimes called a needle gun.

Pistol, Flintlock: An early pistol using flint and steel to ignite a hand-packed wad of gunpowder. Similar in design to a wheel-lock pistol, they are treated the same here.

Pistol, Heavy: A heavy-framed automatic pistol possessing superior stopping power. Slower than smaller, lighter pistols. The .357 magnum is an excellent example of this class of weapon.

Pistol, Laser: A pistol able to emit a high-intensity beam of light capable of searing through most substances, and even able to melt metal. Laser pistols are usually powered by an energy cell containing a limited number of charges.

Pistol, Light: A light-framed automatic pistol trading stopping power for accuracy and rate of fire. The .22 caliber is an excellent example of this class of weapon.

Pistol, Medium: A medium-framed automatic pistol, giving middle-of-the-road firepower and rate of fire. The 9mm is an excellent example of this class of weapon.

Pistol, Plasma: A pistol capable of generating a focused and directed stream of superheated plasma at the target.

Pistol, Shock: A pistol that delivers an immense, directed electrical burst, almost like a lightning gun.

Pistol, Sonic: A pistol firing a highly concentrated cone of sonic energy waves at the target, causing immediate damage to living tissue and inert matter alike.

Pistol, Stun: A pistol emitting a burst of energy set to the same frequencies as the human nervous system, the stun pistol is short-ranged and designed for pacification. Useless against objects and most beings larger than humanoid, though stun pistols can be adjusted for other targets. Sometimes called a "stunner".

Rapier: A slender-bladed one-handed sword, with the thrust being the most common form of attack. Though each is unique, this description also covers the epee and foil, two other fencing swords.

Revolver, Heavy: A heavy pistol of large caliber, like a .44 magnum or the famed Colt .45 from the Old West.

Revolver, Light: A light pistol, usually in the .22 to .32 caliber range.

Revolver, Medium: A medium pistol, usually in the .357 to .38 calibers, or 9mm range.

Rifle, Assault: A heavy rifle with large ammo capacity, rugged design, and the ability to be fired like a machine gun (one-shot, short bursts, or continual fire).

Rifle, Blaster: A futuristic rifle emitting a short burst of energy, usually some form of plasma that burns the target and has some small level of concussive impact. Blaster rifles are usually powered by clips containing exotic chemical fuels.

Rifle, Bolt-action: A rifle with a sliding bolt to cycle bullets from the internal magazine into the chamber. Some use clips, while others store bullets in tube magazines the length of the rifle's barrel.

Rifle, Disintegrator: A rifle capable of emitting an immensely destructive blast of energy, potentially a limited form of antimatter that rapidly disintegrates an entire target, or large portions of that target. Disintegrator rifles can be powered with energy cells or fuel clips.

Rifle, Elephant: A huge caliber rifle designed to bring down the largest game animals on Earth. Sometimes double-barreled, these often are breech-loaded, one thick bullet at a time.

Rifle, Laser: A rifle able to emit a high-intensity beam of light capable of searing through most substances, and even able to melt metal. Laser rifles are usually powered by an energy cell containing a limited number of charges.

Rifle, Lever-action: A rifle with an external lever used to cycle bullets from the magazine into the chamber. These are popular with hunters and in Western settings, though for military actions they are impractical, as it awkward to crank the lever while prone.

Rifle, Musket: An early rifle loaded down the barrel and sometimes filled with either shrapnel shot or large ball-like bullets. Slow and unreliable, ignited with a flint- or wheel-lock.

Rifle, Electromagnetic Pulse: A rifle version of the electromagnetic pulse pistol, emitting a focused blast of electromagnetic energy at an electric-using or electronic target.

Rifle, Plasma: A rifle version of a plasma pistol, capable of firing a focused burst of superheated plasma at the target.

Rifle, Shock: A rifle version of the shock pistol, capable of firing a lightning-like blast for considerable range and power.

Rifle, Sonic: A rifle version of the sonic pistol, firing a cone-like blast of sonic energy pulses at the target.

Rifle, Sniper: A long-barreled rifle designed for extremely long-range fire, precision-calibrated and usually equipped with a long-range scope.

Rifle, Sporting: A light- to medium-caliber (.22 or .30-06) rifle used in hunting to bring down smaller game animals like deer.

Rifle, Stun: A rifle emitting a burst of energy set to the same frequencies as the human nervous system, the stun rifle is short-ranged and designed for pacification. Useless against objects and most beings larger than humanoid, a stun rifle can be adjusted for other targets. Sometimes called a "stunner".

Rock, Thrown: Possibly the first improvised weapon, this is usually a fist-sized rock scavenged from a nearby area.

Saber: A single-edged and slightly curved sword, used most commonly by mounted cavalry, and also utilized in some fencing techniques.

Sai: Japanese weapons shaped like a cross between a pitchfork head and a dagger, sai have no edge and are used as clubs, stabbing weapons, or sword-breakers. They are often used in pairs.

Scimitar: A single-edged and slightly curved sword, often common to Middle Eastern settings.

Scythe: A long-handled farming implement, with a curved blade set perpendicular to the haft. Used for harvesting grains, though occasionally given ceremonial purpose.

Shotgun, Automatic: A shotgun with a large ammo capacity and automatic loading, usually for battlefield or police action.

Shotgun, Double-barreled: A two-barreled, breech-loading shotgun.

Shotgun, Sawed-off: Either a sporting or double-barreled shotgun with a shorter barrel, either hand-made or designed as short-barreled for ease of concealment and convenience. The shorter barrel trades range for wider dispersal of ammo.

Shotgun, Sporting: A medium- to light-gauge shotgun (16- or 20-gauge), used for hunting and sometimes for home protection.

Shuriken: Small throwing blades, often star-shaped. Easily concealed and a favorite of ninja assassins.

Sickle: A crescent-shaped flat blade, single-edged on the inside crescent, used one-handed

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to harvest grain. Sometimes used for ceremonial purposes, and also popular with serial killers in horror films.

Sling: A leather thong with a cup or recess to hold a rock or sling stone, whirled and thrown with incredible force at the target.

Spear, Long: A length of wood roughly three meters long, pointed at one end with either a metal bladed head or a fire-hardened point. These must be used two-handed. Characters armed with long spears can often strike first in a combat round.

Spear, Short: A length of wood roughly two meters long, pointed at one end, with either a metal bladed head or a fire-hardened point. Short spears can be used one- or two-handed, or can be thrown.

Spray, Chemical: A chemical irritant projected from small device (usually a can sprayer) fired into the eyes of the target. Short range and nonlethal.

Staff, Quarter: A long wooden staff often used as a walking staff, useful for defense and attacking.

Staff, Short: A short, all-wood length of wood similar to a police truncheon.

Sword Cane: A thin-bladed sword disguised to fit inside a walking stick. Often used with fencing technique.

Sword, Bastard: A straight, single-or double-edged sword, usually over one meter in length with a longer hilt than normal, the bastard sword can be used one- or two-handed.

Sword, Broad: A straight, single- or double-edged sword usually around a meter in blade

length, the broad sword is used one-handed. Some have basket hilts. Favored by barbarian heroes.

Sword, Energy: A hilt containing a shaped field emitter that projects a sword-length blade of energy, usually appearing like a beam of focused light or a fluorescent tube. This description assumes that the blade has some solidity and can be used as a parrying weapon as well as attacking, but there may be energy swords whose blades are merely light projections. Energy swords use power packs, and often require expensive focusing crystals to operate.

Sword, Great: A straight, double-edged sword almost two meters in length, the great sword is used two-handed and is often a powerful weapon against pike formation.

Sword, Long: A straight, single- or double-edged sword, sometimes with a basket hilt, used one-handed. Lighter and more slender than a broadsword.

Sword, Monofilament: An extraordinarily sophisticated weapon consisting of a blade exactly one molecule thick, set into stasis by a generator in the hilt. With the blade able to slip between atoms, it is capable of cutting through almost any substance. As the blade is often almost invisible, it is extremely difficult to use, and a fumbled attack with this weapon may be fatal.

Sword, Short: A single- or double-edged sword, usually a half-meter in blade length. One of the most common weapons issued to ancient and medieval soldiers.

Sword, Vibro: A longer version of a vibro knife. A handle containing a long sword-like blade

vibrated at an extraordinary rate, capable of shearing through most substances.

Taser, Contact: A small hand-held electric device designed to disrupt the neural activity of a target that it is touched to, stunning them momentarily. Named for Thomas A. Swift's Electric Rifle.

Taser, Dart: A small taser (see above) that fires two small darts and attached wires. Once these hit a target's flesh, a disruptive electrical charge is emitted that usually stuns the target.

Torch: A thick stick of wood with one end soaked in pitch or some other fuel, occasionally wrapped in rags. Ignited and used for light, torches are frequently wielded as improvised weapons.

Trident: A historical three-tined spear, like a fork, with curving side-prongs. Tridents usually have barbed points to hook into the flesh of the target.

Wakizashi: A short sword version of the katana, often made in a matching pair with a katana. Some wakizashi have slender knives built into the scabbards.

Whip: A coiled and woven leather rope with a handle at one end and a tapering end, used to lash an opponent or catch and immobilize a limb. Whips use the special attack rules on "Entangling" on page 196.

Whip, Shock: A metallic whip that generates a high-voltage electric current, released onto the target when it strikes successfully.

Historic Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Arbalest	Crossbow	15	2D6+4	1/3	Impaling	90	2H	14	No	11/9 ¹	93-00	Average	10.0(0.5)	1/4MR
Bow, Composite	Bow	05	1D8+1+½db	1	Impaling	120	2H	12	No	13/9	—	Average	0.5(0.5)	1/SR
Bow, Long	Bow	05	1D8+1+½db	1	Impaling	90	2H	10	No	11/9	—	Cheap	0.5(0.5)	1/SR
Crossbow, Heavy	Crossbow	25	2D6+2	1/3	Impaling	55	2H	18	No	13/7	97-00	Average	8.0(0.5)	1/3MR
Crossbow, Light	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	½	Impaling	40	2H	10	No	9/7	96-00	Average	3.5(0.5)	1/2MR
Crossbow, Medium	Crossbow	25	2D4+2	½	Impaling	50	2H	14	No	11/7	95-00	Average	5.0(0.5)	1/2MR
Crossbow, Repeating	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	1 ²	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/7	91-00	Expensive	7.5(0.5)	1/SR ³
Knife, Throwing	Missile	15	1d4+½db	1	Impaling	20	1H	10	No	/11	—	Cheap	0.2	1/SR
Shuriken	Missile	10	1D3+½db	2	Impaling	20	1H	5	No	/13	—	Cheap	0.1	1/SR

NOTES:

1. STR requirement with a cranequin (hand-crank) is 11; STR 15 when used without one.

2. Has Ammo of 12 and takes 5 rounds to reload entirely.

3. A repeating crossbow has an ammo capacity of 6, 8, 10, or 12 bolts. It takes 1 combat round per bolt to reload a repeating crossbow.

Historic Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Battle	Axe	15	1D8+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/9	—	Average	1.0	2
Axe, Great	Axe	15	2D6+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/9	—	Average	2.0	1
Axe, Wood	Axe	15	1D8+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	8/7	—	Inexpensive	1.5	2
Blackjack	Hand	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	No	7/7	—	Inexpensive	0.2	3
Cestus	Hand	25	1D3+2+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	Yes	11/7	—	Average	0.1	3
Claw	Hand	25	1D4+1+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	10	Yes	9/9	—	Average	0.1	3
Dagger	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	Average	0.5	3
Flail	Flail	10	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	7	Yes	7/6	—	Average	2.0	2
Flail, Morningstar	Flail	10	1D10+1+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	12	Yes	11/7	—	Average	2.0	2
Garrote	Hand	15	Special ¹	1	—	Short	2H	1	No	8/12	—	Inexpensive	0.1	3
Gauntlet, Armored	Hand	25	1D3+1+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	7	Yes	7/5	—	Average	As armor	3
Halberd	Polearm	15	3D6+db	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	25	Yes	13/9	—	Average	3.0	1
Hammer	Hammer	25	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/7	—	Inexpensive	1.5	2
Hammer, Great	Hammer	25	1D10+3+db	1	Crushing	Long	2H	15	Yes	9/9	—	Average	2.5	1
Hammer, Sledge	Hammer	20	2D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/7	—	Inexpensive	2.0	2
Hammer, War	Hammer	25	1D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	11/9	—	Average	2.0	2
Katana	Sword	15	1D10+1+db ²	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	15	Yes	11/11	—	Expensive	1.5	2
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	Inexpensive	0.5	3
Lance	Spear	15	1D8+1+db	1	Impaling ³	Long	1H	15	Yes	9/8	—	Inexpensive	3.5	0
Mace, Heavy	Mace	25	1D8+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	14/9	—	Average	2.5	2
Mace, Light	Mace	25	1D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/7	—	Average	1.0	2
Maul, War	Hammer	25	1D10+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	13/7	—	Average	2.5	1
Naginata	Polearm	05	2d6+2+db	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	15	Yes	7/11	—	Expensive	2.0	1
Pike	Polearm	15	1d10+2+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/7	—	Inexpensive	3.5	0
Rapier	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/13	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Saber	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/11	—	Average	1.5	2
Sai	Dagger	10	1D6+db	1	Crushing ⁴	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/11	—	Inexpensive	1.0	2
Scimitar	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	19	Yes	8/8	—	Average	1.5	2
Scythe	Improvised	05	2D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	20	Yes	12/10	—	Inexpensive	2.5	1
Sickle	Improvised	10	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/9	—	Inexpensive	0.5	3
Staff, Quarter-	Staff	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	All	2H	20	Yes	9/9	—	Cheap	1.5	1
Staff, Short	Staff	15	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	—	Cheap	0.5	3
Sword Cane	Sword	15	1D6+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/11	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Sword, Bastard	Sword	10	1D10+1+db ⁵	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	20	Yes	13 or 9/9 ⁶	—	Average	2.0	2
Sword, Broad	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	9/7	—	Average	1.5	2
Sword, Great	Sword	05	2D8+db	1	Bleeding	Medium/Long	2H	18	Yes	14/13	—	Expensive	3.5	1
Sword, Long	Sword	15	1D8+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	—	Average	1.5	2
Sword, Short	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/5	—	Cheap	1.0	2
Trident	Polearm	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	18	Yes	9/7	—	Average	2.0	2
Wakizashi	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	13	Yes	7/9	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Whip	Other	05	1D3-1	1	Entangle	Long	1H	4	No	9/10	—	Cheap	0.5	0

NOTES:

1. See the rules for Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
2. When using a katana one-handed, damage bonus is ½ normal.
3. Tournament lances are commonly blunt, and therefore do Crushing specials.
4. Sai are traditionally blunt weapons used primarily for parrying and striking, though pop media presents them as stabbing weapons.
5. When using a bastard sword one-handed, damage bonus is ½ normal.
6. STR requirement is 13 when used one-handed; 9 when used two-handed.

Spot Rules for Firearms

Chapter Seven: Spot Rules covers many conditions relating to the use of firearms, such as automatic fire, range, and other relevant situations. Following are some spot rules specific to firearms. The gamemaster may choose to allow these to cover additional types of ranged weapons, such as energy or laser weapons.

Armor and Firearms

Armor types from earlier periods are relatively ineffective against weapons from later periods; a knight's armor provided scant protection from firearms. To simulate this, any armor types from the *Primitive Armor* or *Ancient and Medieval Armor* tables only have half their value against firearms (rounded up). The same is true of *Modern Armor* versus *Advanced Weaponry*. Advanced armor protects at full value against all weapons. To summarize:

- ❖ Primitive or Ancient armor only offers 1/2 protection against high-velocity or energy weapons.
- ❖ Modern armor offers 1/2 protection against energy weaponry.
- ❖ Advanced armor offers full protection against all forms of attack. For campaigns where heroes are blasting their way through legions of armored troops, the gamemaster may rule that advanced armor only protects at 1/2 its armor value versus energy weapons.

If armor value is being determined randomly, you should roll for the armor's protection, apply any modifiers, then divide in half, rounding up. Some armors already state the difference in coverage between hand weapons and high-velocity weapons—these do not need to be reduced twice.

Some types of monsters may also be resistant to firearms, and this is noted in their descriptions in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**.

Loaded Revolvers

For safety reasons, often the chamber directly under a revolver's hammer is left empty, to lower the chance of an accidental discharge. If this practice is followed, lower the ammunition capacity by 1. To emphasize the danger of carrying a fully-loaded revolver, the gamemaster may require your character to make a successful Luck roll to avoid an accidental discharge if your character falls or is jostled roughly enough to potentially trigger the weapon. If the Luck roll succeeds, the revolver does not go off. If it fails, the revolver goes off, and your character and everyone around your character must make a Luck roll to avoid being hit by the stray bullet. The gamemaster should determine who the

friendly fire strikes. If the initial Luck roll is a fumble, the bullet strikes your character and does normal damage.

Malfunctions

If your character's attack roll is equal to or higher than the weapon's malfunction number, the weapon malfunctions and will not fire until it has been dealt with.

- ❖ If the weapon is a revolver, bolt-action rifle, or a double-barreled shotgun, the problem is only a dud round.
- ❖ If the weapon is an automatic, semi-automatic, pump-action, or lever-action, the malfunction is a jam.

A dud round can be cycled past or ejected in one combat round. Fixing a jam takes 1D6 combat rounds and requires a successful skill roll of either the firearm skill or Repair, whichever is higher. Your character can keep trying until he or she succeeds, with each attempt taking an additional 1D6 combat rounds. A roll of 96-00 on this attempt will result in the firearm becoming irrevocably damaged and beyond casual repair.

A fumble may also overlap with a malfunction. If the results of both are contradictory, the gamemaster should address them in the most practical order, applying both results whenever possible. Weapons other than firearms can malfunction, and can be cleared with a use of the Repair skill or the weapon skill (whichever is higher). For energy weapons, the "dud round" is likely an incomplete or faulty charge.

Reloading Firearms

Allow one combat round to load two shells or bullets into any handgun, rifle, or shotgun. Allow one combat round to exchange a clip, energy cell, or battery pack. Changing a machine gun belt takes two combat rounds.

If time is of the essence, it is possible to put one round into a firearm and get a single shot off at 1/2 your character's normal DEX rank.

Unaimed Shots

The attacks-per-round entry for ranged weapons assumes that your character is trying to hit a target directly, and is making an attempt to aim. If you wish for your character to spray an area with shots, such as if providing covering fire, and accuracy is not a concern, you can double the weapon's attacks-per-round, but the chance to hit is reduced to 1/4 your character's skill. If there is more than one target the gamemaster should determine randomly who is struck. At the gamemaster's discretion, if your character is prepared, equipped with a laser sight or equivalent targeting device, and has a weapon skill of over 60%, the chance to hit is not modified.



Modern Melee Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Brass Knuckles	Brawl	Brawl	+2	1	Crushing	Short	1H	18	No	5/-	—	Cheap	0.1	3
Chainsaw	Improvised	20	2D8	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	No	11/11	97-00	Average	8.0	2
Knife, Butcher	Dagger	25	1D6+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	12	No	5/7	—	Cheap	0.3	3
Knife, Pocket	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	9	No	-/5	—	Cheap	0.1	3
Knife, Switchblade	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	7	No	-/5	99-00	Cheap	0.1	3
Taser, Contact	Other	Brawl	Special ¹	1	—	Short	1H	7	No	5/7	97-00	Expensive	0.3	3

Modern Missile Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk ²	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Flamethrower	Other	05	2D6+fire ³	1	—	25	2H	6	No	10/8	93-00	6	Expensive	8.0	½ CR
Gun, Machine	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	1, 3, or burst	Impaling	90	2H	11	No	9/5	00	40	Expensive	3.0	1 or 3/S or 1/CR
Gun, Mini	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	33	Impaling	400	2H	14	No	16/12	98-00	4000	Expensive	6.0	1/CR
Gun, Submachine	Submachine Gun	15	1D8	2 or burst	Impaling	40	1H or 2H	8	No	9/6	98-00	32	Expensive	2.0	2/SR or 1/CR
Pistol, Derringer	Pistol	20	1D6	1	Impaling	3	1H	5	No	5/5	00	1 or 2	Average	0.3	1/SR
Pistol, Flintlock	Pistol	20	1D6+1	¼	Impaling	10	1H	8	No	7/5	95-00	1	Average	1.0	1/2CR
Pistol, Heavy	Pistol	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	15	1H	8	No	11/7	00	8	Average	1.5	1/SR
Pistol, Light	Pistol	20	1D6	3	Impaling	10	1H	6	No	5/5	00	8	Average	0.7	1/SR
Pistol, Medium	Pistol	20	1D8	2	Impaling	20	1H	8	No	7/5	98-00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Revolver, Heavy	Revolver	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	20	1H	14	No	11/5	00	6	Average	1.5	1/SR
Revolver, Light	Revolver	20	1D6	2	Impaling	15	1H	10	No	5/5	00	6	Average	0.7	1/SR
Revolver, Medium	Revolver	20	1D8	1	Impaling	25	1H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Assault	Rifle	25	2D6+2	2 or burst	Impaling	90	2H	12	No	10/5	00	30	Expensive	3.5	1/SR or 1/CR
Rifle, Bolt-Action	Rifle	25	2D6+4	½	Impaling	110	2H	12	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/SR
Rifle, Elephant	Rifle	15	3D6+4	1 or 2	Impaling	100	2H	12	No	13/5	00	2	Average	4.5	1 or 2/SR
Rifle, Musket	Rifle	25	1D10+4	¼	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/5	95-00	1	Average	3.5	1/2CR
Rifle, Sniper	Rifle	20 ⁴	2D10+4	1	Impaling	250 ⁵	2H	10	No	12/7	98-00	11	Expensive	4.0	1/SR
Rifle, Sporting	Rifle	25	2D6	1	Impaling	80	2H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	3.0	1/SR
Shotgun, Automatic	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	14	No	11/5	00	8	Expensive	4.0	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Double-Barreled	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	12	No	9/5	00	2	Average	3.5	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Sawn-Off	Shotgun	30	4D6/1D6 ⁷	1 or 2	Impaling	5/20/-	1H	14	No	9/5	00	1 or 2	Average	2.0	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Sporting	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	10	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/SR
Spray, Chemical	Other	25	Special ⁸	1	—	2	1H	2	No	3/7	91-00	6	Average	0.2	1/SR
Taser, Dart	Other	20	Special ¹	½	—	DEX	1H	8	No	3/7	95-00	1	Expensive	0.5	1/2CR

NOTES:

1. Stuns target; see the rules for Stunning or Subduing on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
2. Many modern firearms have burst fire capabilities; see the rules for Autofire on page 214 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
3. If a target is hit by a flamethrower, it is on fire and will take 1D6+2 points per round in additional damage until the fire is extinguished. See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
4. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with a bipod, doubling the base chance; without a bipod (or similar stabilizer), reduce the base chance to 10.
5. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with telescopic scopes that double their effective range; if without a scope, the range is 125 meters.
6. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc.
7. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc. Sawed-off shotguns are not effective beyond 20 yards.
8. Chemical spray is a type of low-POT contact poison. See the rules for Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details. A sample type of chemical spray might have 2D6+12 POT, an instant effect, and cause blindness if the target fails a resistance roll vs. CON. It would be *Difficult* to shoot into a target's eyes, though the chance is Easy at point blank range, making the chance unaffected.

Advanced Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Vibro-	Polearm	10%	2D8+4+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	11/5	98-00	Average	3.0	1
Knife, Vibro-	Dagger	25%	2D4+2+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	16	Yes	7/7	99-00	Average	0.5	3
Lance, Stun	Staff	15%	1D6+db+stun ¹	1	Knockback	Long	2H	18	Yes	9/5	98-00	Average	2.5	1
Sword, Energy	Sword	10%	2D10+db ²	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	30	Yes	11/15	99-00	Priceless	1.0	2
Sword, Monofilament	Sword	05%	3D12 ²	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	12	No	5/15	91-00 ³	Expensive	0.5	2
Sword, Vibro-	Sword	20%	2D6+3+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	18	Yes	9/7	97-00	Expensive	1.5	2
Whip, Shock	Other	05%	1+½db+stun ¹	1	Entangle	Long	1H	10	No	7/9	97-00	Average	1.0	1

Advanced Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk ⁴	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Pistol, Blaster	Pistol, Energy	15%	1D8+2	2	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	7/5	99-00	30	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Disintegrator	Pistol, Energy	05%	3D4+1	1	—	10	1H	12	No	7/5	96-00	10	Expensive	1.0	2/SR
Pistol, Electromagnetic Pulse	Pistol, Energy	20%	2D6 vs. tech ⁵	1	—	15	1H	12	No	7/5	98-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Flechette	Pistol, Energy	05%	2D4 ⁶	1 or burst ⁷	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	5/7	99-00	6	Average	0.8	1/SR or 1/CR
Pistol, Laser	Pistol, Energy	20%	1D8	3	Impaling	20	1H	14	No	5/5	99-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Plasma	Pistol, Energy	15%	2D10+2	1	Impaling	30	1H	18	No	7/5	98-00	12	Expensive	1.2	2/SR
Pistol, Shock	Pistol, Energy	15%	2D4	1	Knockback	15	1H	12	No	5/5	98-00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Stun	Pistol, Energy	25%	2D6 stun ²	1	Knockback	15	1H	16	No	5/5	00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Blaster	Rifle, Energy	10%	2D8+3	2	Impaling	60	2H	20	No	9/5	99-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Disintegrator	Rifle, Energy	05%	3D6+2	1	—	30	2H	18	No	9/7	96-00	10	Expensive	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Electromagnetic Pulse	Rifle, Energy	25%	3D8 vs. tech ⁸	1	—	75	2H	18	No	7/5	98-00	12	Average	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Laser	Rifle, Energy	15%	2D8	2	Impaling	100	2H	20	No	7/7	99-00	20	Average	1.5	1/SR
Rifle, Plasma	Rifle, Energy	10%	2D10+4	1	Impaling	70	2H	18	No	9/7	98-00	16	Expensive	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Shock	Rifle, Energy	10%	3D8	1	Knockback	50	2H	18	No	9/7	98-00	12	Average	1.5	1/SR
Rifle, Sonic	Rifle, Energy	10%	1D3+2 ⁹	1	Knockback	50	2H	16	No	7/7	97-00	36	Average	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Stun	Rifle, Energy	20%	2D8 stun ¹⁰	1	Knockback	50	2H	22	No	7/5	00	24	Average	1.5	1/SR

NOTES:

1. Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven**:

Spot Rules.

2. Reduce the target's armor value by ½ (round up) versus this weapon.

3. If you fumble an attack with a monofilament sword, you must roll a *Difficult* Agility check to avoid hitting yourself. If you fail this roll, your attack hits yourself in addition to the normal roll on the melee weapon fumble table. This attack ignores ½ your armor value (round down) and cannot be dodged.

4. Many high-tech missile weapons have burst fire capabilities; see the rules for Autofire on page 214 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.

5. If the target is a robot, machine, or device using some form of electromagnetic energy, roll damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target's CON. If the roll is successful, the device is Stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (as per the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**). If the rolled damage is higher than the target's HP, it is overcome and knocked "unconscious". Damage from EMP weapons is temporary, and lost HPs will be restored with a Repair roll and an adequate power source.

6. Against a foe with "hardened" armor (anything with metal, plastic, or other plates), a flechette pistol does only half damage (roll normally and round down before subtracting armor protection).

7. A flechette pistol fires clusters of flechettes, either one "shot" or a long burst that empties the magazine. Each "shot" is treated as a single attack, and does 2D4 damage.

8. If the target is a robot, machine, or device using some form of electromagnetic energy, roll damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target's CON. If the roll is successful, the device is Stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (as per the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**). If the rolled damage is higher than the target's HP, the target is overcome and knocked unconscious. Damage from EMP weapons is temporary, and lost HPs will be restored with a Repair roll and an adequate power source.

9. A sonic rifle does initial rolled damage against living targets for each combat round it successfully strikes them. Against a nonliving target, the damage per round is rolled on the resistance table against the target's base CON, AP, or HP. If the target fails this roll, it shatters or is considered damaged beyond the point of functionality.

10. Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If the target succeeds, he or she takes minimum damage (2) instead of the rolled damage. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

(. . . continued from page 247)

most cases, weapons from an earlier period are available to people from later periods, so the gamemaster may simply choose where weapon availability stops and allow your character access to weapons prior to that point.

Each weapon has the following attributes:

Name: The common name for the type of weapon.

Skill: The skill used for this weapon.

Base: The base chance to use the weapon.

Dmg: The damage done by the weapon. +db indicates damage bonus, and +½db is half the normal damage bonus.

Attk: How many attacks-per-round does the weapon allow?

Special: What type of special success does the weapon do?

Rng: The basic range of the weapon. At the weapon's basic range, the skill chance is unmodified. At medium range (double the basic range), the chance becomes *Difficult*, and at long range (four times basic range) it becomes ¼ the normal skill chance.

Hands: How many hands does the weapon require? 1H = one-handed, 2H = two-handed.

HP: The weapon's hit points.

Parry: Can the weapon be used to parry?

Mal: The weapon will malfunction if this is rolled. See "Malfunctions" on page 254. If the weapon is not a firearm, the malfunction is some other mishap preventing immediate reuse of the weapon.

Ammo: How many times can the weapon be used without being reloaded or recharged?

Value: What is an average weapon's cost in an appropriate setting?

STR/DEX: What are the minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon?

SIZ/ENC: The weapon's SIZ and Encumbrance value.

SR: (Optional) Strike ranks, if that optional system is being used.

RF: (Optional) Rate of fire, a part the optional strike rank system. In this system, 1/#CR means that the weapon is so clumsy it can only be used once a number (#) of combat rounds. 1/CR means that it can be used once a combat round. 1/SR means that the weapon can be used on your character's initial DEX strike rank, then again on his or her DEX strike rank +3. *For example, if your character has a DEX strike rank 2 and is firing a composite bow, he or she can fire once on SR 2, then must nock*

an arrow and draw the bow (taking 3 SR), then adds his or her SR 2, and can then fire again on SR 7.

Each weapon is described in "Weapon Descriptions" on page 249.

Weapon Classes

The descriptions for the Heavy Weapon, Melee Weapon, and Missile Weapon skills in **Chapter Three: Skills** all refer to weapon specialties and weapon classes. A weapon class is a rough group the weapon belongs to, while the specialty is your character's familiarity with that class. Weapons are broken up into classes, while skills are broken into specialties. Each general weapon class is listed below, with specific examples from the weapons list. Some weapons fit into multiple categories, depending on how they are used.

- ❖ **Axe:** Battle axe, great axe, hand axe, vibro-axe, wood axe.
- ❖ **Bow:** Composite bow, long bow, self bow.
- ❖ **Brawl:** Fist, head butt, kick.
- ❖ **Club:** Heavy club, light club, sai, short staff.
- ❖ **Crossbow:** Arbalest, siege arbalest, heavy crossbow, light crossbow, medium crossbow, repeating crossbow.
- ❖ **Dagger:** Butcher knife, dagger, knife, pocket knife, switchblade, vibro-knife, sai.
- ❖ **Explosive:** Antimatter detonator, antipersonnel mine, antitank mine, blasting cap, dynamite, electromagnetic pulse detonator, fusion detonator, improvised explosive, plasma detonator, plastic explosive, sonic detonator.
- ❖ **Flail:** Flail, morningstar flail, whip.
- ❖ **Grenade:** Antimatter grenade, concussion grenade, disintegrator grenade, electromagnetic pulse grenade, explosive grenade, flare grenade, fusion grenade, gas grenade, grenade launcher, LAW rocket launcher, Molotov cocktail, phosphorous grenade, plasma grenade, rocket launcher, shock grenade, shrapnel grenade, smoke grenade, sonic grenade, stun grenade.
- ❖ **Hammer:** Hammer, great hammer, sledge hammer, war hammer, war maul.
- ❖ **Hand:** Armored gauntlet, blackjack, brass knuckles, cestii, claw, garrote.
- ❖ **Improvised:** Chainsaw, thrown rock, scythe, sickle, torch.
- ❖ **Mace:** Heavy mace, light mace.
- ❖ **Machine Gun:** Machine gun, mini gun, submarine gun.

- ❖ **Missile:** Blowgun, bola, boomerang, dagger, dart, hand axe, javelin, shuriken, sling, throwing knife.
- ❖ **Pistol, Energy:** Blaster pistol, disintegrator pistol, electromagnetic pulse pistol, laser pistol, plasma pistol, shock pistol, sonic pistol, stun pistol.
- ❖ **Pistol:** Derringer, flechette pistol, flintlock pistol, heavy pistol, light pistol, medium pistol.
- ❖ **Polearm:** Halberd, lance, naginata, pike, scythe, trident.
- ❖ **Revolver:** Heavy revolver, light revolver, medium revolver.
- ❖ **Rifle, Energy:** Blaster rifle, disintegrator rifle, electromagnetic pulse rifle, laser rifle, plasma rifle, shock rifle, sonic rifle, stun rifle.
- ❖ **Rifle:** Assault rifle, bolt-action rifle, elephant rifle, lever-action rifle, musket, sniper rifle, sporting rifle.
- ❖ **Shotgun:** Automatic shotgun, double-barreled shotgun, sawed-off shotgun, sporting shotgun.
- ❖ **Spear:** Javelin, lance, long spear, naginata, pike, short spear, trident.
- ❖ **Staff:** Quarter staff, short staff.
- ❖ **Submachine Gun:** Submachine gun.
- ❖ **Sword:** Bastard sword, broad sword, energy sword, great sword, katana, long sword, monofilament sword, rapier, saber, scimitar, short sword, sickle, sword cane, vibro-sword, wakizashi.
- ❖ **Other:** Chemical spray, contact taser, dart taser, flamethrower, lasso, net, shock whip, whip.

Using Weapons of the Same Class

Usually, the gamemaster allows you to use your skill specialty with all weapons of the particular class. For example, if your character has the skill *Melee Weapon (Sword)*, this applies to long swords, broadswords, short swords, etc., just as *Firearm (Revolver)* will apply to light, medium, and heavy revolvers. This generalization means that your character will be able to use most types of similar weapons without hindrance.

If your gamemaster would like a very granular system, treat each particular type of weapon as its own specialty. For example, your character does not have a broad skill in *Firearm (Pistol)*. Instead, the skill is broken into *Firearm (Heavy Automatic Pistol)*, *Firearm (Light Revolver)*, etc. This could even be further defined as *Firearm (Desert Eagle)* and *Firearm (.32 Webley)*. Generally, this level of specialization gives your character a disadvantage when using other weapons of similar types. The gamemaster can handle this in two different ways:

Your character may be able to use related weapons of the same class with at a slightly modified skill, based on

the different base skill chances for each weapon. For example, your character has the skill *Melee Weapon (Broad Sword)*. A broad sword has a 15% base chance. Your character is then forced to use a short sword, which has a 20% base chance. The skill is modified by the difference. In this case, because the short sword is easier to use, your character's skill modifier is modified by +5%.

A more severe method is to assume that any related weapons in the skill class are able to be used as if *Difficult*.

In either case, it is recommended that any negative modifiers do not lower your character's chance of using the weapon to lower than its normal base chance. If so, use the weapon's base chance.

Using Weapons of Different Classes

If you have skill in one weapon class, the gamemaster may allow your character to use a similar weapon in a different class at the same skill rating as if the skill were *Difficult*.

For example, if your character has Missile Weapon (Bow) 60%, the gamemaster may allow him or her to use crossbows (from another weapon class) as if it were a Difficult Missile Weapon (Bow) skill attempt. This gives your character a temporary skill rating of 30%.

If using a weapon with a temporary skill rating is successful and any experience is gained, the experience roll is made from the base chance rather than the temporary skill rating. Any experience is added to the weapon or weapon skill's base chance rather than the temporary skill rating. When your character exceeds the temporary skill rating, the actual skill rating becomes the default.

Armor

As with the development of weaponry, armor has evolved through changes in technology, availability of materials, and changing battlefield conditions. It is outside the scope of these rules to list all these different types of armor and their distinctive features, so this section presents a representative sampling. A gamemaster wishing to create more specific armor types keyed to a particular setting should be easily able to extrapolate the relevant attributes from the existing examples.

At a basic level, armor is hardened clothing. Depending on the setting, armor is made of leather, metal, plastic, or some combination of these materials, and it is worn if your character wants something protective between him- or herself and an enemy's weapon. Armor is generally heavier than normal clothing, and most of the time, it is uncomfortable and awkward to wear. If your character is a warrior of some sort, he or

Armor

Primitive Armors

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Helmet	+1	+1 point	Light	0.5	-5% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Cheap
Hide	1	1D3-1	Light	3.5	None	±3	1	All	Cheap

Ancient and Medieval Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Chain	7	1D8-1	Moderate	20.0	-20% to Physical skills	-2	3	All	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1d2-1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Helmet, Heavy	+2	+2 points	Light	2.5	-50% to Perception skills	±0	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+1	+1 point	None	1.5	-15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Inexpensive
Lamellar	6	1D8-1	Moderate	18.0	-15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Expensive
Leather, Soft	1	1D6-1	Light	3.5	None	±2	2	All	Inexpensive
Leather, Hard	2	1D6	Moderate	5.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Average
Leather, Cuirbouilli	3	2D3	Light	5.0	-10% to Physical skills	±0	2	All	Expensive
Padded/Quilted	1	1D2-1	None	3.0	None	±2	1	All	Inexpensive
Padded/Quilted, Heavy	2	1D3-1	Light	4.0	-5% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Inexpensive
Plate, Full	8	1D10	Cumbersome	25.0	-25% to Physical skills	-1	5	All but head	Expensive
Plate, Half	7	1D8	Moderate	18.0	-20% to Physical skills	-1	4	All but head	Expensive
Ring	5	1D6	Light	10.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average
Scale	6	2D4-1	Moderate	20.0	-15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average

Modern Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Ballistic Cloth	3/5 ¹	1D3/1D6-1	Light	4.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Early	4	1D4	Moderate	11.0	-25% to Physical skills	±1	2	Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Modern	4/8 ¹	1D4/1D8	Light	8.0	-5% to Physical skills	±3	2	Chest	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1D2-1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Flak Jacket	4	1D4	Moderate	8.0	-10% to Physical skills	±2	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+6	+3 points	Light	3.5	-25% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2 points	None	2.5	-10% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Inexpensive
Riot Gear	12/6	1D10+2	Moderate	12.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	5	All ²	Expensive

Advanced Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Adaptive Mesh	6	1D4+2	Light	2.0	-5% to Physical skills	±1	1	All	Expensive
Assault Armor, light	8	2D6	Moderate	12.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All ²	Expensive
Assault Armor	10	2D4+2	Moderate	16.0	-25% to Physical skills	±1	3	All ²	Expensive
Energy Armor	1-20 ³	none ³	Light	4.0	-5% to Hide, Stealth, and Perception skills per AP	Any	2	All ⁴	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+4	+4	Light	5.0	-15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2	None	2.0	-5% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Average
Powered Assault Armor, light ⁵	14	2D6+2	Cumbersome	36.0	-20% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	4	All	Priceless
Powered Assault Armor, heavy ⁶	16	4D4	Cumbersome	48.0	-50% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	5	All	Priceless

NOTES:

1. First value is vs. melee or low-velocity missile weapons; second value is vs. firearms.
2. Includes helmet.
3. Energy armor can be set for any value between 1 and 20 points of AP, determined by the user. Each combat round the armor expends a number of charges equal to its AP setting. Standard armor power supplies hold 200 charges; each damage point absorbed costs 1 additional charge. Energy armor offers no random armor protection value. It takes 5 DEX ranks to adjust the AP value.
4. Can not be worn with other armor.
5. Light Powered Assault Armor grants a +3 bonus to STR at a cost of -3 to DEX. Armor includes helmet.
6. Heavy Powered Assault Armor grants a +6 bonus to STR at a cost of -6 to DEX. Armor includes helmet.

Armor Descriptions

This section describes all types of armor from the armor tables, organized alphabetically.

Adaptive Mesh: This high-tech cloth is formulated to harden and react to impacts, but remain pliant and comfortable the rest of the time. It is usually worn as a bodysuit, and can be layered beneath other armor.

Assault Armor, Light: Light futuristic armor used by soldiers to resist primitive arms as well as affording some proof against energy weapons. Made of ceramics, alloys, or high-impact plastics.

Assault Armor, Standard: Heavy futuristic armor, designed for battles in extremely hazardous environments. Made of ceramics, alloys, or extremely resistant plastics, assault armor provides head-to-toe protection and is favored by the military (and evil overlords).

Assault Armor (Heavy), Powered: Similar to standard Assault Armor but more massive and with thicker armored plating. Internal servo-motors boost the wearer's strength. Combatants in powered heavy assault armor often use it to wield massive weapons. The frame accepts modular enhancements (such as a jetpack) and is sealed against chemical weapons and the vacuum of space.

Assault Armor (Light), Powered: Similar to Powered Assault Armor above, but lighter and sometimes lacking extras such as flight and sealed systems.

Ballistic Cloth: Made of *aramid* fiber, ballistic cloth armor provides some protection against bullets, though not as much as a bulletproof vest. Normally worn under street clothing or fashioned to resemble normal clothes.

Bulletproof Vest, Early: An older variant of the bulletproof vest, this was heavy and cumbersome, with thickened metal plates in a segmented canvas vest.

Bulletproof Vest, Modern: A modern evolution of the bulletproof vest, this uses high-impact metal alloys and plastics for a lighter, thinner form of protection.

Chain: This armor consists of a mesh made of woven metal links. It is extremely flexible, but quite heavy.

Clothing, Heavy: This is the equivalent of wearing an extremely heavy cloak, a winter jacket, tight leather clothing, or multiple layers of clothing.

Energy Armor: This armor consists of an internal power pack worn on the belt or slung over the back, between the shoulders, connected to several emitters on various body parts. When activated, it covers the character with a sheath of protective energy.

Flak Jacket: This is a full jacket similar to an early bulletproof vest, though less armored, useful for pilots and ground troops alike.

Helmet, Heavy or Light: Almost all of these armor types also have helmets. It is assumed that full suits of armor include helmets. If a helmet is not worn, reduce the armor value by -1 for a light helmet, and -2 for a heavy helmet. If using a random value armor system, modify the range by -1 or -2 as appropriate. If hit locations are used, a helmet has the same protective value as an arm or leg of the relevant armor material.



Hide: The first step towards leather armor, hide armor is either a tanned or untanned animal coat, worn as a cloak or garment, fur intact.

Lamellar (Studded, Splinted): This armor consists of thin metal strips (*splints*) usually held onto leather backing with rivets (*studs*).

Leather, Soft: A rough equivalent to a leather jacket or vest, soft leather is often worn under other armor as additional padding and protection.

Leather, Hard: This is equal to a half-centimeter of cured leather, about as

thick as the sole of a dress shoe. It may have leather studs or embossed work.

Leather, Cuirbouilli: Thick and semi-rigid leather that has been cured and boiled (hence the name) in oil and wax, then molded to the form of the wearer, almost like a second skin. It is often ornamented and stained colorfully.

Padded/Quilted: This armor consists of sandwiched layers of stiffened thick cloth, sewn together as if a pad or quilt. Cheap and easy to make, it does not offer very much protection, though it can be worn beneath many metal types of armor, such as half-plate and chain.

Padded/Quilted, Heavy: Similar to padded or quilted armor from above, this is much heavier and thicker. A modern example of this sort of armor is worn by attack dog trainers.

Plate, Half: This armor consists a partial suit of plate (see "Plate, Full" below) that does not cover the entire body. Usually, it is a breastplate, helmet, and some smaller pieces of plate, with chain making up the rest of the coverage.

Plate, Full: This armor consists of solid plates of metal, molded to the body and held together with covered leather straps. Historically, this was superior to any other type of body armor, but the all-metal construction makes it the heaviest and least comfortable.

Ring: This is soft leather or other backing with metal rings sewn onto it in a close or overlapping pattern.

Riot Gear: Similar to that worn by modern police, this is a heavy bulletproof jacket and toughened cloth coverall, with plates in strategic body parts, usually worn with a helmet.

Scale: Scale armor (sometimes called scale mail) consists of overlapping metal scales of various shapes and sizes fastened onto a backing.

Splint: See "Lamellar", above.

Studded: See "Lamellar", above.

Special Rules for Armor

The following special rules apply to a variety of situations involving armor.

Armor Encumbrance

Armor encumbrance (ENC) depends on the SIZ of the character wearing it. As shown on the armor table, the SIZ of the character determines the SIZ of the armor in most cases. Each increment of 5 adds to the ENC of the armor, meaning that it is heavier, hotter, clumsier to wear, etc. The SIZ range of 11–15 is considered “normal” or “medium”. Each 5-point increment of SIZ under that range has armor which is 1/5 less encumbering.

The following system applies to the optional hit location system.

ENC per Hit Location Table

Hit Location	Percent of Total ENC
Head	1/10
Arm	1/10 each
Chest	2/10
Abdomen	1/10
Leg	2/10 each

For example, your character buys a complete suit of plate armor in a medium SIZ. It will weigh a total of 25 ENC. The helmet weighs 2.5 ENC, the chest armor weighs 5 ENC, each arm piece weighs 2.5 ENC, the abdomen armor weighs 2.5 ENC, and each of the leg pieces weighs 5 ENC.

Layering Armor

As described above, it is possible to wear soft armor under hard armor to provide added protection. Soft leather and

heavy cloth are commonly used for this, and they add their usual armor points in exchange for their usual encumbrance cost (see above). However, when trying to overlap other than soft armor with hard, total the armor points but triple the ENC cost of the lesser armor. Only soft, pliable armor can easily be worn under other forms of armor.

Putting Armor On

Some types of armor are not as simple to put on as everyday clothing. There are straps and buckles to fasten, multiple pieces to don, and there may be several layers. It takes one combat round for every point of protection a suit of armor offers to put it on, assuming that your character is ready, the armor has been laid out and there are no hazardous or distracting environmental elements. *For example, it will take your character 8 combat rounds (96 seconds, or two minutes) to don a full suit of plate armor.* The GM should increase the amount of time it takes if your character was previously distracted or asleep, or is in some difficult physical situation (running, heavily injured, in pitch-dark, underwater, in a rapidly-moving chariot, etc.). Additionally, this may require an Agility or Idea roll if sufficiently distracted or inconvenienced.

Taking Armor Off

Taking off armor is much easier than putting it on, since your character doesn't have to make sure each piece is properly arranged before putting on the next one. Your character can remove 3 armor points per combat round (round up) if moving rapidly, and if he or she can make a successful Agility roll, this can be increased to 4 armor points per combat round. Use the maximum value of the armor protection if using random armor values.

she is likely to be more comfortable in armor than the average person, though wearing armor is rarely more comfortable than not wearing armor.

If possible, armor is worn over the entire body. Sometimes this is not possible because the wearer does not have the strength for it, or because he needs freedom of limbs to use a missile weapon, or because he cannot stay in a suit of stuffy armor in the middle of summer. Sometimes, too, a suit of armor is too costly, and a warrior can scrape together only what he needs to cover his vital organs, and must leave his limbs unprotected.

Armor described in this section is loosely categorized chronologically by setting for ease of use. In most cases, armor from an earlier period is available to people from later periods, so the gamemaster may simply choose where armor availability stops and allow your character access to armor types prior to that point.

Each type of armor has the following attributes:

Name: The common name for the type of armor.

AP: The amount the armor protects.

Random AP: (Optional) This is the armor protection if random armor values are being used.

Burden: This describes the awkwardness or relative encumbrance of the armor. The gamemaster may use this value with the optional fatigue system.

ENC: This value is for a character of average SIZ (11–15). For SIZ 6–10, multiply the ENC value by .08; for SIZ 16–20 multiply the value by 1.2; for SIZ 21–25 multiply it by 1.4, etc.

Skill Modifier: This is a modifier to a number of your character's skills while this armor is worn. This modifier is applied to any listed skills (or skills within a category), and the gamemaster may assign it to any other appropriate skill.

Fits SIZ: The amount of variance the armor SIZ will accommodate from its default SIZ, expressed as a positive or negative number.

Time: How many combat rounds to put the armor on?

OPTION

Armor by Hit Locations

If using the optional hit location system, you may wish for more flexibility in how your character is armored. Each type of armor described in the armor tables lists the hit locations it covers. These can be broken into smaller pieces based on hit locations, and your character can vary the type of armor he or she is wearing on each hit location. *For example, your character may choose to wear a plate breastplate, chain sleeves, a leather skirt and pants, and a heavy helmet.* Each type of armor worn may have a different armor value.

- ❖ **To determine the value of each piece**—use the base armor point value of the armor provided on the armor charts. For example, scale mail armor is worth 6 AP, and may be worn on any hit location but the head.
- ❖ **The burden imposed by optional armor**—is that of the pieces worn on the chest, abdomen, or legs, using the heaviest if these differ.
- ❖ **Skill modifiers**—use those of the heaviest piece of armor worn, usually on the chest, abdomen, or legs. Helmets keep the same modifiers.
- ❖ **To determine how long armor by hit location takes to put on**—assume one full combat round to put on 5 AP worth of armor (or 1 AP per two strike ranks).

The gamemaster may rule that some types of armor cannot be used piecemeal, such as most of the modern or advanced armor types. Varying armor by hit locations is not recommended with the optional random armor value system.

Layering Armor

Some armor types can be layered for added protection, usually with the softer armor type being worn beneath a more rigid one. The following armor types can be worn beneath other armor types: adaptive mesh, ballistic cloth, chain, hide, heavy clothing, heavy padded/quilted, padded/quilted, and soft leather. When these armors are

overlapped, the ENC for both types of armor is added together. If other combinations of armor layering are attempted, the gamemaster may multiply the ENC cost of the “lighter” armor by 3, to simulate the increased bulkiness. Skill penalties are added together for layered armor.

Helmets

The armor tables list helmets solely as a bonus to armor protection. When using armor by hit location, helmets have armor points of their own. Use the following values for helmets:

Name	AP
Helmet (Primitive)	2
Helmet, Heavy (Ancient and Medieval)	8
Helmet, Light (Ancient and Medieval)	4
Helmet, Heavy (Modern)	8
Helmet, Light (Modern)	6
Helmet, Heavy (Advanced)	16
Helmet, Light (Advanced)	14

Encumbrance per Hit Location

If varying the type of armor across hit locations, it may be useful to have ENC values for each piece. To determine the ENC for each piece of armor, take the “default” ENC value for the suit of armor (provided in the armor tables) and divide it by the following:

Hit Location	Percent of Total ENC
Head	1/10
Arm	1/10 each
Chest	2/10
Abdomen	1/10
Leg	2/10 each

For example, a complete suit of medium-SIZ plate armor weighs 25.0 ENC. The helmet weighs 2.5 ENC, the chest armor weighs 5.0 ENC, the abdomen weighs 2.5 ENC, each arm weighs 2.5, and each leg weighs 5.0.

Locations: (Optional) If the optional hit location system is being used, what hit locations are covered by the armor? If hit locations are being used, use the fixed armor protection value.

Value: What is the armor’s cost in an average setting?

Each type of armor is described in “Armor Descriptions” above.

Unlike weapons and shields, armor does not generally suffer damage, unless through environmental factors. Armor is designed for defense; it can take a lot of pounding. Armor points are never reduced through damage in combat—instead, any change to armor points must come from some extraordinary event.

Shields

Shields are basically large parrying weapons, designed to be interposed between your character and an attacker. A shield usually has a handle, strap, or straps and is worn on the non-weapon arm (for most people, the left arm). Traditionally, shields must compromise between toughness, lightness, and balance. Shields range in size from the small buckler (barely the size of a dinner plate) to the large shield used by Hoplite warriors.

Shields described in this section are loosely categorized chronologically by setting for ease of use. In most cases, shields from an earlier period are available to people from later periods, so the gamemaster may simply

Shields

Primitive Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Primitive	10%	Shield	10	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	2.0	Cheap	3

Ancient and Medieval Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Buckler	05%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	1.0	Average	3
Full Shield	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest, Head	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Half Shield	15%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Average	3
Heater	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	3.0	Average	3
Hoplite	15%	Shield	26	1D4+db	Knockback	Cumbersome	Abdomen, Arm, Chest, Head	12/8	7.0	Average	3
Kite	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Large Round	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Round	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	4.0	Average	2
Spiked	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Impale	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	5.0	Average	3
Target	15%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Cheap	3

Modern Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Riot Shield	15%	Shield	16	1D3 + db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest, Head	9/9	3.0	Expensive	3

Advanced Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Energy Shield	20%	Shield	25	1D2 + db	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	3/3	1.0	Expensive	2

Shield Descriptions

This section describes all types of shields, organized alphabetically from the shield tables above.

Buckler: A small shield that protects the lower part of the arm, usually held with a handgrip or single strap. These were worn hanging on the belt when in town, a practice that gave rise to the term *swashbuckler*.

Energy Shield: A futuristic defensive mechanism consisting of a small power pack mounted on the defender's arm and a projector that emits a circular shield of variable size.

Full Shield: Larger than a small shield and of a variety of shapes, a full shield is usually large enough to cover the defender's lower face and groin.

Half Shield: This is a smaller shield, fashioned in a variety of shapes, commonly used by riders, archers, or light

skirmishers (versus heavy front-line fighters).

Heater: A medium-sized shield shaped like a flatiron heater (and named for it). This is the traditional shape of many heraldic coats of arms.

Hoplite: A large rectangular shield used by Greek phalanxes (and some Roman legionnaires). Very protective, but too heavy and clumsy for horsemen. Hoplite shields are often used resting on the ground. Generally rectangular in shape, but some were also oblong and with rounded edges.

Kite: A type of large shield developed by the Normans. It is teardrop-shaped with a rounded top and pointed bottom, and covers the body from about the shoulders to the knee or ankle.

Large Round: Identical to a round shield (below), only larger.

Primitive: A general type of shield used in primitive warlike cultures. Usually nothing more than a wooden framework with stretched leather over it, wicker, stiffened cloth, or even extremely rigid animal hide.

Round: A round shield gripped in the central boss. Unique in that it has thin unprotected edges which can be used to catch and break edged weapons with a special maneuver.

Riot: A large rectangular clear Plexiglas shield used by riot policemen around the world. Light and tough, these enable shield walls and provide adequate defense against most attackers.

Spiked: A type of target with a central spike, a blade, or series of small spikes facing outward at the opponent.

Target: A round, medium-sized shield, common in many barbaric and warlike cultures. Usually made with a metal rim.

choose where availability stops and allow your character access to shields prior to that point.

All shields are used in melee or to defend against missiles. A thrown shield is an improvised weapon with a range of 10 meters and a 05% chance to hit (this can increase with experience).

Each shield type has the following attributes:

Name: The common name for the shield.

Base Chance: The base chance for anyone picking up the shield. This base chance is also the beginning value for attacking with the shield.

Skill: The skill used for the shield.

AP/HP: This is the shield's armor point value as well as its hit point value. This amount is used if the shield is damaged or targeted. See "Slung Shields" on (below) for details.

Damage: The amount of damage the shield does if used as a weapon.

Special: What type of special success does the shield do? Most shields do knockback special successes.

Burden: This describes the awkwardness or relative encumbrance of the shield.

ENC: (Optional) The ENC value of the shield.

Locations: (Optional) If that hit location system is being used, what hit locations are covered by the shield? This is usually only appropriate for slung shields. See "Slung Shields" on (below) for details.

STR/DEX: The minimum STR and DEX required to use the shield. If your character does not meet the minimum required STR and DEX, any uses of the shield are *Difficult*.

Value: What is the shield's cost in an appropriate setting?

SR: (Optional) Strike ranks. Shield strike ranks are used for shield attacks, not shield parries, which happen as attacks against your character are made.

Each shield type is described in "Shield Descriptions" on the previous page.

Slung Shields

Usually shields are worn slung over the arm/shoulder or back when not being used actively in combat. If the gamemaster is using hit locations, you can add 1/2 the armor protection of a slung shield (round up) to any hit location struck by a weapon, in addition to any armor points already in that location. Of the shields described in this section, only the buckler, primitive, and energy shields cannot be slung. As most shields have plenty of armor points, this will negate most attacks. *For example,*

your character has a shield slung over his or her back, and a dishonorable opponent fires an arrow from behind. The attack is a success, and the hit location rolled indicates the torso. The gamemaster rules that the shield covers this hit location, so 1/2 of the shield's armor points are applied against the arrow's damage. The gamemaster tells you "The arrow thuds into the shield on your back, but it doesn't get through." Now your character has a chance to hold his or her shield properly, not trusting another lucky break.

Artillery

Artillery is a term describing giant mechanisms that fire large-scale missiles, usually on the battlefield or in defense of an installation such as a castle or military base. In ancient and medieval settings, artillery is primarily siege weaponry, used in sieges. Artillery weapons are also found mounted on vehicles ranging from wagons, jeeps, up through battleships and space stations. These massive weapons are usually large, mounted, and complex enough to require more than one person to



Ancient Artillery Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	SR
Arbalest, Siege	Crossbow	10	3D6+1	1/5	Impaling	425	1	18	—	Bolts	1	98-00	Average	14	1/5 CR
Ballista	Artillery	05	10D6	1/5	Impaling	275	3	32	12	Bolts	1	99-00	Average	42	1/5 CR
Catapult	Artillery	10	6D6	1/5	Crushing	325	3	36	12	Rocks	1	00	Cheap	44	1/5 CR
Springal, Bolt-firing	Artillery	05	3D6	1/6	Impaling	300	3	40	12	Bolts	1	99-00	Average	48	1/6 CR
Springal, Rock-firing	Artillery	05	3D6	1/5	Crushing	270	3	40	12	Rocks	1	99-00	Average	48	1/5 CR
Trebuchet	Artillery	05	12D6	1/15	Crushing	300	4	44	12	Rocks	1	98-00	Average	52	1/15 CR

Historical and Modern Artillery Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	SR
Cannon	Artillery	01	4D8+4	1/5	Crushing	8,000	3	36	28	Cannonballs	1	99-00	Expensive	44	1/5 CR
Gun, Field	Artillery	01	10D6/2 meters	1/3	Crushing	12,000	2	48	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	42	1/3 CR
Gun, Gatling	Heavy Weapon	15	2D6+4	Burst ¹	Impaling	100	1	20	24	Bullets	200	96-00	Restricted	20	1/CR
Gun, Tank	Artillery	01	15D6/4 meters	1	Impaling	2,000	2	36	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	28	1/CR
Howitzer	Artillery	01	10D6/2 meters	1/2	Crushing	9,000	2	44	28	Explosive	1	00	Restricted	36	1/2 CR
Mortar ²	Heavy Weapon	01	10D6/2 meters	1	Crushing	2,500	1	18	12	Rockets	1	00	Restricted	12	1/CR
Torpedo	Artillery	01	20D6/2 meters	1/2	Impaling	5,000	1	36	6	Torpedo	1	99-00	Restricted	24 ³	1/2 CR
Turret, Machinegun	Artillery	05	4D6+4	Burst ⁴	Impaling	200	1	48	28	Bullets	1000	98-00	Restricted	36	1/CR
Turret, Spear-thrower	Artillery	05	2D10+2	1	Impaling	350	1	26	28	Spears	1	00	Expensive	16	1/CR

Advanced Artillery Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Crew	HP	AV	Ammo	Cap	Mal	Value	SIZ	SR
Cannon, Energy	Artillery	01	4D10+4	1	Fire	1,000	3	40	28	Energy	Unlimit	00	Restricted	48	1/CR
Gun, Rail-	Artillery	01	6D8+6	1/3	Impaling	10,000	2	64	28	Shells	1,000	00	Restricted	72	1/3 CR
Turret, Energy	Artillery	05	6D10+6	1	Fire	400	1	36	28	Energy	Unlimit	00	Restricted	44	1/CR
Turret, Flame	Artillery	10	4D6/1 meter ⁵	1	Fire	50	1	24	28	Fuel	100	98-00	Restricted	32	1/CR
Turret, Laser	Artillery	05	4D8+4	1	Fire	600	1	32	28	Energy	Unlimit	99-00	Restricted	40	1/CR
Turret, Missile	Artillery	01	8D6+8/2 meters	Burst	Impaling	1,200	1	36	28	Missiles	100	00	Restricted	44	1/CR
Turret, Shock	Artillery	05	4D6/1 meter ⁶	1/2	Stun	40	1	24	28	Energy	Unlimit	96-00	Restricted	32	1/2 CR

NOTES:

1. A Gatling gun fires a 36-round burst each combat round.
2. This is a small man-portable mortar. For larger versions, use the statistics for a howitzer.
3. The SIZ is for the torpedo itself; it must be fired from a launch tube, usually a part of a submarine or other vessel.
4. A standard four-barreled machinegun turret can fire a 120-round burst each combat round.
5. If a target is struck, he or she should roll Luck. If the roll fails, he or she is on fire and will take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every other round until the fire is extinguished or otherwise neutralized. See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
6. Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

operate them. In most cases, they are ranged and fire projectiles of some type. Traditionally, most artillery weapons deliver what is known as indirect fire, targeting an area rather than a specific object (a character or vehicle), though some types can be used against individual targets.

There are nearly as many types of artillery weapons as there are hand-to-hand weapons, and this section provides an overview and a representative sampling of them. If desired, the gamemaster and player can devise additional types from the examples provided. Much larger weapons, such as missiles, rockets, and other vehicle-vs.-vehicle or vehicle-vs.-structure weapons are beyond the scope of these rules.

Each artillery weapon has the following attributes:

Name: The common name for the type of artillery weapon.

Skill: The skill used for this artillery weapon.

Base: The base chance to use the artillery weapon.

Dmg: The damage done by the artillery weapon, sometimes expressed as dice/meter. Damage reduces by 1D6 per meter beyond initial radius.

Attk: How many attacks a round does the artillery weapon allow?

Special: The type of special success.

Artillery Weapon Descriptions

A description of all types of artillery weapons, organized alphabetically from the table on the previous page.

Arbalest, Siege: A heavier version of the arbalest, reloaded with the aid of a cranequin.

Ballista: A large mounted siege weapon that throws crossbow-style bolts, usually at people on the battlefield rather than structures or other vehicles.

Cannon: A cannon fires solid projectiles such as shells, cannonballs, or smaller shot using an explosive charge contained within the base of the barrel. The older the cannon, the less sophisticated the projectile.

Cannon, Energy: A heavy-framed energy projection weapon, either firing single blasts or using a rotating series of barrels for multiple fire. Often mounted on starships or on bases, though some are portable.

Catapult: A siege weapon that hurls stones and other objects in a parabolic arc onto the targeted area. Thus they are called indirect fire weapons. Because of the flight path of catapulted missiles, they are ideal for reaching over walls of open fortifications or shooting at slow-moving ground or sea vehicles.

Gun, Field: A smaller and more mobile cannon.

Gun, Gatling: The first rapidly repeating firearm, devised during the Civil War and used extensively there. Too large to be carried, Gatling guns were mounted on wagons or two-wheeled caisson-like carts. Most modern machine guns descend from this initial design.

Gun, Rail: A gun utilizing a series of magnetic fields to propel a projectile along a rail, accelerating the projectile to incredible velocity.

Gun, Tank: The main weapon of a tank, firing high-velocity large caliber rounds of a variety of ammunition types. Some of the more common projectiles fired from tank guns are high explosive, armor piercing, or guided missiles.

Howitzer: A type of field artillery similar to the cannon, though with a shorter and narrower barrel. Howitzers fire projectiles at a higher angle and trajectory, delivering plunging fire (fire falling from above) at an enemy.

Mortar: A small rocket launcher that is based on the ground, and serves to project a self-propelled bomb in an arc at the target. These are often little more than a solid base and a straight tube with a simple firing mechanism.

Springal: Similar to the ballista in function (though using a different method), this siege weapon hurls immense javelins at a targeted area. The springal can be used to throw either stones or bolts. Bolts are launched in a direct trajectory and stones are thrown indirectly.

Torpedo: A self-propelled missile used underwater or in space. Essentially a rocket set to explode upon contact with the target. Older torpedoes were sometimes set off at a calculated distance to prevent them from becoming navigational hazards. More sophisticated models have guidance systems and the ability to lock on targets.

Trebuchet: This siege engine uses an immense counterweight to throw large stones or other payloads at the targeted area. Usually assembled on a battle-

field, it only targets a single area, and the only means of changing the aim is to shorten the distance or move the entire trebuchet.

Turret, Energy: Used in space or on ground, an energy turret is a large energy-projecting weapon that draws an immense amount of power. Commonly used on space stations, medium-to-large spaceships, or in large ground battles. Otherwise similar to a machinegun turret (below).

Turret, Flame: A turret-mounted flamethrower, usually with additional armor protecting the user, offering greater range than a hand-held flame projector.

Turret, Laser: A turret-mounted laser cannon, often mounted on a space station or defensive satellite. Similar to an energy turret (above) but using lased light rather than raw energy bursts.

Turret, Machinegun: A large machine gun set on a rotating base, capable of a large arc of fire, usually guided either from afar or from an internal or external gunner. Turrets are usually mounted on medium or large airplanes, ships, tanks or other motor vehicles, or even on walls or other defensive structures.

Turret, Shock: A turret capable of projecting lightning or electric arcs across a distance, often utilizing some form of alternating current. A shock turret has a +20% to hit against a metallic target, or a target covered in metal armor.

Turret, Spear-thrower: A turret-mounted automatic spear-gun, usually firing meter-long metal bolts rather than actual spears. Some early models are used in the whaling industry, though they are also utilized in post-apocalyptic settings.

Rng: The range of the siege weapon.

Crew: How many characters does the artillery weapon require to be used effectively? Below this number, all attacks are *Difficult*.

HP: The artillery weapon's hit points.

AV: The artillery weapon's armor value, if applicable.

Ammo: What type of ammunition, whether solid, shrapnel, energy, chemical, or other?

CAP: The weapon's capacity; how many shots it can fire before reloading or recharging.

Mal: The artillery weapon's chance to malfunction.

Value: What is an average weapon's cost in an appropriate setting?

Modern Explosives

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg ¹	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Blasting Cap	Demolition	—	2D6/1 meter		Knockback	3	—	3	No	—	00	Average	0.2	—
Dynamite	Demolition	Throw	5D6/2 meters	½	Knockback	Thrown	2H	1	No	5/5	99-00	Average	0.5	1/SR
Explosive, Improvised	Demolition	—	3D6/2 meters		Knockback	8	—	4	No	—	91-00	Cheap	1.0	—
Explosive, Plastic	Demolition	—	6D6/3 meters		Knockback	21	—	15	No	—	99-00	Expensive	1.0	—
Grenade, Concussion	Grenade	Throw	2D6 ² /2 meters	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Explosive	Grenade	Throw	4D6/4 meters	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	99-00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Flare	Grenade	Throw	³ /3 meters	1	—	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Gas	Grenade	Throw	⁴ /3 meters	1	—	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	99-00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Phosphorous	Grenade	Throw	2D6 ⁵ /24 meters	1	—	Thrown	1H	4	No	5/5	98-00	Expensive	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Shrapnel	Grenade	Throw	4D6/4 meters	1	Impaling	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Smoke	Grenade	Throw	⁶ /3 meters	1	—	Thrown	1H	6	No	5/5	00	Average	0.3	1/SR
Grenade Launcher	Grenade	25	3D6/2 meters	1/3	Knockback	20	1H	12	No	—	99-00	Expensive	3.0	1/2CR
Launcher, LAW Rocket	Grenade	15	8D6/1 meter	1	Knockback	150	2H	10	No	7/5	98-00	Expensive	4.5	1/3CR
Launcher, Rocket	Grenade	01	10D6/5 meters	1/3	Impaling & Knockback	400	2H	12	No	11/7	99-00	Expensive	7.0	1/3CR
Mine, Antipersonnel	Demolition	—	4D6/5 meters		Knockback	25	—	9	No	—	99-00	Average	2.0	—
Mine, Antitank	Demolition	—	6D6+6/ 3D6+2/1D6		Impaling	10/25/50	—	12	No	—	99-00	Average	3.0	—
Molotov Cocktail	Grenade	Throw	1+Fire ⁷	½		Thrown	1H	1	No	5/7	95-00	Cheap	0.7	1/SR

Advanced Explosives

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg ⁸	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Detonator, Antimatter	Demolition	—	10D10/10 meters	1	—	110	—	12	No	—	96-00	Expensive	1.5	—
Detonator, Fusion	Demolition	—	10D8/10 meters	1	—	110	—	16	No	—	98-00	Expensive	2.0	—
Detonator, Electromagnetic Pulse	Demolition	—	6D10/5 meters ⁹	1	—	35	—	12	No	—	97-00	Expensive	1.0	—
Detonator, Plasma	Demolition	—	6D10/5 meters ¹⁰	1	—	35	—	10	No	—	99-00	Expensive	1.4	—
Detonator, Sonic	Demolition	—	4D6/2 meters ¹¹	1	Knockback	10	—	8	No	—	97-00	Expensive	2.0	—
Grenade, Disintegrator	Grenade	Throw	4D10/2 meters	1	—	Thrown	1H	12	No	5/5	96-00	Expensive	0.8	1/SR
Grenade, Electromagnetic Pulse	Grenade	Throw	5D8/1 meter	1	—	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98-00	Average	0.5	1/SR
Grenade, Fusion	Grenade	Throw	6D6/1 meter	1	—	Thrown	1H	10	No	5/5	97-00	Average	0.8	1/SR
Grenade, Plasma	Grenade	Throw	3D10/2 meters ¹⁰	1	—	Thrown	1H	10	No	5/5	98-00	Average	0.7	1/SR
Grenade, Shock	Grenade	Throw	4D6/1 meter	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98-00	Average	0.5	1/SR
Grenade, Stun	Grenade	Throw	3D8/2 meters ¹²	1	Knockback	Thrown	1H	8	No	5/5	98-00	Average	0.5	1/SR

NOTES:

- Damage is expressed in dice per meters; damage done each meter past the initial radius decreases by 1D6 per meter.
- All targets taking damage must succeed in a Stamina roll or be stunned. See the rules for Stunning or Subduing on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- Illuminates the range instead of doing damage; see **Light Sources** on page 226 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- Fills an area with a type of toxic or non-toxic gas. See the rules for Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details. A sample type of gas grenade might have 2D6+12 POT, an instant effect, and cause choking and 1D6 per round HP loss if target fails a resistance roll vs. CON.
- Phosphorous grenades are produce smoke as per a gas grenade, and are also incendiary (causing damage each round until extinguished). See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- Fills an area with vision obscuring smoke instead of doing damage; can obscure a room as if darkened. See **Darkness** on page 220 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- If a target is struck, he or she should roll Luck. If the roll fails, he or she is on fire and will take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every other round until the fire is extinguished or otherwise neutralized. See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- Damage is expressed in dice per meters; damage done each meter past the initial radius decreases by 1D per meter.
- Damage is rolled and compared to an electronic/electrical-based target's CON or current HP on the resistance table. If the target loses, it takes the rolled amount in damage. If the resistance roll is successful, target takes the detonator's minimum damage (based on range) to current HP.
- If a target is struck, he or she should make a *Difficult* Luck roll. If the roll fails, he or she is on fire and will take 1D6 points of damage immediately and every other round until the fire is extinguished or otherwise neutralized. See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
- Against a nonliving target, a sonic grenade's damage is rolled on the resistance table against the target's base CON, AP, or HP. If the target fails this roll, it shatters or is considered damaged beyond the point of functionality.
- Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If the target succeeds, he or she takes minimum damage (2) instead of the rolled damage. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

SIZ: The artillery weapon's SIZ.

SR: (Optional) Strike ranks, if that optional system is being used.

Each artillery weapon is described in "Artillery Descriptions" on page 266.

Artillery Weapon Classes

These classes of weapon have some overlap, and may be redefined at the gamemaster's discretion. There is additionally some overlap with the Heavy Weapons skill, and that skill may allow players to use artillery weapons as if Difficult, or vice versa.

Cannon: Cannon, energy cannon, field gun, howitzer, tank gun.

Launcher: Mortar.

Mounted Gun: Rail gun.

Siege Engine: Ballista, catapult, springal, trebuchet.

Missile: Torpedo.

Turret: Energy turret, flame turret, laser turret, missile turret, machinegun turret, shock turret, spear-thrower turret.

Artillery Weapon Effects

Artillery weapons are rarely used for individual attacks. They are fired at masses of men or at walls and other structures, usually affecting an area of SIZ 40 (around 4 meters in radius from the center, about the SIZ of a small airplane). Anyone caught in that range is injured. If a target is smaller than SIZ 40, reduce the chance of hitting by 1% per each point of SIZ point smaller than 40. *For example, using an artillery weapon against a SIZ 14 person would result in a -26% reduction to the appropriate skill.*

If the projectile misses, use the rules for the Throw skill on page 83 to determine where the projectile actually went, multiplying the distance by a factor of 5. *For example, if the Throw skill indicates that a projectile missed by 4 meters, multiply the result by 5 for a result of 20 meters.* This is to ensure that a miss is still a miss.

Guided Missiles

Some forms of artillery such as missiles are guided through internal or external electronic targeting systems, making them much more accurate. If a missile is guided in this manner, it makes any skill use Easy. If it is self-guided, it automatically strikes the target on any roll other than a 99 or 00, though a mobile target may attempt to dodge the missile. If so, dodging attempts are considered to be evasive actions (see page 191), and dodges against a guided missile are Difficult, whether the Dodge, Drive, or Pilot skill is used. The best defense against guided missiles

(other than thick armor) is electronic jamming. Jamming reduces a guided missile's attack chance by 1/2, making it Difficult. If a guided missile misses its target, see the rules for artillery weapon misses above to determine where the projectile actually strikes.

Shrapnel

Many artillery weapons can shoot projectiles which fragment, or large payloads of smaller projectiles. Both of these serve the same purpose—scattering sharp objects (*shrapnel*) across a radius around the point of impact. Some weapons only fire solid projectiles, others fire only shrapnel, and some can fire either type of payload. The shrapnel will damage people, but not buildings. The damage from shrapnel is only 1/6 the damage done (divide the number of dice if possible, if not, roll dice and divide by 6, rounding up) by a comparable solid projectile, but it is done to everything within a radius equal in meters to the number of dice called for by the solid projectile damage roll. *For example, a trebuchet fires a projectile doing 12D6 damage when it hits. If it fires shrapnel, it will do 2D6 to everyone within a 12-meter radius of the point of impact.*

Robots & Artificial Life

One unique type of equipment is the robot, a construction treated like a character, with almost the same range of characteristics and skills. Robots can range in shape and design from non-humanoid golems, clumsy and oversized automatons, sleek and attractive humanoids, or even indistinguishable from humanity. For convenience, all of the different types of robots (androids, golems, synthetic humanoids, A.I., etc.) are referred to as robots in these rules. All of the attributes for a robot are identical to a normal character's, with the same characteristics, skills, and even powers. **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** has a sample robot, and appropriate sourcebooks for *Basic Roleplaying* may provide more detail about robots.

Robots as Player Characters

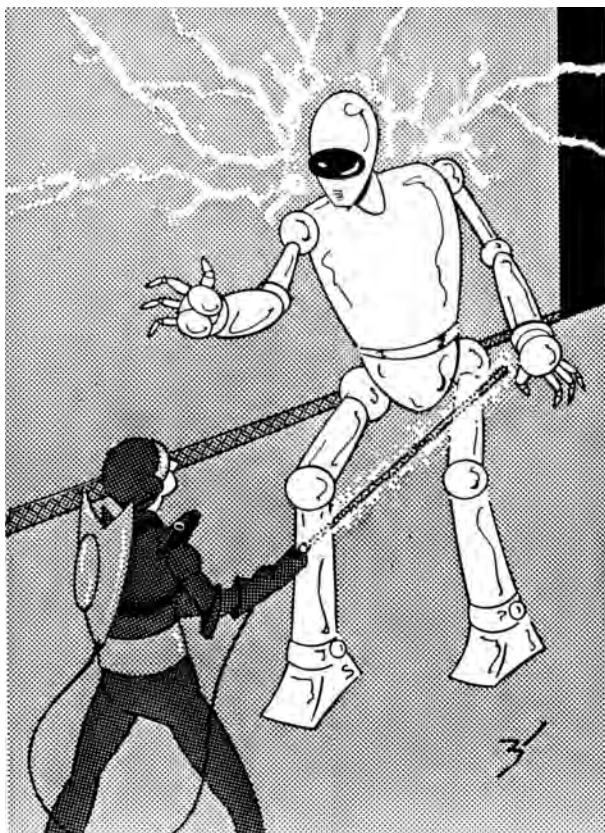
With the gamemaster's permission, your character can even be a robot, either built using normal character creation or using one of the samples as a template. If so, your character should be built along the lines of a normal character, though the POW characteristic becomes a simple battery storage capability, rather than actual soul-force. The most appropriate power set for a robot is the super powers system. Your character must either be repaired through an appropriate Repair skill (or

Technical Skill, depending on how advanced your character is), and these repairs may require a Status roll to gain access to the required components.

Cybernetics

If you wish for your character to have some cybernetic aspects to his or her body, such as artificial limbs or organs, you should work with the gamemaster to determine what effects the artificial body part should have. In most cases, if the body part does not offer any special bonuses or unusual attributes, you should just assume that it is to be treated just like a living body part, though instead of the First Aid skill, you may need an appropriate Repair or Technical Skill to restore the limb to functionality if it is damaged through the effects of a major wound or an injury using the optional hit location system.

If you want the artificial body part to have some special powers or attributes beyond those of a normal limb, you should construct the limb as if it were a gadget (see "Equipment with Super Powers" on page 246), only attached intrinsically to your character's body. Alternately, the artificial limb/organ could be removable or even modular. Either way, the gadget system is the best means of simulating cybernetic or otherwise artificial body parts.



A robot can be "built" in Basic Roleplaying in several ways. It could be a robotic superhero, a mechanoid "demon" from another plane, or an enchanted set of devices.

Metric Conversions

Measurement throughout *Basic Roleplaying* utilizes the metric system as the default. While much of the world uses the metric system, many countries still use the Imperial system of measurements (inches, feet, miles, pounds, etc.). Many historical settings utilize Imperial measurements (or even older systems!), and the gamemaster may wish to use Imperial measures for ease (if he or she is used to it) or for flavor. For example, "miles" intrudes less than "kilometers" in a fantasy setting, whereas in a science fiction setting the reverse is true. These metric conversions are approximate and rounded off where convenient, providing simple conversions for you and the gamemaster.

Equivalencies

1 centimeter = 1/3 inch	0°C = 32°F
1/3 meter = 1 foot	10°C = 50°F
1 meter = 1 yard	20°C = 68°F
1 kilometer = 3/5 mile	30°C = 86°F
100 grams = 3 ounces	40°C = 104°F
1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds	100°C = 212°F
1 metric ton = 2200 pounds	
1 liter = 1 quart	
4 liters = 1 gallon	

Vehicles

Just as with weapons and armor types, a comprehensive listing of all vehicles or even most major types of vehicles would dominate this rulebook. The following section includes a variety of vehicles identified earlier in "Movement Rates" on page 181, as well as others suitable for adventuring. These have been provided as examples for you and the GM to use when creating additional types of vehicles. These are samples based on estimated averages, and the GM is encouraged to expand these listings or alter statistics as desired. The following table displays the major vehicular characteristics utilized in chases and other game systems, abbreviated using the following terms:

Type: The generic type of vehicle.

Skill: The skill your character should use when piloting it.

Rated Speed: The maximum speed of the vehicle, an abstract value used in the chase system on pages 216-217 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Handling: This modifier is applied to your character's skill, reflecting the vehicle's maneuverability or relative ease of use.

ACC: Acceleration, the number of speed increments the vehicle can accelerate or decelerate from its current

Vehicle Descriptions

This section describes all manner of vehicles, organized alphabetically from the vehicle table.

Air Vehicle, Bomber: A huge propeller- or turbine-driven aircraft utilized for long-range bombing missions, usually equipped with several machinegun turrets.

Air Vehicle, Dirigible: A balloon with a limited structural framework and a small cabin hanging below, usually inflated with a lighter-than-air gas. Driven by rotors.

Air Vehicle, Helicopter: A smallish rotary blade-powered air vehicle. Cabins range from simple plexiglass bubbles to armored with troop compartments and gun mounts.

Air Vehicle, Jet: A long commercial jet airliner, with at least two wing-mounted jet turbines.

Air Vehicle, Jet Fighter: A relatively small, highly maneuverable jet designed for aerial combat and bombing strikes.

Air Vehicle, Propeller Plane: A small propeller-driven passenger plane.

Air Vehicle, Skyskimmer: A high-tech ultralight air vehicle capable of vertical takeoff and landing, utilizing advanced thruster technology.

Automobile, Modern Sedan: An average four-door modern automobile.

Automobile, Modern Sportscar: An extremely fast, two-door, two-seat, high-performance automobile.

Automobile, Vintage: An old boxy automobile, equivalent to the Model-T.

Boat, Motor: A smallish motorboat with a single propeller and a small forward cabin.

Boat, Small Rowed: A small two-bench rowboat.

Chariot: A small two-horse chariot, with room for one driver, one warrior, and a small rack for weapons.

Four-Horse Carriage: An open- or cloth-top four-horse carriage.

Four-Horse Wagon: A wooden stagecoach with a cramped passenger cabin and room for storage on back and on top.

Horse: See page 336 of **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** for horses.

Hovercraft: A commercial hovercraft ferry suitable for around 20 passengers on relatively still water.

Land Skimmer: A high-tech turbine-driven land vehicle that skims on a bed of compressed air, like a hovercraft.

Motorcycle: A two-wheeled motor vehicle with room for a driver and one passenger. Sidecar optional.

Ship, Aircraft Carrier: An immense ship (300+ meters long) with a flat deck capable of launching fighter craft and having them land on it.

Ship, Ancient Rowed: A longship with single rows of oars port and starboard, usually rowed by galley slaves or by fighting men.

Ship, Modern Battle: A massive battleship (165+ meters long), heavily armored with a wide variety of long-range artillery and missile systems.

Ship, Modern Cruise: A massive passenger liner (300+ meters long) serving almost as a mobile hotel, with shops, entertainment facilities, and countless amenities.

Ship, Vintage Sailing: A galleon, roughly 35 meters in length, with two or more masts, popular in swash-buckling and pirate genres.

Space Vehicle, Cargo: The mainstay of space commerce, this is a cargo vessel with a small crew. Lightly

armored and armed. May have energy shielding.

Space Vehicle, Rocket: A multi-stage fuelled rocket with a small passenger cabin/landing module.

Space Vehicle, Starfighter: A relatively small, highly maneuverable spaceship equivalent to a jet fighter. Heavily armed, though lightly armored. May have energy shielding.

Space Vehicle, Transport: A moderate-sized spaceship used primarily for passenger transportation, lightly armored and armed. May have energy shielding.

Submarine: A submersible vessel used by the military for stealth, infiltration of enemy waters, and naval combat.

Tank, Modern: A heavily armored tracked combat vehicle equipped with a large-caliber central gun as well as other armaments.

Tank, Vintage: A heavily armored tracked combat vehicle, usually equipped with a large-caliber central gun, circa the First World War.

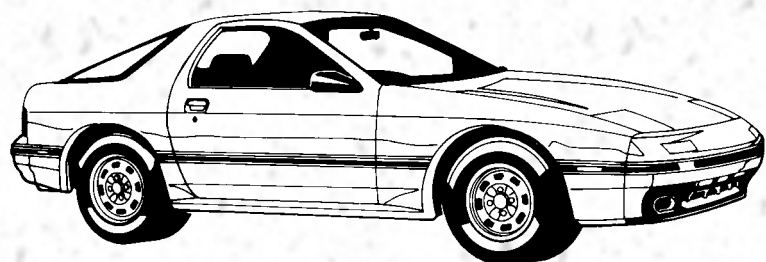
Train, Bullet: A high-speed, streamlined passenger train built on a specialized track, usually driven by electricity.

Train, Mag-Lev: An advanced passenger train levitating on a magnetic track.

Train, Steam Engine: A steam-driven engine dating from the later 1800s. SIZ value is per car.

Truck, Pickup: A four-wheel drive pickup truck.

Truck, Semi (18-wheeler): A large commercial truck with a small cabin and a long cargo compartment.



Vehicles

HORSE & HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated Speed	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Horse	Ride	2	—	±2	10	1/—	26	20	1	1	8	Average	See <i>Chapter Eleven: Creatures</i> .
Chariot	Drive	2	-5%	±1	10	6/—	35	20	1	1	18	Average	Two-horse variety.
Four-Horse Carriage	Drive	2	-5%	±1	10	8/—	55	30	2	4	18	Average	—
Four-Horse Wagon	Drive	2	-10%	±1	10	8/—	60	35	1	4+	36	Average	—

AUTOS, TRUCKS, TRAINS & TANKS

Type	Skill	Rated Speed	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Vintage	Drive	6	-5%	±1	67	10/1	60	35	1	3	12	Average	—
Modern Sedan	Drive	12	—	±7	134	14/2	50	40	1	3-4	24	Average	—
Modern Sportscar	Drive	15	+5%	±8	200	10/2	45	45	1	1	8	Expensive	—
Pickup Truck	Drive	12	—	±7	134	16/2	55	65	1	2+	36	Average	—
18-wheeler	Drive	10	-10%	±4	100	16/2	90	90	1	3+	72	Expensive	—
Motorcycle	Drive	13	+5%	±8	166	10/—	18	25	1	1	6	Average	—
Land Skimmer	Drive	20	+5%	±10	400	12/—	30	30	1	3	12	Expensive	—
Tank, Vintage	Drive	4	-10%	±1	42	18	80	85	4	—	8	Restricted	—
Tank, Modern	Drive	8	—	±4	83	24	90	140	4	—	12	Restricted	—
Train, Steam Engine	Drive	6	—	±2	67	14/—	100	120	4	200+	96	Expensive	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are Easy.
Train, Bullet	Drive	19	+5%	±4	366	14/1	110	125	4	400+	72	Priceless	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are Easy.
Train, Mag-Lev	Drive	22	+10%	±4	534	12/2	120	100	2	400+	72	Priceless	SIZ is per car. Drive rolls are Easy.

BOATS & SHIPS

Type	Skill	Rated Speed	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Small Rowed	Pilot	2	-5%	±1	10	4/—	18	20	1+	1	12	Average	—
Ancient Rowed	Pilot	2	—	±1	10	10/—	84	42	50+	10+	64	Expensive	—
Vintage Sailing	Pilot	3	-5%	±1	15	10/—	96	96	25+	8+	80	Expensive	—
Hovercraft	Pilot	4	-5%	±2	42	10/—	80	40	2	20+	48	Expensive	—
Motorboat	Pilot	8	—	±2	83	6/—	40	40	1	5+	24	Average	—
Modern Cruiseship	Pilot	6	-10%	±2	67	10/—	200	320	200+	2000+	120	Priceless	—
Modern Battleship	Pilot	10	-10%	±2	100	36/—	240	480	600+	1200+	200	Restricted	—
Aircraft Carrier	Pilot	8	-25%	±2	83	24/—	640	600	1000+	2200+	320	Restricted	—
Submarine	Pilot	8	—	±4	83	16/—	140	240	100+	24+	48	Restricted	—

AIR VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated Speed	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Dirigible	Pilot	12	—	±2	134	—/12	100	100	40+	72+	36	Priceless	Balloon is unarmored; cabin is.
Propeller Plane	Pilot	15	—	±1	200	4/1	55	55	1-2	2+	12	Expensive	—
Bomber	Pilot	17	-10%	±1	334	6/2	105	105	6+	4+	48	Restricted	—
Jet	Pilot	30	—	±2	1084	8/3	110	110	1-2	48+	48	Priceless	—
Jet Fighter	Pilot	33	+10%	±10	1334	6/2	80	80	1	—	2	Restricted	—
Helicopter	Pilot	15	—	±10	200	4/2	48	48	1	3+	12	Priceless	—
Skyskimmer	Pilot	23	+5%	±10	584	8/4	72	72	1	5+	18	Expensive	—

SPACE VEHICLES

Type	Skill	Rated Speed	Handling	ACC	MOV	Armor	SIZ	HP	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	Value	Notes
Rocket	Pilot	70	-10%	±1	33K	10/8	100	85	4+	—	8	Priceless	—
Transport	Pilot	92	—	±10	50K	24/18	120	180	2+	8+	48	Priceless	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.
Starfighter	Pilot	100	+10%	±20	65K	18/12	50	150	1+	1	6	Restricted	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.
Cargo	Pilot	90	—	±10	42K	25	150	750	2+	4+	100	Expensive	Speed is sublight; has FTL drive.

rated speed each combat round. This is provided as a value of \pm , and is used in the vehicle chase system.

MOV: The maximum speed of the vehicle in a combat round, expressed in its MOV rating. MOV has a sliding value of 1-5 meters; this assumes a median value of 3.

Armor: The vehicle's general armor value and the amount of protection it confers upon the crew or passengers. Usually attacks on passengers are through a window or open section of the cabin. If these two numbers are different, they are expressed as two values separated by a slash. The GM should determine whether a character has protection from the vehicle. Usually attacking someone in a vehicle is a *Difficult* task.

SIZ: The vehicle's apparent SIZ in terms of its ability to be manipulated in the game world.

HP: The vehicle's hit points. Vehicles do not suffer the effects of special successes. Critical successes will only ignore the vehicle's armor and do not do additional damage.

Crew: This is the number of characters required to pilot and maintain the vehicle at full efficiency while en route. For larger vessels, this is usually 1/3 the normal complement, as the crews work in 8-hour shifts. The GM may make vehicle-related skill rolls *Difficult* if the vehicle is under-crewed.

Passengers: The number of passengers the vehicle normally carries, combined with the number of off-duty crewmembers (if appropriate).

Cargo: The space the vehicle has for cargo, expressed in SIZ. For game purposes, 1 ENC equals 1 SIZ point.

Value: A general value for the vehicle, as described in "Money" on page 237 and "Purchasing Equipment" on page 239.

Notes: Additional notes about the vehicle and its capabilities.

Other Equipment

This section covers a variety of other equipment your character may use that does not fall into any of the previous categories. This list is obviously incomplete, but should provide enough guidance for you or the gamemaster to determine the relevant attributes of most other types of equipment.

Poisons

The rules for handling poison are discussed in "Poisons" on page 229 in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. A nearby table provides guidance for a number of sample poisons.

Sample Poisons

Poison	Speed of Effect	POT	Symptoms
Arsenic	1/2 to 24 hours	16	Burning pain, vomiting, violent diarrhea.
Belladonna	2 hrs to 2 days	16	Rapid heartbeat, impaired vision, convulsions.
Black Widow venom	2-8 days	7	Chills, sweating, nausea.
Chloroform	1 combat round	15	Unconsciousness, depressed respiration.
Cobra venom	15-60 minutes	16	Convulsions, respiratory failure.
Curare	1 combat round	25	Muscular paralysis, respiratory failure.
Cyanide	1-15 minutes	20	Dizziness, convulsions, fainting.
Rattlesnake venom	15-60 min.	10	Vomiting, violent spasms, yellowish vision.
Scorpion venom	24-48 hours	9	Intense pain, weakness, hemorrhaging.
Sleeping pills	10-30 minutes	6	Normal sleep; each additional dose increases chance of respiratory failure by 5%.
Strychnine	10-20 minutes	20	Violent muscle contractions, asphyxiation

Books and Printed Materials

This category covers a large variety of reading materials, ranging from newspapers, comic books, scrolls, paperbacks, magical grimoires, or hardcover books. For clarity, they'll all be referred to as books here. Books can be for entertainment or for informational purposes. Only the latter type is addressed here. (This is not to denigrate reading for entertainment; it is not covered here because it has little in-game benefit.) Books can have almost any value, from cheap to priceless, depending on the subject matter, date of publication, author, rarity, or other circumstances.

When a book is sought out or encountered in the course of play, the gamemaster should determine the following:

Language: If the book is written in a language other than your character's native tongue, he or she must have the book translated or make successful Language (Other) rolls as appropriate (as well as Literacy, if that skill is used).

Skill: What skill and how many skill points can your character learn through this book? Generally, a book contains a single skill, though some rare and prized volumes may include more than one subject.

Reward: What bonus to a skill can be gained by reading the book? This is generally an amount from 1% for something brief or mostly filled with nonessential materials, up to 20% for a comprehensive volume that serves as the end-all authority on the subject. Generally, an amount between +1% and +10% is appropriate. If more than one skill can be learned from the book, the gamemaster should determine two ratings, even if they are identical.

Time to Read: How long will a book take to read? This is not a casual skimming of the contents—it represents a thorough examination of the text of the book and an attempt to understand it in context. This may involve additional supplementary reading, research, or attempts at exercises to increase comprehension and facility with the material.

Powers: Some rare books contain magic spells or sorcery spells, invocations to demons or other supernatural beings, or some other means of learning a power. The gamemaster should determine if the book has any of these, which they are, and what are the limits they can be learned to (such as a level or percentage cap, if appropriate). In some works the actual name of the power may be obscure or deliberately vague, to shield the contents from the neophyte. The gamemaster should use the guidelines in the magic and sorcery powers for learning spells as guidelines here.

Types of Books

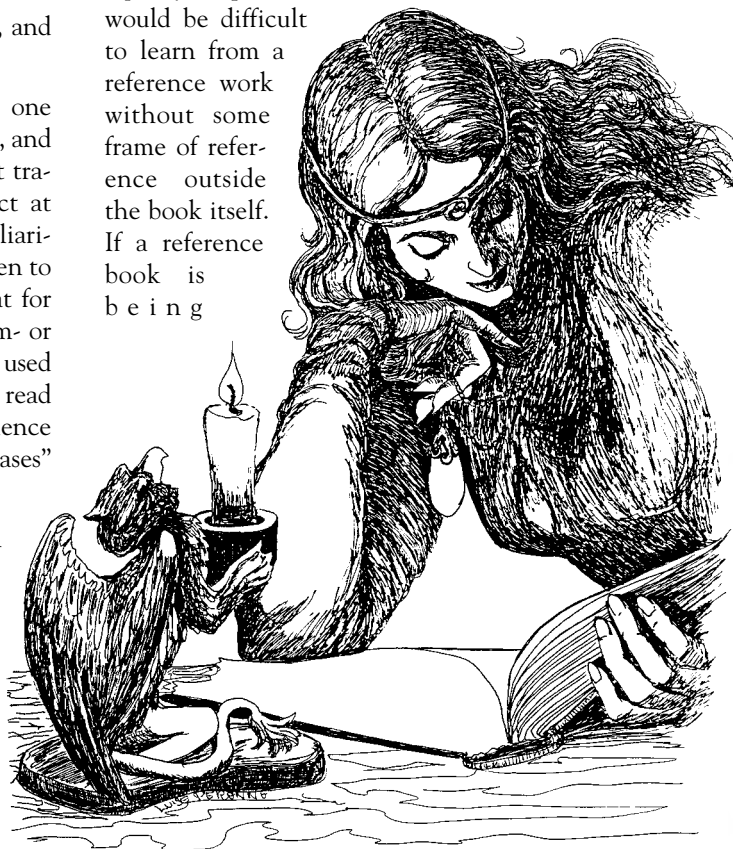
Following are a variety of different types of books, and how they might be utilized in the course of play:

Instructional Books. An instructional book is one that is designed to teach a particular subject or skill, and is organized and written with that goal in mind. It traditionally begins with an overview of the subject at hand, and then attempts to build a beginner's familiarity or skill, expanding to a neophyte's skill level, then to an intermediate, an expert, etc. It is assumed that for many skills, when your character is training by him- or herself, some form of instructional books are being used to guide this research. Instructional books, when read successfully, grant the skill bonus as if an experience check were earned. See "Researching Skill Increases" on page 185 for more detail.

Lore Books. A lore book is one full of some form of knowledge, either secret or public, that your character can learn from. Usually, reading a book of lore causes a potential increase in the subject of the book. These can vary tremendously in organization and structure, but often serve to give an impression of a specific field of knowledge from a certain perspective, whether a scholarly overview or the private diaries of a

madman. These are similar to instructional books in the way they are used—though successful reading of a lore book will grant an automatic increase of skill rating in a particular skill. *For example, after reading the diary of a crazed man who claimed to have escaped the tortures of Hell, your character earns a +10% to his or her Knowledge (Demonology) skill.* Some books may contain such horrific knowledge that they can even cost your character sanity points (SAN) if read successfully, at the gamemaster's discretion. In such cases, the sanity point loss is considered to be automatic—rather than sanity losses through glimpses of monstrous beings. For books that increase a Knowledge skill and cost sanity points, the gamemaster should impose a limit on maximum SAN based on the total of 99 minus the skill rating in the new skill, as described in the Blasphemous Knowledge entry in "Maximum Sanity" on page 315. *For example, reading the mad monk's treatise of the denizens of Hell costs your character 2D3 sanity points, and the knowledge gained (+10%) is subtracted from 99 ($99 - 10 = 89$), meaning that his or her SAN score can never increase above 89 points.*

Reference Books. A reference book can be a dictionary, encyclopedia, or some other form of organized reference in paper, electronic, or some other format. The primary difference between a reference book and another type of book is that there is no attempt to contextualize the information—instead, it is presented in a format where all information is more-or-less equally important. It would be difficult to learn from a reference work without some frame of reference outside the book itself. If a reference book is being



used as a means of attempting to learn a skill, the research requires one or more successful skill rolls in the very skill being studied in order to earn the experience checks. The gamemaster should determine how many skill rolls are required for this. The amount of time required to research a skill through a reference book is double that of an instructional book. *For example, if your character attempts to increase his or her Science (Astronomy) skill using nothing more than a reference work consisting of many star charts, he or she must make a successful Science (Astronomy) roll in order to make sense of the material and to place it into some context.* Successful skill rolls made to research a skill increase do not earn an additional experience check.

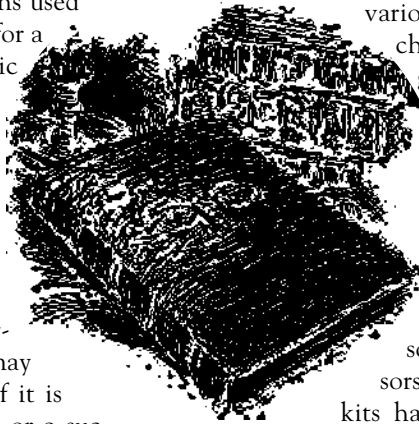
Spellbooks. Also referred to archaically as *grimoires*, these are books, scrolls, tablets, hides, scribed stones, knotted ropes, or other means used to convey the information required for a magic-using character to learn magic spells or store spells he or she already knows. These types of spellbook are described in the magic and sorcery powers in **Chapter Four: Powers**.

Using a Book

Generally, to use a book, your character must be able to read it. This may require the optional Literacy skill if it is not a default part of the campaign, or a successful Language roll using the appropriate language(s) the book is written in. Alternately, a translation can often be obtained, though this is costly if it must be done on commission. The gamemaster should determine how much this would cost, using the guidelines for teachers given in "Skill Training Costs" on page 184. When the study of the book is complete, your character earns the relevant skill points, if any.

Books as Objects

The physical properties of books are less impressive. Most books are of SIZ 0, 1, or 2, and a book's hit points equal its SIZ. Depending on what they're made of, a book usually has an armor value of 0 (paperback) up to 4 points of armor (heavy leather spine and covers). Unless the book has some additional measure of protection or is sturdily constructed, it can be reduced to scraps in five combat rounds, or destroyed utterly by fire in that same amount of time. If the book is actually a scroll, electronic reading device, holographic learning display, or computer, the gamemaster should determine its SIZ and hit points based on examples of items throughout this chapter.



Medical Equipment

Physical harm is a constant threat to your character, and many pieces of equipment have been devised throughout history to aid in treating injuries and illness. The following list of medical equipment is listed in order of relative complexity, from the more primitive to futuristic. Though it is not a common designation, each of these has been lumped together as a *kit*, an assortment of equipment serving a specific purpose. The gamemaster can determine if a particular kit is of inferior, average, or superior quality.

Herbalist or Midwife's Kit. Used by shamans, physikers, midwives, and leeches throughout history, this is an assortment of cloth for bandages, poultices, thread and a sharp needle (bone or metal), and some other oddments including herbal remedies of various levels of efficacy. Such a kit is cheap in most settings, and is often gathered by the owner using the Knowledge (Herbalism) skill.

First Aid Kit. A standard first aid kit includes clean (or sterile) bandages, rubber gloves, some minor ointments, pills for minor illnesses or infections, some eye-wash, poison or venom treatment, and perhaps some small tools such as tweezers, scissors, or even a small knife. Larger first aid kits have more of the above, and a larger variety, and may come with a small first aid manual. A first aid kit is used with the First Aid skill, and is usually cheap.

Doctor's Bag. A traditional doctor's bag includes a variety of general pills and some antibiotics, a stethoscope, light, a prescription pad, and a variety of medical implements and tools for on-site diagnosis and potentially emergency medical treatment. A doctor's bag is used with the First Aid skill, though it can be utilized for Medicine skill rolls depending on the extent of the procedure. A doctor's bag is expensive.

Surgery Kit. A set of surgical tools packaged and sterile, ready for use. This contains several rubber gloves, dressings, antiseptics, sutures, etc., and is essential for any involved surgery or use of the Medicine skill involving surgery. Any hospital should have multiples of everything that goes into a surgery kit. A surgery kit is expensive.

Trauma Kit. A specialized collection of medical supplies to deal with immediate trauma. Often intended for battlefield use, a trauma kit has supplies such as adrenalin shots, antitoxins, other remedies to ward against chemical agents, emergency medical supplies to immediately deal with large and open wounds, a

portable defibrillator, and a limited set of surgical tools. A trauma kit is expensive.

Medi-kit. A highly advanced set of equipment, this includes dermal regenerators, hypo-sprays, instant blood clotting agents, a simple medical scanner, universal anti-toxins and antidotes, stimulation shots, synthetic skin spray, spray-on casts and other forms of near-immediate healing. Usually a medi-kit has a small medical computer or reader capable of describing thousands of treatments, and diagnosing simple injuries. Using a medi-kit makes all First Aid attempts *Easy*, and doubles the number of hit points a successful First Aid roll heals. If it is available in your setting, a medi-kit is of average value.

Auto-doc. A fully automated medical treatment system complete with complex diagnostic abilities capable of recognizing and implementing treatment for almost any known medical condition. Some auto-docs may include robotic components capable of maneuvering patients, while others are the size of a room, extruding limbs and other manipulators to deal with the patient, who is usually stationary in the center. Usually, an auto-doc has 100% skill in Medicine and First Aid, and a successful roll yields double the number of hit points restored to the patient, with recovery times cut in half. An auto-doc is expensive or priceless, while treatment in one ranges from free to priceless.

Other Equipment

The following lists a variety of other random or miscellaneous pieces of gear that your character might wish to utilize. Many of these are in the form of 'kits', a term which is not meant to imply some form of packaged assortment of gear, but instead a typically assemblage of materials required for the activity. The section "Skills and Equipment" on page 242 contains additional details on equipment required for or assisting in the utilization of skills.

Chemistry Set. A wide-ranging selection of various chemicals and substances, in small portions, with a microscope and some means of mixing and storing compounds. Usually only an educational tool, it can be utilized with the Science (Chemistry) skill for basic tasks. Usually cheap and readily commercially available to students or anyone else interested.

Computers. A computer is essentially a type of thinking equipment, either simple (able to recall information when asked or perform simple commands) or complex (possessing artificial intelligence or an approximation of sentience). It is a tool that can be used with or to enable other skills such as Appraise, Art, Gaming, Knowledge, Science, Teach,

and especially Research. Typically, a skill that would be aided with a wide and searchable base of knowledge or near-instant communication with others in the field can benefit from using a computer. The programs contained and the relative ease of use allow a bonus of up to +15% if the computer is especially suitable for the skill being used, while an average computer setup offers no bonus, and an inferior or inefficient computer setup can penalize a skill by up to -15%, at the gamemaster's discretion. If you and the gamemaster wish for the computer to have more capability than a standard modern computer, you should create it as if it were a super powered gadget with INT using the rules presented earlier in this chapter.

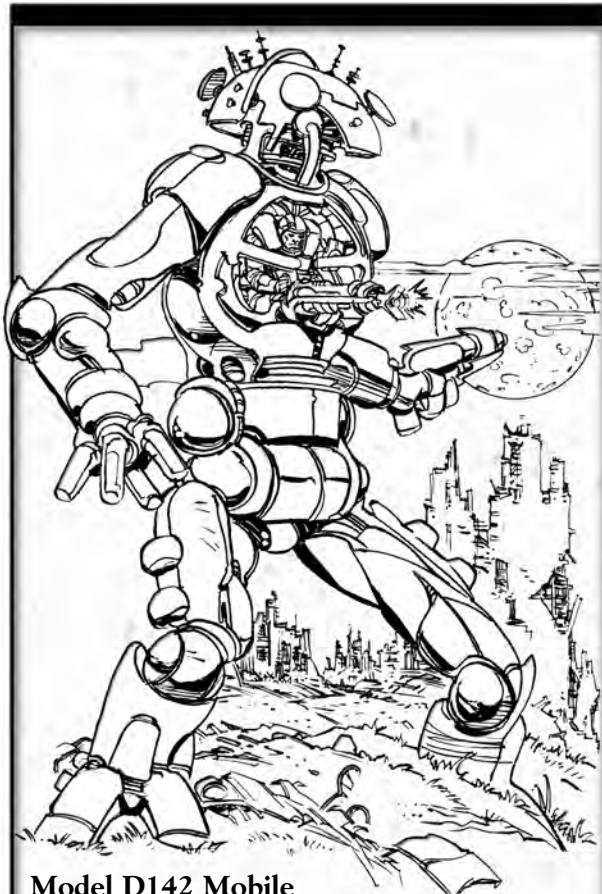
Criminology Kit. Used by forensics labs and detectives, a criminology kit contains fingerprint detection methods, a variety of measuring devices, rubber gloves, collection bags and bottles for storage of evidence, magnifying glasses, some appropriate chemicals and sprays, minor tools, black-light flashlights and normal flashlights, and other means of detecting traces of criminal activity. A criminology kit is expensive.

Disguise Kit. A collection of skin dyes and colors, makeup, and other forms of changing one's appearance, a disguise kit is usually assembled by the user to be of maximum use for his or her physical features and/or gender. A disguise kit may include wigs, false facial hair, hair dyes and other styling tools, scissors, skin cleansers, a mirror, false contact lenses or glasses, and may even include elements of wardrobe. More sophisticated kits can include prosthetics to alter facial features. A disguise kit can also be general-purpose, but such a kit is not usually as effective. A disguise kit can be assembled out of commercially-available items for cheap to average cost, or a high-quality one can be expensive.

Kits, Various: As described in "Skills and Equipment" on page 242, nearly any type of Craft skill can have a kit or tool set that aids in its use. The value and utility of these should be determined by the gamemaster based on the setting.

Lockpicks. This can range from a few single picks to a more sophisticated set with stethoscope, drills, and a variety of tools and implements for opening the most complex and challenging locks. These can range from cheap to expensive.

Suppressors and Silencers. A silencer is a long tube filled with baffles, attached to the barrel of a firearm, which muffles the sound of shots fired. This slows the projectile's velocity, halving its base range. A silencer is usually made to order for a specific type



Model D142 Mobile

Exoframe, aka Skyhammer **Value:** Priceless

The *Skyhammer* is a heavily-armored, humanoid-shaped mecha with an elongated torso that serves as the cockpit, housing the pilot. Its head is an array of sensory equipment, and its limbs are functional. Protruding from its "navel" is a large laser cannon that the pilot sits above.

STR 100 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 50

Hit Points: 50 **Major Wound:** 25 HP **Power Points:** 110
Damage Bonus: +8D6 **MOV:** 15

Armor: 30 point alloyed plating (see below)

Weapons: Laser Cannon (uses pilot's Projection skill %),
 75 meter range, 5D6 damage
 Hammer Fists (uses pilot's Brawling skill %), 1D3+8D6
 damage

Skills: Fine Manipulation 45%, Jump 65%, Listen 65%, Navigate 70%, Pilot (autopilot self) 41%, Repair (internal diagnostics and repair) 55%, Spot 65%, Track 30%, Fly 100%.

Powers: Adaptation 6 (cold, heat, high pressure, radiation, vacuum; cost = 15 points), Armor 30 (electric 30, kinetic 30, radiation 30; cost = 90 points), Energy Projection 5 (light; cost = 50 points), Extra Energy 11 (+110 power points; cost = 11 points), Flight 17 (cost = 17 points), Super Characteristics 200 (STR, CON, SIZ; cost = 200 points), Super Sense 5 (Hearing 5, Vision 5, Dark Vision 5, Infrared Vision 5, Sonar Detection 5; cost = 75 points), Super Skill (Fine Manipulation 2, Jump 2, Listen 2, Navigate 3, Pilot 2, Repair 2, Spot 2, Track 1, Fly 5; cost = 42 points). Total Power Budget Cost = 500 points

of firearm, and usually wears out after D100 + 10 shots have been fired through it. A silencer cannot be attached to a shotgun or heavy machine gun, but can be used for a light or medium Machine gun. In most settings they exist in, silencers are expensive and restricted.

Telescopic Scopes and Laser Sights. These attach to a firearm and allow your character to effectively double the base range. Laser sights quadruple the base range. When combined with "Aiming" (see page 212), either can be quite devastating. These are of average value, though precision scopes may be more expensive.

Mecha

A mecha (sometimes shortened to "mech") is essentially an overlarge suit of powered armor, piloted by one or more characters. These are popular in science fiction settings, particularly those inspired by Japanese *anime*. Usually humanoid in form, or some bipedal structure, mecha are popular in many settings, particularly space opera and some types of cyberpunk fiction. The mecha depicted to the left was built using the gadget guidelines provided earlier in this chapter. It is provided as an example should the use of mecha be a part of your setting.

General Qualities of Objects

There is a much larger class of item, outside the category of weapon, armor, shield, siege weapon, or vehicle. Anything in the game world that is not one of these can be viewed as an *object*. This is a loose category that covers telephones or telephone poles, houses or castles, ballpoint pens or the Eiffel Tower. Most of the time, the only reason to provide an attribute is because the object is being used against your character, your character is using it against another character, your character is trying to destroy it, or potentially it is collateral damage.

Damage to Inanimate Objects

Inanimate objects such as doors, chairs, and walls are likely to get in the way of a missed attack, or may need to be knocked down or blown apart for various reasons. The gamemaster should treat an inanimate object like a weapon or piece of armor (its armor points are also its hit points). If the damage exceeds the object's armor points, then the hit points are reduced by the amount of damage in excess of the

armor points, which in turn reduces the armor points. If an object is smaller than human-sized (such as a chair), it is totally destroyed if it is reduced to 0 hit points. If it is larger than human-sized (such as a wooden wall) and is reduced to 0 hit points; it has a human-sized hole in it.

The armor points of an object may equal its SIZ, but this is not necessarily the case. Some heavy-but-soft objects may withstand less damage than objects that are light but resilient. You should use the "Armor Protection" table below as a guideline, but an easy

Armor Points

Armor points represent the amount of damage subtracted from a successful attack. The higher the armor points of an object, the less likely it is to be damaged. The following table lists a variety of sample armor point values of physical materials in the world. The "Armor" section on page 258 covers personal armor, while armor point values for other objects and vehicles are described in their relevant sections. Using values provided in those sections or below, the gamemaster should be able to extrapolate additional armor point values or estimate them based on rough equivalencies. Following is a small chart describing the armor protection of various substances:

Armor Protection

Type of Substance	Armor Points
1 cm of glass	1
5 cm thick door	3
3 cm of hardwood	6
12 cm of concrete	9
3 cm of bulletproof glass	22
3 cm of steel plate	28
Large sand bag	20

Natural armor values such as these above are not lost and do not deteriorate through multiple attacks, unless through some environmental means or a specific attempt to reduce the armor point value of an object. *For example, your character bashes at a window made of bulletproof glass repeatedly with a sledgehammer, aiming at the same spot in an attempt to cause enough cracking to break through it.* The gamemaster should rule that under most circumstances, attacking the same spot repeatedly is a *Difficult* action. In this case, any additional damage scored above and beyond the armor point value reduces the armor point value accordingly.

A simple guideline for destroying objects is that an average object has hit points roughly equivalent to its SIZ, and once armor is bypassed and these hit points are lost, the object is nonfunctional and destroyed, or at least reduced to a state where it is of no apparent use.

Object SIZ Examples

Object	Full SIZ	Segment SIZ
Glass window	3	3
Door	4-8	4-8
Chair	4-9	4-9
Table	4-12	4-12
Manhole cover	5	5
Fire hydrant	5	5
Potted plant	2-5	2-5
Glass door	8	8
Desk	10-20	10-20
Lamp post	30	10
Home interior wall	25-35	8
Home exterior wall	25-45	12
Brick wall	30-50	20
Concrete wall	30-50	20
Concrete and steel wall	35-55	25
Small air vehicle	40	10
Automobile	50	12
Vault door	60	20
Medium land vehicle	60	12
Steel beam	65	30
Air vehicle, jet fighter	80	18
Medium tank	80	30
Heavy tank	90	35
Locomotive	100	20
Air vehicle, jet cargo	100	15
Air vehicle, bomber	105	15
Air vehicle, airliner	110	15

rule of thumb is to average the armor points provided below with the SIZ of the object if appropriate.

SIZ of Common Objects

Nearby is a list of the sizes of sample objects. "Full" represents the entire size of the object as used for lifting or determining SIZ, and "Segment" represents a human-sized portion of the object, for purposes of breaking through or destroying a section for passage through. If the damage done to an object does not exceed the object segment's SIZ, a hole may have been broken through the size and shape of the attack, as appropriate. As noted above, an average object is assumed to have hit points equal to its SIZ.



CHAPTER NINE

GAMEMASTERING



As the gamemaster, you play the most difficult role for anyone in the group. You guide the other players as they create their player characters; you must create (or adapt) the setting your game will take place in; you must create and roleplay the non-player characters your players will encounter and interact with; and you must describe the world to the players, all the while being a fair, impartial, and ultimate arbiter of these rules. While players are able to take turns and keep one another entertained, as the gamemaster, you're always on. You must respond to the actions of the players, and engage each of them in the adventure, ideally keeping them all engrossed and allowing each player to share the spotlight as much as he or she wants, while doing your best to be fair to the other players.

It is an often-difficult balancing act, mixing narration, roleplaying, bookkeeping, and rules refereeing. The closest equivalent to the role of the gamemaster is that of the theatrical director of a quasi-improvisational acting troupe. Many roleplayers never try to gamemaster, while others do it exclusively. It can be an immensely rewarding experience, which is usually why roleplaying gamers do it.

Following is an overview of what a gamemaster may need to do to put together a game. Not all of these steps are necessary; nor do they need to be as detailed as they are described here. You should determine what feels best for you and your players.

Assemble Your Players

How many players are you dealing with? You may enjoy gamemastering for a large group, or you may be more comfortable with a smaller group. A roleplaying group can be anywhere from a single player and a gamemaster, up to a dozen players. Each group has its own dynam-

ics and is unique—some groups have a single gamemaster who always runs the game, and others rotate through a bunch of gamemasters, allowing a variety of gamemaster styles and giving everyone a chance to play.

There are differences in the dynamics of large groups and small ones, and here are a few guidelines for gamemastering with groups of different sizes:

Average Groups: The average gaming group (if such a thing exists) usually includes three to seven players and a gamemaster. Smaller groups tend to be more closely knit, and often are easier to organize due to different schedules and demands from life outside the game. Generally, the larger the group, the more difficult it is to get everyone in one place at one time. For this reason, the gamemaster might want to make allowances for an occasionally shifting group of players—to accommodate players who can't make it one session, or bring a friend the next. Games set in densely-populated environments are usually best for this, as it relieves the gamemaster of the responsibility of dealing with missing players' characters. The urban environment makes it easy for one character to disappear one week, and reappear another. Games involving travel across a sparse rural environment make it a little more difficult to explain away missing player characters.

One-on-One Groups: Games with a single player and gamemaster are often incredibly character focused. As a result of having a gamemaster devoted to the player, one-on-one game sessions can be intense with a lot accomplished. Gone is the time spent discussing plans between player characters, and the time to resolve actions in combat is much shorter. Virtually any setting works for one-on-one gaming, though superhero, horror, or sword-and-sorcery settings are ideally suited. In most cases, it's a good idea for the gamemaster to allow enemies to be more merciful to avoid killing the player characters all the time, or to compensate by raising the player character's power level considerably. Some one-on-one games can benefit from allowing a lot of player leeway in describing the environment, allowing the player to run one or more allied non-player characters (henchmen, sidekicks, etc.), or even letting the player

call the shots about the types of adventures and where they'll be set, so long as the gamemaster agrees.

Larger Groups: Any group larger than eight players is bound to need an assistant gamemaster, or the gamemaster organizing and running everything must expend a Herculean effort to handle all the players. If you are unused to game mastering such a large group, there are a number of ways you can cut your workload. First off, you might simply ask one or more of the players to help with the dice rolling and record keeping during combats. If there's no secret about an enemy group of guards or soldiers, hand them over to one of the players (preferably someone not involved in the fight) and ask that player to roll for these NPCs. Secondly, let the players do their dice rolling ahead of their actual actions in combat—you should ideally be able to trust that they will not cheat about results, and they'll simply announce to you "I attack the second guard, and unless he parries, I do 8 points of damage." Then, you can roll for a parry or dodge, and let the player know if he was successful in his action, subtracting armor and hit points when appropriate.

Recruiting Players

If you are an eager gamemaster without an established game group, you will need to recruit one or more players. There are many ways to go about this, from posting notices in a local game store (many stores have a small bulletin board set aside for such purposes), seeking out players online (there is an enormous range of gaming message boards and news sites, each usually containing an area for gamemasters seeking players and vice versa), and game conventions (these are held in various places around the world, usually on a semi-regular basis, and most science fiction, fantasy, anime, and other conventions incorporate some gaming).

Additionally, you can make new gamers by recruiting people who have never gamed before (but are curious). These can be drawn from friends, family, coworkers, etc. You will likely be surprised at how many people were exposed to role-playing games at an earlier age. *Basic Roleplaying* is an excellent beginner's game, with the easy-to-understand percentile system. You might discover that people who would have never considered roleplaying games will enjoy it enough to return!

One-Shot or Campaign?

The next big decision you have to make is whether this will be a one-shot (a single adventure, either one session or spread over a few), or whether it will be a campaign. Each has benefits and weaknesses.

One-shots are often a lot of fun, and allow a rapid turnover of gamemasters, and rarely grow stale. Characters are created for the one-shot, and are generally not used again, so there is little need to worry about

Who Are "You"?

In this chapter and onward through the rest of these rules, 'you' refers to the gamemaster and not the player, as this information is for the gamemaster's use. Though this section does not contain any information to spoil a player's enjoyment of the game, the material in this chapter and beyond is intended primarily for the gamemaster.

experience or a longer-term goal. In many cases, player characters for a one-shot can be extremely focused and specific to the particular adventure, as they are intended to be appropriate for only a limited time. They do not need to appeal to the player for a long campaign, and the gamemaster may even go so far as to create pre-generated player characters for a one-shot, or guide some aspect of their creation. The section titled “Pre-generated Characters”, below, has more information on this subject. The amount of preparation work a gamemaster has to do for a one-shot is also limited—generally, it is enough to have a rudimentary understanding of the world and a level of knowledge about the setting to provide atmosphere. Games held at gaming conventions are usually one-shots, regardless of their length, though some tournaments may consist of a few rounds of one-shots, with elimination of players between rounds until a “winner” is chosen from the remaining players.

In most one-shots, the overall focus is story. Usually there is a simple plot hook, dramatic enough for an intense roleplaying experience with a significant amount of action or conflict, and a relatively simple set of goals or plot.

Schedule a Time and a Place

It seems elementary, but once you have the players, you should pick a place and a time and communicate the information clearly to the players.

Gaming sessions can happen anywhere, but are usually more enjoyable in environments free from distractions. Some basic requirements: enough seating for everyone, and an area for you to put your materials and roll dice. Everything else adding to the environment is a luxury. You might want to have your game around a table, with the gamemaster in a central location (or at the head of the table). You could also find a nice coffee shop and sit in easy chairs around a low coffee table, though the noise might be distracting.

Other options include space at a local library (if you're quiet—there may even be small rooms available), a school cafeteria, a bedroom, dining room, kitchen, outdoors on a balcony, a quiet restaurant (make sure to clear it with the waitstaff if you plan on being there for a prolonged time), or even on a road trip. Players with the extra space may even have a dedicated room for gaming. Soldiers who play roleplaying games often use their bunks as makeshift game spaces, and people have even used the food court of a shopping mall. There are unlimited places you can use for a gaming area, so it shouldn't be too difficult to find a venue.

The time is important, as role-playing sessions usually take a few hours or longer, depending on the gamemaster and players. You should pick a place you and your players aren't going to be abruptly kicked

out of, and you should budget time for getting started and finishing up (these always take a little longer than expected). You and your players should decide what time you're meeting, and whether that means that the game begins exactly at that time, or whether everyone should begin trickling in at around that time. Some game groups like to begin promptly at a certain time, and expect players to arrive early if they're going to sit around getting ready (eating, chatting, etc.). Others are more informal, and it may be an hour or even longer from the game's start time to when play actually begins. You should determine which style your group is (or at least, where they lean), and plan accordingly.

Pick a Setting

In game terms, the setting is the time and place the adventure(s) will transpire in. This can range across the entirety of history, and almost anyplace imaginable. **Chapter Ten: Settings** contains a lot of information about settings, providing an overview of historical and popular settings, along with notes about the common player professions, common technology, powers associated with the setting, a list of source material that may be of use, and some brief adventure types in that setting. Published settings compatible with *Basic Roleplaying* and other roleplaying games are also addressed in the next chapter. **Chapter Ten: Settings** also covers adapting existing settings from some other form (movie, television show, book, comic, etc.) into a game setting.

Generally, you as the gamemaster get to choose the setting based on what interests you. Excitement is as contagious as disinterest, and if you aren't enthused on the setting, the players will have a hard time following suit. However, you may open the issue up for discussion, allowing the players to help decide the game setting. Sometimes the gestalt of different tastes can create a new and original setting.

Have an Adventure Ready

Once the setting has been established, and a rough idea of the number of players, the gamemaster should create an adventure, or use a published adventure. Later in this chapter, the process of creating an original adventure is discussed, and guidelines are presented to assist the gamemaster in doing so. If a published adventure is going to be used, the gamemaster should be familiar with it and should make any notes that may be of interest. Some gamemasters like to mark up an adventure with highlighter pens, use sticky notes, bookmarks, and provide 'liner' notes to assist in the running of the adventure. With the advent of digital publishing, many adventures are available in electronic format and relevant sections can be printed as required or even marked up and edited by an enterprising gamemaster.

Designing Adventures

The structure borrows much from a traditional (stereotypical) Hollywood movie with its formulaic dramatic structure. Following is an example of such a structure, though it is not the only one.

Introduction: A short introduction of the main characters (the protagonists and the antagonists). The player characters are usually the protagonists (though they don't always have to be the good guys), and the antagonist will embody or serve some central conflict that is to be resolved later. The protagonists don't necessarily have to meet the antagonist face-to-face here, but will become aware of his or her existence. If this part of the adventure begins with action . . . that's all the more exciting and involving. The Introduction leads to the Complication (following).

Complication: One or more complications are introduced at this level, usually designed to force the protagonists into activity. They may discover that they cannot escape the attention of their enemies, or they could lose their homes, or will have loved ones threatened. In many cases, this is where the stakes are defined. Obviously from the Introduction, the protagonists know that there is a big conflict or problem in the world, but this is where it becomes the protagonist's problem. Now something must be done, and this leads to Rising Action (following).

Rising Action: Now the hammer falls, and the protagonists usually must come face-to-face with the antagonist and his or her allies. This may be a single confrontation, or a series of short engagements that builds to a dramatic face-off. Often, this results in the antagonist getting the upper hand, leading to Loss (following).

Loss: Sometimes the antagonist forces a stalemate, but he or she almost always has an advantage later. An ally of the protagonists may be killed or incapacitated. The protagonists may even find themselves captured or exiled in some fashion. The overall feeling here is that the protagonists are not going to win, and that the force that the antagonist embodies is going to triumph in the end. If the story ended here, most people would find it very depressing. Fortunately, it doesn't usually end at this point, and returns to another segment of Rising Action (following).

Rising Action: This second wave of rising action is where the protagonists are now reeling from loss, and it has become personal. They may have gained new allies, or discovered some weakness in the antagonist's forces. There is new hope, though it may be desperate and reckless. This leads to a second challenge, where the protagonists and the antagonist must go face-to-face once more, with all of the resources they are able to muster. This leads to a Climax (following).

Climax: The rising action from the previous segment has reached the greatest heights it will. All of the metaphorical chips are on the table and the stakes are usually survival. Usually, this revolves around a single instant when everyone's fates are dependent upon a single action, or a short series of them, where everything is decided. In a heroic story, the protagonists usually win because they are pure of heart, or have some quality that the antagonist lacks. In a darker story, the antagonist wins, but even if this happens, it is usually a signal that this adventure was the first, and there will be a sequel or sequels where the protagonists have another chance at survival. This leads to the Dénouement (following).

Dénouement: This is a French term meaning *resolution*, and it is where all of the fallout from the climax is dealt with. Rewards are granted, and a new status quo is established here (or is announced). In heroic stories, this is often the happy ending.

If this outline sounds familiar, it should. It's *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Jaws*, *The Terminator*, and about a hundred or even a thousand other movies you've seen or books you've read. This structure may be clichéd, but it still works well, and can provide a solid backbone or starting point for your own adventure construction. You are encouraged to come up with your own variations on this basic structure, so that all of your adventures don't resemble one another. Don't be afraid to mix things up, and defy expectations, as long as the story you're providing the players with is compelling. However, don't let this (or any) structure constrain you.

Having a group of players often means that they'll be splitting up, requiring their own story threads, and often they'll encounter various challenges and complications at different times than other players. This can be challenging, but not overwhelming. One trick to handle this is to keep track of all of the player characters on a sheet of scratch paper, with their activities delineated in terms of what parts of the adventure structure they're currently encountering, and due to encounter. This way, you have a quick and easy way to determine when your characters should be encountering difficulty, loss, setbacks, or triumph. This method isn't for everyone, however, and requires a bit of work.

Sandbox Worlds

Some players rebel against being manipulated in a potentially obvious fashion, and prefer a more reactive world, called the sandbox approach, where all of the story elements are there, waiting for the player characters to interact with them and seeing what happens. There are pros and cons to the sandbox approach. It requires a lot more setup work and proactive players, as you need to know what's in the sandbox before put-

ting the players in it, and less active players will inevitably get bored if they're not being given some clear indications of the best course of adventure. As the gamemaster, you must also be ready at improvising, because the players will inevitably do something you haven't prepared for. The main advantage to the sandbox is that the players are the ones creating the stories, and that sort of thrill is unique and personalized. It's the sort of thing that roleplaying games do better than any other form of existing entertainment. It's even possible with sandbox gaming to throw out the gamemaster entirely, and let players take on the roles of other non-player characters in the environment when required, with all of you working together to forge a unique game experience.

Designing Campaigns

Designing a campaign sounds daunting, but it isn't, because campaigns can be as simple or complex as you want. The major difference is that a one-shot or short adventure usually consists of one basic story arc spread across one or a few sessions, while a campaign can be a longer story or series of story arcs, spread across anywhere from a half-dozen sessions, to an ongoing campaign with no end planned. As the gamemaster, you can decide (with the player input, of course) whether you're running a campaign or a single adventure, and you can plan accordingly.

Campaign Structure: Structure can vary tremendously from one campaign to another. You might make yours almost like a television show, where a couple of dozen sessions are the equal of a season, and end on a cliffhanger to be resolved with the next big story arc. Or you might conceive of your campaign as a trilogy, with three big adventures united in theme, with a single shared goal that will be resolved in the third story arc. The benefit of a loose campaign structure is that you can occasionally have diversions or downtime sessions, where the player characters are able to relax before getting on with the big adventure. On the other hand, these long term campaigns can get bogged down if players don't feel that the plot's resolution is achievable, and a campaign that feels like it is not going anywhere will lose player interest rapidly.

Campaign Length: Campaigns can be either ongoing or finite (as planned—sometimes real life makes the decision for you). Some of the major differences between ongoing and finite campaigns are as follows:

Ongoing: This is a loose conglomeration of adventures, sequential in nature, where the players simply go from one activity to another. Each session or adventure is roughly independent, and the only major change is the player characters themselves as they grow in power and experience. Sometimes these are tied together with a

major theme, but sometimes they're not. If you're using published materials from a variety of sources, this might be the default campaign type. In some ways, this is almost an approximation of real life, where there is no clear structure and sometimes things just happen that change everything. Player characters can drift in and out of the group, get killed and replaced by others, and an overall description of the campaign would usually be a series of encounters and adventures without much overall shape.

Finite: With this, you've got an end-goal in mind, and the campaign will end at a certain point. This allows you to steer things towards this conclusion, and the adventures are usually designed to help bring about that conclusion. It is usually an epic ending, such as the resolution of some great wrong or the cessation of a great conflict, but it can be something less violent, like bringing about positive change on a major level. Of course, if the campaign was a success, you can always revisit it with a sequel featuring the same or new player characters.

Campaign Theme: Following are several suggestions for types of campaign themes, though this list is not exhaustive:

Quest-based: Usually, a quest-based campaign is the easiest to understand and works best with a fantasy setting. The player characters are given some mighty task that they feel compelled to complete, and spend the bulk of the campaign trying to achieve that quest. If it is completed, the campaign ends. If they are defeated, there are usually grave consequences. Frodo's journey to destroy the One Ring from *The Lord of the Rings* is the quintessential modern quest story.

Duty-Based: A duty-based campaign is one where the player characters are agents or are somehow required to go on a variety of assignments, usually to serve a common goal. The adventures may vary widely each time, but the overall framework essentially remains unchanged. The James Bond books and films are an example of this sort of campaign framework, with Bond taking assignments that send him across the globe.

Task-Based: This is a somewhat unusual campaign structure, where a certain finite number of tasks must be achieved for the story to be resolved. This may be the collection of a series of cursed magic items scattered across the world, hunting down a certain number of people who are marked in a certain way, attempting to atone for a certain number of bad deeds one has committed, cataloging a number of dimensions opened by secret portals, or some other limited number of tasks. Not every session and adventure has to concern this task, but accomplishing the task is the overall framework that drives most of the adventures.

Story-Based: This one is a more nebulous type of campaign, and is often more rich in narrative and roleplaying

opportunity. With a story-based campaign, the gamemaster has a big picture, with subplots, non-player characters, and some overall big picture he or she wants to narrate, using the player characters as active participants. This type of story is often very rewarding to take part in, but requires a lot of planning in advance, and runs the risk of making the players feel that they're merely pawns in some greater story that they do not have an overall effect upon. If you're running a story-based campaign, remember that the player characters should make a difference, and that ultimately it should be them, not a non-player character, who makes the final decision around which the resolution of the story can be accomplished.

Location-Based: This can be episodic or finite, and involves the group of player characters assigned to or essentially stuck in a particular location. Usually this is a base of operations, a home town, or someplace remote where their actions will be important. It can be their homes, such as a monastery or big city, or the player characters may be sent to a faraway place, like a military outpost on the edge of human-inhabited land, or even a distant surveillance post at the fringe of the galaxy. Television series are usually based on a single location, such as *Lost* or even *Cheers*. A variation of this is one where the base is mobile. Some examples of this are a sailing ship owned and operated by the player characters, massive generation starship, a floating castle drifting across the landscape, a magical plane-traveling tower, or even a merchant caravan. The classic Western series *Wagon Train* is a great example of a mobile location, as are most of the incarnations of *Star Trek*.

Foreshadowing: One of the great things about a long-term campaign is that you can bring up things in the beginning that have a payoff much later, such as seemingly incidental details, bits of dialogue, or non-player character actions that seem small but turn into very important plot elements. That little item a non-player character gave one of the player characters in the first act turns into a talisman of great importance later, or the old drunk's prophecy that the players barely listened to when they heard it turns out to hold the key to the destruction of the evil overlord they've been fighting for all these sessions. Be extremely careful about abusing this technique, as it can lead to paranoia—your players may suspect that every bar-maid or hotel maid possesses a valuable clue, or is somehow important to the overall scheme of things.

Recurring Non-player Characters: You should figure out who the important non-player characters are, whether helpful or villainous, and make sure that they've got some survivability built in. If your players kill the supposed villain in the first story arc of a long-term campaign, you might want to make the villain just a pawn of a greater villain. The earlier you can hint at this bigger villain, the better. Try not to make the new bad guy seem

like a carbon copy, or a one-up on the previous one, though. Perhaps he or she is much different in tone from the first one. *For example, Darth Vader from the Star Wars films is a great example. He's apparently powerful and physically daunting, but he bows in respect (and a bit of fear) to the Emperor, an apparently wizened old man. Darth Vader is the evil warrior henchman, while the Emperor is the evil wizard.*

Devise any Non-player Characters, Monsters, Maps, Alternate Rules, etc.

Once the adventure is created, it will need to be populated with non-player characters, monsters, maps, and other encounters, as well as any rules modifications or alternate rules that may be desired. This rulebook presents a number of stock non-player characters and creatures for off-the-shelf use, and they can be easily modified to suit the needs of a particular setting, adventure, or power level.

Create Other Materials

Maps and any visual aids are always useful. If miniatures are being used, a map is a near-essential piece of equipment. Even if they are not being utilized, a map can help explain an area to players in a way that a great deal of description does not. On the other hand, sometimes a map can be too limiting, especially in indoor areas. A gamemaster who prefers to improvise descriptions of a setting, or allows players some degree of leeway in adding



For a colorful bad-guy group, the above are members of Serial Killers Anonymous

background details, will sometimes find that a map can stifle and contradict this creativity. A map doesn't have to account for every tree and bush to be effective, and overland land maps may only have some major geographic landmarks displayed. This way, you can always improvise or add elements to the area as required . . . so if the players are sorely in need of a place to rest after a combat took an unanticipated turn for the worse, they might discover a small little inn alongside the road, unmarked on their maps. If the map presents every farm and road-stop, it will be much more difficult to make such a change. Similarly, sometimes a map can tell too much, whether it be a note of 'cursed mines' in the area you'd like the characters to be adventuring in, or the fact that the mysterious island indeed does look just like a skull when viewed from above. Too much detail is no ally to players: they'll see so many places they want to visit that they may stray from the intended path because of all of the options displayed on the map.

Maps can be easy to make (a quick drawing on a sheet of scratch paper), meticulous (done on graph paper with a key and legend), or even done electronically with a graphics program, or with one of the commercially available mapping programs. Programs allowing for layouts of houses and homes can prove invaluable in modern games, allowing the gamemaster to create isometric and top-down maps, to scale, complete with furniture and landscaping. A gamemaster with an artistic flair may choose to create maps hand-drawn in colored inks on parchment, artificially weathered through various means, or can find a quality map from some online source and alter it with a graphics program, or even print it onto fancy paper.

Ultimately, if you're using a map, find a level of detail that seems comfortable and still allows for some flexibility. Not everything needs to be set in stone from the first day, and you should be able to add detail when it is required.

Know the Rules

It should go without saying, but it should be emphasized that the rules to *Basic Roleplaying* are simple enough that there is almost no excuse not to know them well enough to run a game. The section "Teaching the Players the Rules" below contains enough information to start, and a single read-through of relevant rules sections before the game is always useful. One helpful tool is to provide a quick list of relevant sections of the rules, and note their page numbers on the notes. For example, if the adventure you are using specifies that the characters must climb a wall to enter some important area, taking note of the page numbers for the Climb skill and the spot rules for Falling would be wise. Sticky-notes are another useful tool for this kind of preparation, stuck to the pages of frequently used sections of the rules. You don't have to be a

rules expert, but you should know the rules well enough to be able to make any snap judgments that make sense.

There are a great number of optional rules here available for use in different settings and play styles. You should first choose which of these you're going to use and make this clear to the players from the onset, if any of them have access to this rule book. Choose these optional rules carefully, remembering that some of them may complicate others. **Chapter Ten: Settings** has more suggestions on which optional rules would be best for a particular campaign setting. When in doubt about the effect an optional rule may have on your game, either don't use it or try it out for a limited period of time, such as for one session. If you don't like the way it worked, the GM may have to adjudicate the session's impact on the characters.

Describe the Setting to the Players

Once you have picked a setting and have gathered the players, you should explain the setting to them. The settings described in **Chapter Ten: Settings** are easy places to start, and provide relatively concise descriptions of each setting. You can customize these descriptions with the new elements you've added to the setting (if any). Or you can come up with a completely new setting.

One of the best ways to think of this process is that you're "selling" the players on the setting, or the premise. Try to boil things down to a few quick sentences, answering the following questions:

What is the setting like? What will it remind players of? If you can think of a movie, book, or television show that your setting is similar to, you should name it. If you're creating something original, try to boil it down to a high-concept Hollywood pitch. *For example, you might tell your players: 'It's a world like Middle-Earth from The Lord of the Rings, but set in the trenches and battlefields of World War II. J. R. R. Tolkien said he wasn't writing an allegory, but this is one. British Hobbits, American Men, Scottish Dwarves, and others are going to be fighting Nazi Orcs to save the world.'*

What role or roles will the player characters fill? This is broader than just a list of professions; it's a role, telling the players where they stand in the universe. *For example, you might sell it to them like this: 'You'll all be members of the Allied nations who oppose the Darkness, and you'll be an elite group assembled for a special task.'*

What will the player characters be doing most of the time? This is a description about what sessions will contain, such as the types of adventures you'll be creating for the players. *For example, you might tell your players: 'You'll spend a lot of time fighting the forces of evil, eventually going deep behind enemy lines and into the country of the enemy, to deliver a top-secret magical item to strike at the heart of the evil.'*

OPTION

Optional Rule Checklist

Following is a list of all of the optional rules from this rulebook with a note about their effect in game play:

Characters & Character Creation

These optional rules concern characters and the character creation process.

- ☐ **Choosing Characteristic Values (page 16):** Players will be able to assign their characteristics where they want, resulting in PCs more suited to the players' tastes.
- ☐ **Higher Starting Characteristics (page 16):** This yields more robust and generally more competent characters.
- ☐ **Education/Knowledge Roll (pages 24, 27, 28):** Especially useful for games involving the modern world such as investigation or other sciences.
- ☐ **Cultural Modifiers (page 38):** Most applicable in fantasy or historical settings or any setting where cultural homogeneity is not prevalent. Also useful for science fiction settings.
- ☐ **Non-Human Characters (page 335):** Almost a requirement for high fantasy and science fiction settings.
- ☐ **Point-based Character Creation (page 19):** PCs are designed by the players down to the smallest degree, allowing for exactly the character desired.
- ☐ **Step Six (page 21):** Good for competent and well-rounded PCs who are focused in a particular direction. A good character/skill shortcut.
- ☐ **Increased Personal Skill Points (page 24):** Useful for settings where PCs are competent professionals with a wealth of personal experience.
- ☐ **Hit Points per Location (pages 20, 29):** Mostly useful for very combat-intensive settings. Usually used in tandem with "Armor by Hit Locations".
- ☐ **Total Hit Points (page 30):** Characters with these HP totals will be much more competent in combat and able to survive considerable damage. Using the option where only PCs and important non-player characters have the higher HP totals makes for a very powerful game, where PCs are able to take considerably more damage than cannon-fodder style non-player characters.
- ☐ **Fatigue Points (pages 20, 32):** Like "Hit Points per Location", best used with extremely gritty combat-focused games.
- ☐ **Sanity (pages 21, 32, 318):** Useful for any game involving horror elements, whether fantasy or modern occult thriller.

- ☐ **Distinctive Features (pages 34-35):** Primarily a role-playing element with no numerical game effects, so useful in any setting.
- ☐ **Freeform Professions (page 41):** A good way for looser settings or PCs who can't be pigeonholed into a normal profession.
- ☐ **Aging and Inaction (page 183):** These rules are primarily of use for long-term campaigns where PCs actually age significantly.

Skills

These optional rules concern skills and their use.

- ☐ **Skill Category Bonuses (pages 20, 31, 48):** Any game where skills are important will benefit from having skill bonuses used. Not compatible with "Simpler Skill Bonuses" (below).
- ☐ **Simpler Skill Bonuses (page 31):** A simpler halfway measure to regular skill bonuses. Not compatible with "Skill Category Bonuses" (above).
- ☐ **Complimentary Skills (page 50):** Useful in any game or setting.
- ☐ **Acting Without Skill (page 49):** Allowing the minor chance of success in any skill, regardless of training, will tend to create unusual outcomes and may not be suitable for all settings.
- ☐ **Literacy (page 67):** Most useful in settings where reading and writing is not assumed to be a common skill.
- ☐ **Research Specialties (page 74):** This level of detail is unnecessary in any but investigative or academic-themed settings, or those involving those aspects of play.
- ☐ **Skill Ratings Over 100% (page 175):** Almost essential for high-powered settings and vastly competent PCs and non-player characters.

Powers

This optional rule concerns powers and their use.

- ☐ **Projection (page 145):** Necessary in any setting involving super powers.

System

These optional rules concern the system in general.

- ☐ **Opposed Skill Roll Systems (page 174):** Using one of these over another is largely a matter of personal preference.
- ☐ **Encumbrance (page 180):** Perhaps one of the least used systems in roleplaying games; this is most useful for grittier, combat-oriented games.

Combat

These optional rules concern combat.

- ☐ **Eliminating or Reversing Statement of Intent (page 188):** To speed up combat somewhat, eliminate statements of intent. To slow them down a bit more but better model the effects of higher perceptual speed from high DEX characteristics, reverse them.
- ☐ **Initiative Rolls (page 188):** This allows for a wider range of results and might be best for combat-oriented games where the situation can vary dramatically round to round.
- ☐ **Power Use in the Action Phase (page 189):** This is good for any game where characters should be on a somewhat even foot against villains, or vice versa.
- ☐ **Attacks and Parries over 100% (page 198):** Most suitable for high-powered fantasy and superheroics, or some other genre with similar extraordinary skill levels.
- ☐ **Dodging Missile Weapons (page 198):** This is suitable for more cinematic style games, or ones where combat is exaggerated and unrealistic.
- ☐ **Dying Blows (page 199):** This is of use in a campaign where dramatic license is taken, and perhaps as a nice end to a beloved player character.
- ☐ **Splitting Attack and Parry Skills (page 199):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Strike Ranks (page 199):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Miniatures and Maps (page 202):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Armor By Hit Locations (page 262):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-based games.
- ☐ **Damage and Hit Locations (pages 204-205):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.

Miscellaneous

These optional rules concern any other aspect of the game.

- ☐ **Allegiance (page 315):** Almost a necessity in any game positing supernatural powers, especially those that intervene in human activity.
- ☐ **Personality Traits (page 294):** Useful primarily as a gamemaster tool, and used as a matter of preference only.

Once you know the answers to these three questions, you'll be able to determine rapidly if your idea needs more work to appeal to the players, or if they're instantly excited about play. Often, this three point summary of the campaign helps you decide how to create your adventures, and will help players get a handle on the sorts of characters they should create, and the kinds of adventures they'll be having.

Teach the Players the Rules

Though this book seems like it has a lot of information and rules, the most important thing to remember is that players often don't need to know each and every rule in order to have a good time. *Basic Roleplaying* has only a few principles to keep in mind, and once your players know these, you should be fine. In a nutshell, these rules can be summarized as:

- ❖ Characteristics are usually 3-18 (the higher the better). Make a characteristic roll when there is no opposition and a resistance roll when there is an opposed force that can be rated.
- ❖ The resistance table is based on equal forces having a 50/50 chance against one another. The more unequal the forces are, the greater the difference. Both scores' chances add up to 100%.
- ❖ Skills have percentile ratings (the higher the better), and you want to roll low to succeed. A roll of 99 and/or 00 is a fumble. A roll over your skill is a failure. A roll equal to or under your skill rating is a success. A roll of 1/5 your skill is a special success. A roll of 1/20 your skill is a critical success.
- ❖ Usually, roll your full skill rating on percentile dice. If the task can be accomplished automatically, don't roll. If it's very *Easy*, double your skill rating. If it's normal, do not modify it. If it's *Difficult*, cut your skill in half.
- ❖ Occasionally, skill ratings will be modified by a value (usually within the range of $\pm 20\%$) if some contributing factor makes things more difficult, or if something makes the skill attempt easier.
- ❖ When you run out of hit points, you die.
- ❖ Most powers use power points for fuel. When these run out, you fall unconscious.

Everything else can be determined during the course of play, or explained as required. Having players who understand the rules fully is always a benefit, but if knowledge of the rules is getting in the way of actually playing, better to play, figure things out or look them up when needed, and don't be afraid to make your own rulings if necessary.

Walk the Players Through Character Creation

The section on character creation in **Chapter Two: Characters** provides a ten step guide for character cre-

ation. You should assemble your players and walk them through the process of creating a character, step by step, answering questions that might arise. One useful thing to do at the beginning of the process is to ask the players to decide what each is going to play, and discussing it as a group to eliminate any potential redundancies or weaknesses in the group. In most cases, it's good to have a well-rounded group of character types, to better handle a wide range of situations and to give each player a specialty or area of focus that they're best at.

Examine All Player Characters

When all of the player characters are created, you should ask to see them, to better understand the player character types that will be involved in the adventure. You may insist on an informal audit, making sure that all of the points for skills and powers add up correctly and that the player didn't cheat or make any mistakes in their character. Or you may be less formal. You should decide up front which sort of a gamemaster you'll be, and let the players know ahead of time.

The most important part of this process is to take some notes on the important aspects of each player character, such as the character's name, profession, any exceptionally high characteristics, personal information, some skills that might be important to the adventure (usually Listen, Sense, and Spot), and any relevant skills that you might want to roll instead of the player. You may also want to make a few notes about skills the player has invested a lot in, such as any skills over 70%. This can give you a good idea about what sorts of things the player would like his or her player character to excel in, and you might choose to tailor the adventure to suit the skill set. *For example, if one of the player characters has a lot of points in his or her Communication and language skills, you may want to give them a chance to use those skills during the course of the adventure. It shouldn't be too difficult to come up with some scene that requires negotiation in one or more languages, depending on the setting.*

This is a good time for troubleshooting, such as recognizing what skills are lacking, or if a player hasn't spent his or her skill points effectively. If the adventure will call for a lot of political negotiation, and the player has invested a lot of points into skills like Pilot and Heavy Machine, you might let him or her know that the player character may not feel very useful during much of the intended adventure. Similarly, you should pay attention to when a player is spending too many skill points "spiking" skills that seem uncharacteristic, based on the character's profession and what he or she knows about the adventure. Sometimes this is a case of the player exploiting "out of character" information about the adventure, and you should be aware if it is happening. How you choose to deal with it depends on your players and your own personality and style, though it's often an unfair

advantage you should deal with. Remember, always, that it's just a game, and try to keep people focused on the fun.

Character Goals

After the players have finished character creation, an optional step that is especially useful in a campaign is to ask them what goals they have for their player characters. This might be a little early, as they haven't begun play yet, but if the players know what sort of an adventure and setting they're in for, you could ask them for some things they might enjoy doing. For an adventure or campaign you're devising, this can provide an invaluable resource of content that is customized to the player characters and to the players' tastes. This can range from a single heroic moment, a life goal, a series of actions, or a general field of experience. It may even be that a player thinks it would be cool for their character to die in a particular heroic fashion, way down the line.

For example, if you're running a Wild West game, one of the players might surprise you by telling you that he wants his character to run for sheriff in a small town. That sounds interesting, and since the planned setting was to have the player characters all working out of a regular town on the frontier, it would be a useful plot element and a rich source of plot hooks.

Sometimes, the players will help you write adventures, just with the ideas they provide about neat stuff they'd like to do.

Integrate the Characters Into the Story

Now that you know who the player characters are, and what goals they may have, you should look at the adventure (or the campaign) and figure out how to involve them. It's usually important to provide a reason why player characters care enough to embark on the adventure at hand. Why do they feel that they must do this thing, and why are they present in the initial scene? This is important, because it provides motivation for them to stick around and see the adventure through to its conclusion. If the player characters don't feel compelled to be in the initial scene, it will be that much more difficult to keep their interest throughout the adventure.

One of the most overused examples of a game beginning is "You're hired by a stranger to go and do [dangerous task]." Usually this one begins in a medieval tavern. A lot of players reject it, while others aren't bothered by the cliché. If your game isn't meant to be particularly deep, and your players aren't that discriminating, then it should work fine. The second most clichéd beginning is the one that goes: "Your distant [relative/friend/acquaintance] contacts you and asks you to go and do [dangerous task]." You may use a variation of one of these, but you should probably try to disguise it a little bit, or mix it up somewhat. Another popular beginning is to have the player characters all thrown together in the same mis-

fortune, such as "You all wake up in chains." Usually this scene is followed by a non-player character showing up to set them free or tell them what they need to do next. Sometimes, this can be done in a less heavy-handed manner, such as having all of the player characters in a bank when a man walks in with a bomb and a gun. What will they do next?

One method that allows for a lot of player freedom is to present the opening scene and ask the players why their player characters are there and what motives they may have for being there. *For example, you may begin by telling the players that their player characters are all at the funeral service of a disgraced policeman who recently took his own life. You tell the players that aside from the grieving widow and the minister, they are the only ones there. At this point, you ask each of them "Why have you come to Detective Rizzo's funeral?"* Once you've established a premise, you may let each of the players come up with reasons they're at the initial scene, including subplots or past relationships they may have with the principal non-player characters. This method requires some improvisation on the part of the gamemaster, but often is more rewarding to the player characters, as their motives are their own, and haven't been handed to them.

You should be prepared to help out any players who can't come up with good reasons, and you may have to veto any outlandish reasons or those that contradict the background and premise for the adventure. One of the best methods for dealing with this is to ask for a compromise, but give them something in return, such as an interesting piece of information that they'd normally have to discover through a non-player character. *For example, one of the players from the above example tells you that he's a hit man who killed Detective Rizzo, and wants to pay his last respects. It's a great hook, but is a bit too much. Since your adventure is about the mystery surrounding Rizzo's death, that would throw the whole thing askew. You ask the player "How about if instead, you were going to Rizzo's place to kill him for a piece of information he had, but when you got there, you found him face-down in a pool of blood, with a gun in his hand? As you looked at his corpse, you saw someone looking through the window at you. You jumped to the window, but he or she got away down the fire exit. The police cars were coming, and you split rather than be caught."* That way, you can shift some of the information-finding to one of the players, rather than a non-player character, and you can give the player some personal stake in the story.

This sort of integration can continue well into the course of the adventure, or even into the campaign. If possible, make contacts and non-player characters known to the player characters, and maybe even suggest some past history with them, so that they react more interestingly than to total strangers. This process makes

the game setting seem more alive, and the player characters a more important and integrated part of it, rather than just visitors with no personal history or connections. On the other hand, if it's a "stranger in a strange land" sort of game, it would be strange for the player characters to know too much about the area or the people, so you should use this tool based on how appropriate it is to the setting.

It is also useful to try to spread the contacts around the group of player characters, and make sure each of them has some integration with the adventure. If it's a longer campaign, this doesn't have to be a part of the first adventure, but players often get frustrated if one of them dominates all of the time—knowing all of the non-player characters and having access to all of the various aspects of investigation. It's good to spread the riches around.

Connecting the Characters to Each Other

One of the most challenging aspects of game mastering for a group of player characters is finding reasons to keep them together and to get them to work with one another in a way that makes sense for the setting. Some settings and campaign ideas lend themselves immediately to groups, such as having all of the player characters already part of the same team, group, or organization. Some or all of the player characters can be close or distant relatives, old friends, neighbors, co-workers, or other affiliations. Depending on what is expected of them in the campaign, the player characters can have been assembled by a mysterious benefactor, or hired for a specific purpose. These last two lend themselves well to some missions, though this often stretches incredulity and assumes that the player characters are for hire or willing to work with one another.

Other means of tying the player characters together involve them being drawn together through some mystic bond or manipulation of destiny. Perhaps they've even known each other in previous lives. They can be questing knights serving the same king, or peasants forced from their homes and dwelling in the forests. They can be the children of a famous band of heroes now emerging into their own, the former sidekicks of a famous hero who has now vanished or retired, or they could be simple passengers caught on the same conveyance (ship, airplane, train, elevator, etc.) when things go wrong. Having the player characters fill the roles of a group of disparate people trapped together in some situation they must band to overcome is a common theme in adventure stories. In an

academic game the player characters can all be classmates. In a setting strong in mythology, all of the player characters can be members of the same religious group or cult, favored by their god, or they may even be the cohorts and allies of a demigod. They could each have an identical unexplained tattoo or birthmark, or perhaps they have met one another in dreams. The player characters can even be a bunch of teenagers who drive around the countryside in a van, solving mysteries.

There are many ways that the connections between player characters can be developed, and sometimes the players themselves will be happy to help with this. At the beginning of the session, the players may be required to identify one other player that they have some connection to (a past, a friendship, etc.) and a non-player character that they know through that other player character. These connections do not have to be mutual, and it is often preferable if they aren't. When this is done, each player character has a connection to one or more other player characters, and a non-player character or more that he or she knows. This helps to connect the play-

er characters to one another, and to the world. You should ultimately approve or disallow any connections or non-player characters that might be in conflict with the plans of the campaign or scenario, though it is more advisable to guide any player choices toward something that works, rather than vetoing them outright.

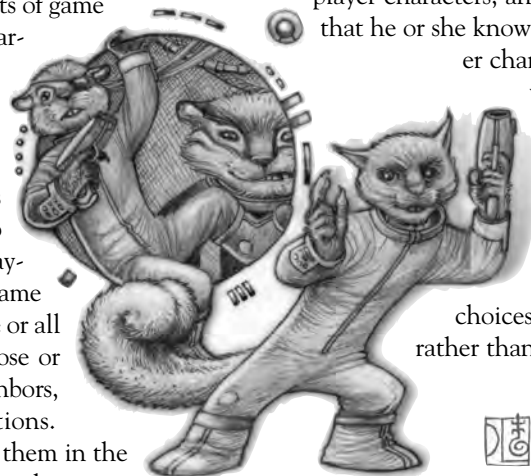
On the other hand, if this method isn't required for the campaign, then skip it. Sometimes it's best to let the player characters figure out why they need to stick together, and come up with reasons

they shouldn't be left behind or otherwise shunned. In these cases, you should work with the players and make sure that they're not excluding anyone when it can be avoided.

Set the Initial Scene

The initial scene is often crucial for the adventure, because it will set the tone for the rest of the adventure, and will hopefully get the players (and their characters) interested in what is happening and feeling like they want to continue. The initial scene needs to consist of the following elements:

Location: A location that is somehow symbolic of the challenges the adventure will present, or a natural beginning spot. The more interesting or dramatically appropriate the initial location is, the better. It sets the tone for the rest of the campaign.



Some gaming groups prefer a serious roleplaying experience, while others keep play light-hearted (especially for younger gamers).

Introductions: You should describe any non-player characters present, but more importantly, each player should describe his or her character as the player character would be seen by the others present. You might let the player characters do full introductions, giving their names, professions, important skills, etc., or you might keep those ‘secret’ for now, and let them up in actual roleplaying.

Motive: Why are the player characters there? As noted in the above section, you should either provide a reason for the player characters to be involved, or let them come up with their own reasons.

‘The Carrot’: As in ‘The carrot or the stick’, a carrot is some clue or instigating piece of information that will lead the player characters out of the initial scene and into their own investigation or exploration. If you don’t use a carrot, you should use a stick (see below).

‘The Stick’: This is the threat to the player characters, their friends and families, or the world in general. Usually this means an attack or some threat of violence at the beginning, from a relatively weak version of the villain (or some of his henchmen). The principal bad guy can be introduced here, but often it is his second-in-command the player characters will encounter in the initial scene.

Drama: Usually, the initial scene needs to really kick off the adventure with some sense of the stakes. A strong visual, such as a player character beginning play standing over the body of their murdered mentor, is always helpful. Unless there’s a reason to begin in a mundane mode, you should amp up the drama in the initial scene to really sell it to the players that they’re here to have an adventure!

Once these elements have been introduced, you should let the scene play out to its natural conclusion. If this is the first time these players have played *Basic Roleplaying*, you should take things slowly and introduce rules systems gradually. Combat and actions may take longer to resolve than they will later, as people may spend a bit of time figuring out how the system works as well as how their characters will behave.

From here, you’re ready to move onto the following scene or scenes. Depending on how much information you’ve provided and the nature of the adventure and setting, this may be a guided progression to a single location, or you may favor a more free-form approach allowing the players to find their own way around the adventure, taking the encounters in the order that they choose. Some styles of gamemastering favor the first sort of plot structure. At its worst, this is called ‘rail-roading’, where players feel that they’re stuck on a track and cannot deviate from it. Other gamemaster styles allow for more freedom, such as the “sandbox” approach mentioned above.

Keep Things Moving

Regardless of how you’re running the game, it’s important to keep things moving. The adventure doesn’t have to be like an amusement park ride, but given the large number of things that happen in a roleplaying game, there is a strong potential for getting bogged down in overlong discussions or rules debates. These can lead to bored players, which leads to unenthusiastic players. It’s contagious: if one or more players have “tuned out” of the adventure, you should keep an eye on it and do what you can do to keep things interesting for everyone.

One famous detective story writer said something to the effect that whenever his stories bogged down, he sent a guy through the door with a gun in his hand. It immediately enlivened the story, and often created new questions to engage the reader, such as “*Who sent that guy? What did he want? What would have happened if the hero lost?*” Obviously it’s not appropriate for every setting, and it shouldn’t be a knee-jerk reaction to any time things bog down, but sometimes having something unexpected happen, or someone unwanted show up, can break a slow portion of a game and make the players get more active. However, you shouldn’t do this so often that the players feel like they’re being swept along, as if a giant broom is continually shoving them around.

House Rules

If there’s a rules argument, don’t be afraid to say something to the effect of “*For now, let’s do it this way. Later, if we learn differently, let’s use the new rule.*” You’re the gamemaster, and one of your duties is that of a referee. You are expected to make calls when there’s a dispute. Do so fairly, and try to be consistent, from instance to instance, and from player to player.

There are going to be many situations that aren’t covered in these rules, even in a rulebook of this size, so from time to time you may need to make up a rule. Hopefully the rules system has provided plenty of examples of how a new rule might be developed, but if it isn’t obvious don’t be afraid to make up a new rule. If it works, write it down. This becomes a “house rule” like those used in card and board games, where the rule essentially applies only in the house (or with the group) it originates. You may of course tell other players and gamemasters about your house rules, but you shouldn’t expect any of them to feel a need to use these house rules. Often times, you can find house rules on online forums and discussion groups relating to the game system in question. *Basic Roleplaying* has been around for a long time, in one form or another, and there are plenty of places online where you can find all types of house rules.

Handle Non-player Characters

As noted earlier, one of the roles the gamemaster must fill is “the rest of the world”—meaning every non-player character and creature the player characters may encounter. This is perhaps the most challenging task, presenting a variety of characters with different personalities and goals, each of whom will interact with the player characters in a slightly different manner. You should play each significant non-player character as if he or she had an agenda and potential goals. If it doesn’t make sense for the non-player character to fight to the death, then maybe he or she should surrender or flee. However, you should distinguish between the important and unimportant non-player characters. Usually, the act of giving one of them an actual name will be all you need to make the distinction. A fully-fleshed non-player character is important, while Guard #3 may not be worth this attention.

Some of the ways you can make your gamemasters more distinctive is to give each of them some quirk or individual aspect that makes them stand out, like a stutter, a peculiar accent, a distinctive physical characteristic, or a vocal tic or catchphrase. When you’re thinking of your non-player characters, it helps to tell the players about any of these mannerisms or visual elements. The more you can do of this, the more your players will think of the non-player characters as unique individuals, and that will make your job that much easier. A couple of quick methods exist for this: basing a non-player character off someone you know, or off some actor (or a role played by that actor). If it’s a real person, try to avoid someone too obvious that the players will know. If the non-player character is based off an actor, you can describe them physically, and you might even tell the players “*If this were a movie, this guy would be played by Ben Kingsley.*” Be careful, though, as associating a non-player character with a particular actor can lead to all sorts of potentially unwanted associations, such as inappropriate movie references or making a non-player character more like an impression than an actual character. Depending on tastes, you should also cast non-player characters wisely—someone too obscure and you’re going to invite a lot of “*What’s she been in?*” head-scratching, and too famous may cause players to joke about the game’s budget or other distractions from play.

Remember that it is the player characters, not the non-player characters, who are the leads in the story. Gauge the number and presence of non-player characters accordingly. You should probably try to avoid having a lot of random characters on hand, or having extended periods where the players are sitting around listening to non-player characters explain things (or, even worse, having two non-player characters discussing things to one another, without player character

involvement). Non-player character followers who are more competent and steal the spotlight from the player characters are rarely a good idea, unless the point is for them to lull the player characters into a false sense of security, and then get out of the way quickly and thrust the player characters into adventure. Whenever you can give an active role to a player character in place of a non-player character, do so. You can provide any background information on a note card or feed it to the player when they make successful Knowledge rolls (or some equivalent).

In addition to the acting challenge of evoking all of these different non-player characters, you need to be dealing with them on a mechanical level. You roll dice for them, you determine what actions they’re going to take, and you mark down how injured they are during the course of a combat. As noted before, you should have some ideas of key attributes for your important non-player characters, if they’re essential, and you can use some of the characters from **Chapter Eleven: Creatures** if you need to. Usually, in a nonviolent encounter, you really only need a few characteristics (INT, APP, POW) and some relevant Communication-based skill ratings for a non-player character. When combat is involved, you need almost the opposite set of attributes, with characteristics like (DEX, CON, STR), other statistics like hit points, power points, armor value, any Combat-oriented skills, and any applicable weapons and/or powers (and their levels). An extremely sneaky trick for a gamemaster to do is to make copies of the player character sheets, and use these as the basis for non-player characters, making changes where necessary to disguise their origin. Often this is a great source of well-designed characters, and you can hardly be accused of cheating on your non-player characters if they’re based on the player characters.

One other unique circumstance often occurs in sessions where a player misses a session and the gamemaster must run their player character as if he or she were a non-player character. You might let another player handle the player character, or if you think it would be better, you should handle the player character as if he or she were a non-player character, making all of the rolls for him or her. You might want to rule that if the player isn’t present, any successful rolls their character makes do not yield experience points, if that isn’t too harsh a penalty. It’s a fair compromise—this way, you’re not outwardly penalizing the absent player, but they are not gaining the same advantage as if they had attended the session. It’s a question of personal style. You might find it easier to come up with an in-game reason why a player character has suddenly disappeared. This can range from them simply being called away on an unrelated matter, to them being captured or kidnapped by an enemy, and their rescue will be the source of a future session.

Take a Break if You Need It

You may find that the players are overwhelming you with requests, or things have become somewhat exhausting. It's always a good idea to take a quick break (anywhere from five to 20 minutes) every so often during a long play session. For the gamemaster, this may give you a chance to regroup and plan for the next period of time. If the players have surprised you by going beyond what you were expecting, and you find yourself needing a few minutes of downtime to get your own notes in order and decide what you want to happen, call a break.

Sometimes it's just good to get up and stretch. Tabletop gaming is fairly sedentary, inasmuch as it involves sitting at a table or some other more comfortable seating arrangement, talking to one another. You may do a lot of gesturing, but this isn't very much activity overall. Every hour or two, you may want to just call a quick break for people to stand up, stretch, move around, refill their beverages or snacks, and even go to the restroom. Sometimes if things bog down too much, a quick breather is just the trick to break a slow point and have players return to the table refreshed.

Some gamemasters like to end before a break on a cliff-hanger, while others call breaks before potentially longer periods of the adventure, like a massive battle. You can assume that the game world just pauses, with no time whatsoever passing between the beginning and end of the break, or you can use the break as a good way to indicate a break in the game time. *For example, you may tell the players "You arrive in town just before dark. It's quiet, but you find an inn with some open rooms, and the guide warns you to stay out of trouble before he heads off to bed. Let's take a break now, and when we get back, you can tell me what trouble you get into before the morning."* Breaks can also provide players a chance to do some of their own bookkeeping, and make plans of their own, and you should probably allow players to call breaks if they feel that one is required.

Set the Tone and Mood

There are a few tricks you can use to establish a tone and mood for your game, but all of these will vary from setting to setting. Following are some suggestions for some of the more obvious ways to do this with little difficulty.

Music: You may want to have some music playing in the background, just like a television show or movie might do with a soundtrack. This should probably be chosen carefully, based on the setting and the player group. Sometimes, pop or current music can be distracting, and the vocals can call attention away from dialogue or actual game talk. You might want to find a favorite bit of ambient music, and run it indefinitely in the background, or you may want to use specific tunes for scenes of some

importance. Based on the setting, you might find that popular music is exactly what the doctor ordered, such as using techno for a cyberpunk setting, Woodstock-era music for a game set in the Summer of Love, mournful jazz for a film noir style mystery, and so on. You may even have a campaign theme, played at the beginning of the session, such as a television show's introduction theme. Digital storage of music has made it possible to put together highly customizable soundtracks for an adventure, though ultimately, the two most important things to remember when doing this are whether the time would be better spent on the adventure, and how obtrusive it is. Switching back and forth between CDs or even shuffling around on a digital recording device at a crucial scene can possibly be more distracting than the "fight theme" blaring now and again at random, even in the middle of a conversation.

Props: Sometimes, having little props on hand might help evoke the setting, such as strange dusty old books in stacks next to the gamemaster for a Lovecraft-inspired game involving horror at a remote and antiquated university. For a martial arts game set in modern China, some Chinese coins scattered across the table might do the trick. Try stacking some old disk drives and circuit boards around your table to provide some flavor to a cyberpunk game, or light the table only through laptops and computer monitors.

The Game Environment: This is perhaps the most optional of all of the methods of evoking a mood. There are a lot of neat ways you can alter the environment in subtle ways to evoke a setting. If you're really dedicated, you can put posters on the wall that are related to the setting, or you can do simple stuff like put colored lights in the light sources to evoke strange environments. A visit to a party supply store will give you plenty of inspiration for cheap and easy means of decorating the game environment. There are a great many things you can do, but you shouldn't go so far that it's distracting to the actual play, and you should be considerate of the players comfort and convenience. A game set in ancient Japan, where people traditionally kneeled or squatted rather than use chairs, might be aesthetically better played on a tatami mat and with no table or chairs, but it's likely to be uncomfortable after a short while. Obviously, do what's comfortable for you and your players, and no more than that.

Take Notes on What Happens

One thing you might want to do, or even ask a player to help with, is taking notes during an adventure session. It helps to remember who the players talked to, what they learned, who they killed, and what the general state of affairs was when you left off, if you're going to continue. This can be done during the adventure, as

things happen, or can be done afterwards by reviewing the game notes. If you're particularly strict, you might ask that the players keep their own notes, and make them use Idea rolls to remember what happened last session, or you could provide a brief "Previously..." overview. Some well-organized groups or campaigns even send adventure write-ups to the players between sessions. To make this easier, you may even keep a laptop at the table, but this is advised with caution—sometimes the clatter of keys and the requests for clarification are more distracting than not knowing what happened last week.

Wrap Things Up

At the end of the session, you should try to bring things to some sort of dramatic conclusion. If there's been a big fight at the end of the session, you might want to stop there, or if the story arc has wrapped up, you could conclude with a scene of reward or some other sort of epilogue. Players should get a feeling that things are either going to continue or that they're finished, and if there is a continuation, some clues as to what might come next are always useful. If there's any homework, now is the time to assign it. Homework may include doing experience checks, planning what happens between sessions, or doing some other form of wrap-up. If a big story ended, you might want to provide a short coda to the adventure, letting players know how the story flowed from the final scene.

One other thing you might do is to ask the players informally how they felt about the session. What sort of things they liked, disliked, or anything they weren't expecting. This doesn't have to become a critique, but can instead serve as a good informal barometer of what went right. If you're the sort of gamemaster who doesn't take criticism well, or you've got players who aren't comfortable talking about things they didn't like, don't bother with this wrap-up. If the adventure is over, but the campaign is continuing, you might also ask the players what they'd like to see happen in the next session or adventure. Sometimes player feedback can push you in interesting directions, and provide unexpectedly rich content. As noted, this is entirely optional, and should be pretty casual. You could even do this via email or one-on-one later, in the parking lot after the game (or wherever is appropriate). Oftentimes, the post-game chatter is almost as much fun as the game itself—which is one reason it tends to run so long!

Some gamemasters like to collect the character sheets at the end of a game session. One of the reasons, sadly, is trust—to make sure that nothing changes between one session to the next. A better reason is convenience. Often, players will lose character sheets, or not be present for the particular session, and usually it's good for the gamemaster to at least have a copy of the

character sheet on hand to use the player character as a non-player character if need be.

To be Continued...?

One big question that is often asked at the end of a successful game is whether or not it'll be followed up. Sometimes a one-shot can turn into a campaign, and sometimes a campaign doesn't really go as well as you'd think, and turns into a one shot. You might ask your players at the end of an adventure if they'd like to continue, if it hasn't been established already. If you already know the answer, don't bother, but it's always good to know how interested your players are in continuing the game you're running. Naturally, if you're not continuing, you shouldn't bother with experience checks, notes, or any form of continuity, but if there's a chance of coming back to the same group of characters and the setting, you should make sure that the possibility exists, so don't accidentally destroy or discard your notes or the character sheets.

Play Aids

There are many ways you can gamemaster, and many options and play aids available to help you, and in some cases, even do your job for you. Many roleplaying game companies publish various items to encourage roleplaying games in their game worlds, usually offering one or more of these features: rules expansions; bestiaries full of new creatures and beings to encounter; equipment books adding to the list of available gear and/or vehicles; regional sourcebooks that describe a particular geographical area and define it in game terms; and finally, adventures and campaigns.

There is value in all of these sorts of expansions to the basic game, though different groups will get different amounts of use out of these materials. This usually depends on the gamemaster, the players, and the setting. Usually it's a combination of all three of these aspects. Players may want to stick to the basics, or they may wish to have all manner of additional options made available, such as new superpowers, spells, personal equipment, or even more background elements such as new professions and skills. Gamemasters who are inclined towards world building and wide amounts of creative input in their setting may choose to do it all themselves, or they can make liberal use of published materials and change things to suit their own tastes and goals. Sometimes, the setting determines how expandable the world is.

For example, a campaign where the players are a small band of Neolithic hunter/gatherers might not have much use for anything more than the basic few weapons, character background options, and a handful of prehistoric beasts they fight over and over again. On the other end of the spectrum, a science fiction setting in a sprawling universe full of alien life and technology

always has room for more aliens, more spaceships, more blaster rifles, electro-swords, etc.

The most potentially controversial type of game material for a gamemaster to consider using is published adventures (sometimes called scenarios). Usually, a published adventure is rigidly defined, sometimes linear in nature, and often begins with a simple set of requirements for player characters such as the following:

"This adventure is written for 4–6 characters who are all members of a major city's police force, in a downtown precinct. More or fewer players are possible, though the gamemaster should adjust the adventure to suit these numbers. Characters who are not a part of a police organization should be either associated with the police force in an advisory capacity, or have strong personal relationships with one or more player characters or non-player characters who are police officers."

This way, the gamemaster does not have to stretch credulity and spend a lot of time introducing players who are not appropriate for the adventure, and the players are more likely to be actually involved in the events of the adventure rather than being uninterested in how things play out. A resourceful gamemaster can adapt most scenarios to fit a particular group of player characters, or can jump through some dramatic hoops to shoehorn an unusual or inappropriate player character into an adventure, but the amount of work entailed may either result in a player who feels straight-jacketed into being something (or somewhere) they'd rather not be. The worst-case situation is where the whole group doesn't feel any compulsion to play through the adventure, as it does not interest their player characters, or they feel that they are not the right group to be handling this adventure.

Other published adventures are more open-ended, with more options for player characters to get involved. These might begin with a simple note to the effect of: *"This adventure is best played with 3–5 beginning player characters"*, allowing for a much greater range of player character choices. The primary difference between tailored adventures and open adventures is usually that the tailored adventure requires less work from the gamemaster to get the player characters involved, while open adventures may take some shoehorning or hand-waving to explain why the player characters are there and involved. Neither of these styles is better than the other, and usually, published game adventures fall somewhere between these two poles.

Gamemastering Tricks of the Trade

The following aren't actual rules, or even guidelines, but are suggestions to aid you in the complicated and

incredible task of game mastering. None of these are graven in stone, and some of these may run contrary to your style, so take all of these suggestions for what they are: tools in the gamemaster toolbox.

Show, Don't Tell: Whenever possible, you should be as visual as possible with your descriptions of locales, non-player characters, and action sequences. If there is an event that the player characters need to be aware of, if you can get them on the scene to experience it firsthand, the experience will be much more important and significant to them. Rather than hearing that aliens attacked London, you should put them on the streets when the tripods first began their reign of terror. This doesn't have to be a full-fledged scene, either, and you can easily begin with such a scene and then summarize how it turned out, jumping to the point where the players are able to do something about it.

The Player Characters Are the Stars: This has been noted elsewhere in this chapter, but bears repeating here. The player characters are the stars of the adventure. This doesn't make them the most important people in the universe, but it makes them the most significant people in the adventure. Their actions should be significant, and unless there's a good reason for it in the setting or adventure, they should be the ones who get to shine. Having non-player characters around who are more competent and heroic than the player characters is fine, but making the players feel like they're watching someone else's adventures from the sidelines is usually a surefire way to lose player interest.

Encourage Player Investment: One interesting way to gain player interest and retain it through the course of the campaign is to encourage the players to 'invest' in the campaign and their characters. You can encourage them to create things that will enrich the game experience without affecting it directly, such as in-character journals, illustrations of their player characters or non-player characters, or even performing real world tasks such as aiding you with some of the note-taking and bookkeeping. Or it could be basic things like agreeing to host the game sessions, or contributing to the group's food and drink. If the reward of simply making the game better isn't enough, you can offer small rewards such as a free experience checks, or rewards can potentially take the form of some sort of in-game benefit, though this is cautiously advised against for the difficulty of administering such a reward fairly.

Try Something New: You shouldn't shy away from some of the more innovative or unusual gamemaster tricks in your arsenal, drawn from the wealth of storytelling techniques. Some of the easier ones to do are listed below:

Flashbacks: These can be to an earlier scene or prologue, where the players enact the roles of other char-

OPTION

Personality Traits

Sometimes, you may wish to describe a non-player character's personality in a numerical value, much as a characteristic or skill. One quick method of describing a non-player character this way is to use a personality trait scale, where a trait is described as a value of 01 to 100, much like a skill percentile. A value of 01 would indicate that the personality trait is almost nonexistent in the non-player character, while a value of 100 would indicate that it is always characteristic of the non-player character.

Personality traits are paired with an opposite, such as Aggressive and Passive, and the value of the opposite trait is equal to 100 minus the initial personality trait. A quick means of shorthand for this pairing is 'Aggressive 90 / 10 Passive', for example, and a sample check-sheet has been provided below to make this easy to develop personality traits for non-player characters.

For example, you determine that a particular non-player character is highly aggressive, and decides to assign a value of 90 to the Aggressive personality trait. The opposite trait is Passive, and will have a value of only 10 in this personality trait (100 - 90 = 10). A non-player character with an Aggressive trait of 90 will be ready to pick a fight, answer any challenge, and take dramatic action, while one with a Passive of 90 will back down from a fight and slink away from most challenges.

Most of the time, you do not need to determine all potential personality traits for non-player characters, and such a level of detail is rarely needed (or recommended). Instead, you should choose one or more relevant personality trait pairings and assign them, fleshing them out as

required. Recurring non-player character allies or enemies can be fully fleshed out if appropriate.

Having personality traits based on percentiles makes them easy to assign on the fly. If you've got a preference, you can just assign the personality trait without bothering to roll. If you have an ideal, but want some element of randomness, you should come up with a quick method, such as dividing D100 by two and adding 50 to the result, for a spread of 51-100. Or you can get a more extreme result with a roll of 3D10+70. You can also just roll randomly, if you are uncertain, though this is obviously going to yield random results. Sometimes these are favorable, sometimes they aren't.

You can do two major things with personality traits—you can use them as a guide as to how the non-player character will behave by characterizing these traits through roleplaying, or you can use the values to randomly determine how likely the non-player character is to behave in a manner consistent with that personality trait. This is determined with percentile dice being rolled—success with one trait equals a potential reaction based on that character trait, while failure means that the opposite trait is followed. You may also choose to utilize special or critical results for these rolls, but only in a general sense.

For example, the PCs encounter the aforementioned non-player character with the personality trait spread of 'Aggressive 90 / 10 Passive'. One of the PCs behaves rudely to the non-player character, and you decide to roll for the non-player character's reaction. Any roll of 01-90 and the non-player character will react aggressively, while a roll of 91-100 indicates that the non-player character decides to be

(... continued on the next page)

acters. You might even split a flashback adventure between a modern setting and a historical one, with parallels between the two, with players taking on the roles of their modern characters and their ancestral forebears. For a variation on this, you might have the player characters transported to another time and place in some strange fashion, where their dreaming selves must enact a scene in the past. Or you could do a "flash forward", where you give the players a glimpse of what is to come with their player characters in the near or distant future.

"If I Heard It, You Said It": When sometimes the players are a bit rambunctious or talkative, impose this rule. For the next few minutes, treat all table chatter as if it is "in character". Players speaking out of turn or impetuously suddenly find their character(s) in heaps of trouble from their "big mouths". This is especially useful during scenes when the Etiquette skill is also called for.

Cut Scenes: These are commonly used in films, but their use in a tabletop setting is somewhat problematic.

Essentially, a cut scene occurs away from the protagonists (hence, we cut away from them) and involves other significant characters. In a game, this would be a scene that occurs simultaneously to the one the player characters are involved in, and involves one or more non-player characters, usually doing something significant to the plot or adding foreshadowing to the player characters' future. The tricky part with cut scenes is that they usually offer the players out-of-character knowledge that is often going to affect them, and it requires the players to watch while the gamemaster tells a little story or enacts a scene. You might get around the second problem by letting the players read a scripted version of the cut scene, or you could ask them to role-play it as if it were their own characters. If you're a story-based gamemaster who wants the players to feel like they're the active parts of a narrative, then this might work well for you. If you're more episodic with your adventure(s), you might not bother with this trick. It can also be used to great effect in a light-hearted or comedic game, where out-of-character knowledge can be explained away easily.

OPTION

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passive about it, perhaps distracted or unwilling at this time to answer the challenge being presented.

The system of assigning numerical value to a personality trait and utilizing it in roleplaying or in random determination for reaction is highly abstract. It is recommended that you never refer to these values directly in the course of narration or in play, such as "He's got an Aggressive 90, so he's not going to take that insult lightly." Instead, it is preferable to characterize these through adjectives and behavior, such as "He's got a contemptuous sneer on his face as he looks at you, and his chin juts out and he's clearly tense and ready for some sort of action. His fingers twitch at his side, giving you the impression that he's a hair away from jumping on you at the slightest provocation." Find the level of description that suits your style and doesn't risk boring your players, and use it strategically. If every non-player character is described to that level of detail, the players will become overwhelmed, so you might only use the more advanced descriptions for significant non-player characters.

Following is a list of suggested personality trait pairings. You are encouraged to shorten or lengthen this list as appropriate. There is no particular organizational principle work used to order these traits (such as initial traits

being positive and opposing traits being negative), though you may choose to reorganize them into such values.

Skills and Personality Traits

Players with the Insight skill (page 63) may be able to determine where an non-player character falls on the spectrum between two of the opposed personality traits. As noted above, you shouldn't reveal an actual numerical amount, but you may indicate whether a particular non-player character leans strongly in one direction between the two opposed traits.

Though it is extremely unlikely to have a player character performing Psychology for a long term on a non-player character, if such a circumstance emerges, you may allow a successful Psychology roll to affect a single paired personality trait in the same fashion that it restores lost SAN. Roll to see whether SAN points are regained, and how many, but instead of adding the points to SAN, instead use the points to shift a particular personality trait by that many points in the desired direction (assuming the Psychology use was successful). The time required for treatment is identical. This way, through time and therapy, a successful Psychology roll can "help" a non-player character change his or her natural inclinations towards a particular personality trait.

Opposed Traits

Initial Trait	Value ____	Value ____	Opposing Trait
Aggressive	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Passive
Impulsive	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Cautious
Extrovert	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Introvert
Optimistic	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Pessimistic
Stubborn	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Receptive
Physical	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Mental
Patient	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Nervous
Emotional	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Calm
Trusting	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Suspicious
Leader	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Follower
Greedy	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Generous
Energetic	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Lazy
Honorable	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Dishonorable
Brave	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Cowardly
Curious	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Incurious
Dependable	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Unreliable
Pious	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Irreligious
Honest	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Dishonest
Clever	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Dull
Humorous	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Dour
Innovative	_____ / _____	_____ / _____	Conservative

Introductions: A good introduction can set a campaign off to a bang. It's different from an initial scene in that it's usually not role-played through, and is often just a bit of narrative. This can range from a few paragraphs of stirring text where you describe the state of the world, galaxy, political situation, or recent history, and hint at the big picture. The opening crawl from *Star Wars* is a good example of this.

"Jobber" Sequences: You can also let the players each give themselves a "jobber" sequence. The term originated in professional wrestling and is a storytelling trick. Essentially, it involves one formidable opponent (or several) who are first made up to be frightening or powerful. Then, they're easily defeated by another character to demonstrate the newcomer's prowess. To jobber for someone is to make them look good. It can work for heroes or villains, protagonists or antagonists. It is often used in the James Bond films at the introduction, showing Bond successfully completing one mission with style and ingenuity, establishing his credibility as the world's greatest spy. This

can be extended to all manner of specialties or skills, and if the setting and play style is one where the player characters are heroic, you might let each player around the table give themselves such a sequence while the other players watch (or pitch in). You don't even need to roll the dice for such a scene, as it should be a foregone conclusion that the player character escapes and makes it to the initial scene.

Bait-and-Switch: This is a classic storytelling trick, where the players are given one premise (a setting, an adventure, etc.) and then quickly discover that they are in the middle of another premise. Usually this is a dramatic discovery, causing them to reevaluate everything that they know or have experienced so far. For a recent example of this, the film *The Matrix* depicts the protagonist discovering that his reality is merely a computer-generated simulation, and that his real body is in a tank of slime being used to generate bioelectricity. This can be used to comedic effect, or to completely transform an adventure.

For example, the characters are medieval peasants and men-at-arms. They have chased a sinister ghoul through medieval catacombs beneath the cloister they live near, and suddenly, they turn a corner to find a shimmering door with a strange metal frame. They step through, and emerge into a high-tech chamber within an alien facility, where the misshapen 'ghoul' is removing his environmental suit, revealing a slender grey-skinned alien beneath. Several other of the aliens stand nearby. Are these elves, and is this some enchanted chamber of theirs? The players will know what is going on, but their player characters have no frame of reference for this experience.

Recognize Your Players: Players come in a lot of stripes and sizes, and their goals can differ tremendously, even within the same gaming groups. You might want to assess what (based on your experience with the player) they enjoy in games, and why they play. For ease, you might break them down into different groups like, based on the following general types, codified by Robin Laws in his excellent gamemaster advice book, *Robin's Laws of Gaming* (Steve Jackson Games, Inc., 2002):

- ❖ **The Leader:** This player usually ends up leading the group and will frequently create characters who command respect and authority (a police officer, government agent, a military officer, etc.). This sort of player usually demands attention, often from the other player characters as well as from the gamemaster.
- ❖ **The Specialist:** The player usually creates characters that are secondary and are often only background characters most of the time, but extremely skilled in a narrow field, whether it be weapons, computers, piloting, etc. When in their field of specialty, the player wants to succeed, and succeed well.
- ❖ **The Power Gamer:** This player creates characters who are extremely powerful (sometimes using judicious manipulation of the rules). Such characters are often after more power, whether the most powerful magic weapon, the most terrifying spell, etc. Also called the *munchkin* or *mini-maxer* (as in "What's the minimum I can pay for the maximum effect?").
- ❖ **The Method Actor:** The method actor player (named for the Stanislavski school of acting) will create elaborate stories and focus on their character as if he or she were from some other medium, even taking on unnecessary flaws and disadvantages just because they feel "right for the character".
- ❖ **The Follower:** This is the simplest type of player. Often he or she is merely there because of a significant other, relative, or friend, and this player is content to hang back and watch the fun, rolling dice or acting when required. He or she might enjoy being in the spotlight now and again, but usually doesn't require it.

Not every player is the same type in every campaign. Sometimes a player is as regular as clockwork, while other times, he or she may choose which role based on the setting and the campaign. Sometimes the leader, for one reason or another, is content to be a follower for one game. It isn't an exact science, and players can even act as if

they're a cross between two types. However, once you have a good idea about who's who, you might ask yourself if their preferences and needs are being met in the course of the game, and adjust accordingly.



Comparative Sizes

This table equates approximate weight with game SIZ. In *Basic Roleplaying*, SIZ pertains not only to weight but to volume and height as well. This table should not be relied on absolutely: it will not be useful for creatures lighter than air, who are gaseous, able to change mass, or made of plasma or ectoplasm. From SIZ 330 on, SIZ is exactly 1/10th the creature's weight in short tons. Thus, a kraken of SIZ 8000 weighs 80,000 short tons.

SIZ	English Weight	Metric Weight
1	1-12 pounds	.5-5.5 kg
4	38-51 pounds	17-23 kg
8	109-120 pounds	50-55 kg
12	156-168 pounds	71-76 kg
16	220-239 pounds	100-109 kg
20	310-338 pounds	141-154 kg
24	440-479 pounds	200-218 kg
32	880-959 pounds	400-436 kg
40	1760-1919 pounds	800-872 kg
48	3520-3829 pounds	1600-1741 kg
56	7040-7649 pounds	3200-3477 kg
64	7.1-7.7 tons	6455-7000 kg
72	14.1-15.4 tons	6.4-7 metric tons
80	28.2-30.7 tons	12.8-14 metric tons
88	56.5-61.5 tons	25.7-28 metric tons
96	96 tons	44 metric tons
104	104 tons	47 metric tons
112	120 tons	54.5 metric tons
120	144 tons	65.5 metric tons
128	176 tons	80 metric tons
136	216 tons	98 metric tons
140	240 tons	109 metric tons
144	264 tons	120 metric tons
152	320 tons	145.5 metric tons
160	384 tons	174.5 metric tons
168	456 tons	207 metric tons
176	536 tons	244 metric tons
184	624 tons	284 metric tons
192	720 tons	327 metric tons
200	824 tons	375 metric tons
208	936 tons	425 metric tons
216	1056 tons	480 metric tons
224	1184 tons	538 metric tons
232	1220 tons	555 metric tons
240	1364 tons	620 metric tons
256	1516 tons	689 metric tons
264	1676 tons	762 metric tons
272	1844 tons	838 metric tons
280	2020 tons	918 metric tons
288	2204 tons	1002 metric tons
294	2396 tons	1089 metric tons
304	2596 tons	1180 metric tons
312	2804 tons	1275 metric tons
320	3020 tons	1373 metric tons
330	3300 tons	1500 metric tons
340	3400 tons	1546 metric tons
350	3500 tons	1591 metric tons

CHAPTER TEN

SETTINGS

This chapter discusses settings—the locales where your adventures will occur. To use the movie analogy once more, if the PCs are the stars of a movie, and their equipment the props, then the setting is the genre—Western, science fiction, techno-thriller, sword-and-saddle, high fantasy, or many others. This chapter also includes optional rules for Allegiance and Insanity.

Settings

Despite the numerous examples of different game types, settings, genres, etc., this book doesn't have any actual setting information presented. This rulebook allows you, the gamemaster, to utilize *Basic Roleplaying* with a setting of your choice. There are two main ways to do this: adapting an existing setting, and creating an original one. Between them, there are many ways these goals can be combined, and the process for one method can be used with the other.

Sample Adventure Settings

These settings are neither historically accurate nor all-inclusive. Instead, this is an overview of many classic or appropriate settings that are suitable for adventure. Each of the settings described has a few subsections to help you understand it and describe it easily to your players.

Title: A generic name for the setting.

Character Types: A list of character professions commonly encountered in the setting. This list may be amended or ignored outright according to your perception of,



and goals with, the setting. Obviously there are always exceptions, but these are generally not common in the setting. *For example, Tribesmen and Shamans still exist in remote corners of the modern world, but are hardly common on most of the Earth.* The profession titles are generic, and you are encouraged to personalize these for the setting. *For example, in the Ancient World, the Clerk is called a Scribe, though the skills are unchanged.*

Common Powers: Each description lists the powers most commonly associated with that setting. It's not a prohibition, however, and you are more-than-welcome to use or disregard these suggestions. Without much work, you and your players can find many examples from history, myth, or fiction to support such changes. *For example, the American folk heroes Paul Bunyan (with his giant size and giant blue ox) and John Henry (with his great strength and apparently tireless ability to labor at super-speed), are both super powered characters set in the United States of the 1800s. The Western folk hero Pecos Bill, able to lasso and ride whirlwinds, could be similarly described as being super powered.* Change what you want to get the setting you want.

Technology: A brief overview of the level of technology associated with this period. It is intentionally inaccurate, relying more on a common understanding than historical reality. You are encouraged to do more research and present a more accurate picture of the setting if it is desired.

Inspirations: A list of sample historical references, books, films, and other sources for the setting. These can be useful to you, both as research and as a means of explaining the setting to the players.

Adventures: A short list of some sample adventure types player characters might encounter in this setting. This is admittedly brief, and listing all of the potential adventures could fill another volume the size of this rulebook.

Suggested Optional Rules: These are a few optional rules ideally suited for this setting, whether enforcing some rule of the genre, or making things easier for you and your players. This list is subjective, and the exclusion of a rule here does not automatically mean that it is unsuitable.

These settings are loosely organized chronologically.

Prehistoric

This covers any prehistoric or primitive tribal environment, before the dawn of civilization, or somehow set apart from it. Life in a prehistoric setting is short and brutal, and usually the only social organization the characters will ever encounter is their own tribe, or possibly rival tribes. Prehistoric mammals are usually the

main threat, though alternate histories sometimes include dinosaurs.

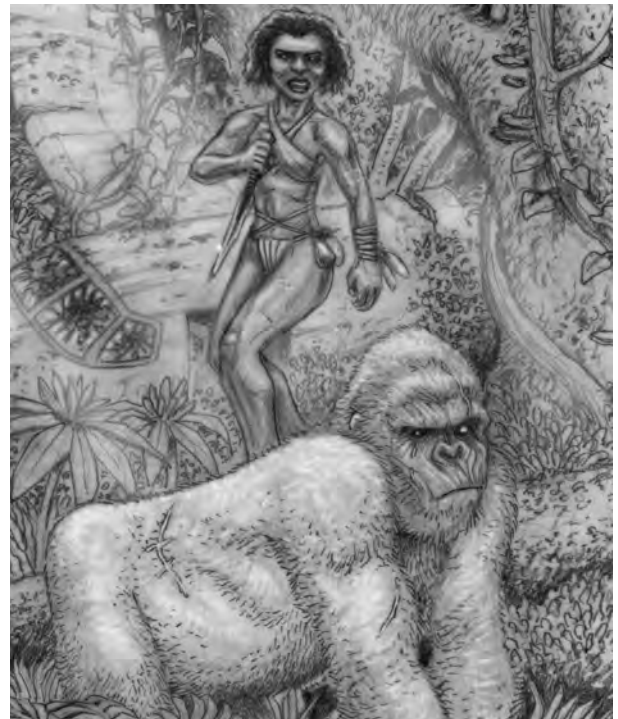
Character Types: Professions suitable for a prehistoric setting are Craftsman, Farmer, Hunter, Shaman, and Tribesman.

Common Powers: Primitive shamans might use the magic system. Depending on the setting, mutations and psychic abilities may also be available.

Technology: Few manufactured items are available in a prehistoric world, with everything being shaped from primitive resources such as wood, stone, bone, leather, fur, feathers, and clay. Aside from rough clothing, rudimentary tools and weapons, and smallish carved items, there is almost nothing in the way of gear available, though the corollary to this is that almost everything is available to anyone. Though some skilled craftsmen may make better stone axes and shape better carved talismans, there is little that characters cannot make with available substances in their environment. Most items will be of poor or average quality, and essentially valueless save through barter.

Inspirations: The films *Quest for Fire*, *Caveman*, *The Land that Time Forgot*, and *Clan of the Cave Bear* (also the book). For nontraditional prehistoric settings, try Harry Harrison's *West of Eden* novels or television shows like *The Flintstones* or *Land of the Lost*.

Adventures: Adventures in a prehistoric setting may range from the humorous, with stone and wood tech-



For a change, have all players create gorilla characters, members of the same tribal group trying to stop poachers from decimating their species.

nology and an otherwise modern worldview, to grim tales of survival. Tribal conflict between primitive groups of hunter-gatherers over prime hunting spots, adverse weather, aggressive animals, or even great hunts can form the core of prehistoric adventures. Alternate prehistories might include strange creatures such as the servitors of H. P. Lovecraft's near-eternal Old Ones, aliens bent on enslaving primitive humanity, or even divergent evolutionary paths where intelligent saurians or apes have become the dominant species, and humanity their fodder. This can also include anachronistic elements such as dinosaurs.

Suggested Optional Rules: None.

Ancient

The ancient world saw the rise of kingdoms such as Sumeria, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, and other mighty empires across the globe. It is a rough designation covering all periods from Biblical antiquity, through classical Greece, until the fall of Rome and the subsequent chaotic breakdown of Europe. This designation can also apply to many sword-and-sorcery fantasy settings (sometimes called sword-and-sandal fantasy). The ancient worlds this setting represents also can include the Aztec and Maya cultures, or many others not on the European continent, the Middle East, and their neighbors.

Character Types: Professions suitable for an ancient world or equivalent setting are Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Wizard.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be based off the powers of the gods of the setting. Demigods (the offspring of gods and mortals) or legendary heroes may have super powers.

Technology: This is the heyday of the Bronze Age and the flowering of the Iron Age. These two materials have made weapons and armor much more effective and the tools for smithing metal have given rise to metallic currency as well as complex and beautiful objects of art. Kiln-firing, leather tanning, and some basic chemical processes enable crafting of durable and hand-made items, and early work in precision metalworking is born during this period. Similarly, gem-smithing flourishes in this period, and equipment begins to be adorned with precious metals and jewels.

Inspirations: The legends of Cuchulaine (mythology); the legend of Gilgamesh (mythology); any Greek hero

myths (Jason and the Golden Fleece, for example); *The Odyssey*; *The Iliad*; *Spartacus* (film); the *Conan* stories (books, films, and comics); the *Rome*, *Xena*, and *Hercules* television series.

Adventures: This time period is ripe for all manner of adventures, with mythological themes, ranging from sword-and-sandal epics in ancient Greece and Rome, historical-based campaigns among the early Christians, alternate worlds which resemble our own, to the epics of mighty divine heroes.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Dodging Missile Weapons, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills, Total Hit Points.

Dark Ages

In the period of time after the fall of the Roman Empire, life is grim and existence is difficult. Though the name is a generalization, and during this time there were social advances and some improvements to the overall quality of life, the Dark Ages are characterized as a brutal and unenlightened time. This period includes the rise of the Norse culture, and many regional wars across Europe. This period can also embody many less-developed or grittier fantasy settings, including non-human races such as elves and dwarves, and other mythic animals.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a Dark Ages or equivalent environment are Assassin, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Doctor, Entertainer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Wizard.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.

Technology: The sciences have not advanced tremendously in the centuries between the ancient world and the medieval era, though the term "Dark Ages" is a misnomer—there were scientific developments, various improvements in basic mechanical engineering, and the treatment of disease improved by leaps and bounds. Understanding of the physical world began to flourish, and the practice of creating books and preserving knowledge became more prevalent, though restricted to the nobility and to the clergy. Metallurgy improved somewhat, and the means of war (weapon and armor making) saw a general improvement, especially with the development of siege weaponry. In the field of

transportation, carts and wagons became more frequently used, and agricultural production grew beyond the smaller scale of previous centuries. Sailing ships became more sophisticated and faster, allowing for longer or swifter voyages.

Inspirations: Some Arthurian films or novels are inspirational for this setting. Films include *The 13th Warrior* (the book more than the film), *The Name of the Rose* (the book more than the film), *Eric the Viking*, *Dragonslayer*, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Games include *Cthulhu Dark Ages* (also from Chaosium).

Adventures: This setting is ripe for grim adventure and conflict. Europe after the fall of Rome has been called a veritable post-apocalyptic wasteland, and life was intensely hard for the common peasant of Europe. Petty wars and oppression were commonplace. In Scandinavia, however, the Viking peoples were flourishing, dominating most of their surrounding lands with their superior ships and fierce demeanor, taking by force what they could not bargain for through honest trade. The division between pagan cultures and Christian ones can (and did) provide plenty of conflict and turmoil.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Education/Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Hit Points per Location, Literacy, Sanity.

High Medieval

This covers many classic historical eras, feudal-era settings, as well as general fantasy milieus. Nobility, knighthood, and feudalistic governments and social structures often characterize this setting. It can even be stretched to accommodate a post-apocalyptic setting, where the last vestiges of civilization have degenerated into neo-feudalism. Idealized romance is often a driving force in a positive high medieval world, though this may be contrasted by brutal and grim reality. Magic is believed to work in these settings, and the divine is considered as real as the infernal.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a high medieval or equivalent setting are Assassin, Beggar, Craftsman, Criminal, Doctor, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Wizard.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.

Technology: Though there is little in the way of widespread industry, a dedicated craftsman class has emerged,

and items of value and artistry are available to those who can afford them. Distribution of goods and services has increased enough that items can be found hundreds of miles away from where they were made. Trade guilds are forming, with standardized master/apprentice systems to pass along secrets and standardized methods of manufacturing items. In some countries there are some restrictions on the possession of some types of weaponry, and the lack of widespread literacy limits the availability of books or other items. Nonetheless, characters in major cities can find most of what is available in the medieval world. In some portions of the world, gunpowder may be available. At the height of this period, the fighting nobility used plate armor, though increased prominence of the longbow and the early crossbows began to render plate armor obsolete.

Inspirations: *Le Morte d'Arthur* and any Arthurian novels or films (*Excalibur* is mighty fine). *Ladyhawke* (film). *The Lion in Winter* (play and film). George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels.

Adventures: The most obvious use of this setting would be the height of chivalry and the Arthurian period of legend. Other campaigns might feature Charlemagne's knights, or schisms within a widespread Christianity.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-Human Characters, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills.

High Fantasy

Similar in some aspects to the high medieval setting, this represents a world where many different races such as elves, dwarves, halflings, and others exist alongside human beings, usually allied loosely. These races are frequently in conflict with other more aggressive races such as orcs, trolls, goblins, and evil variants of the "good" races. High fantasy settings often include active gods and goddesses with established priesthoods and centers of worship. Values of right and wrong, good and evil are clearly-defined and are often openly stated. Magic use is prevalent and magic items are commonplace in the form of healing potions, magic swords, enchanted armor, etc. There are often vast numbers of other monsters to be fought, from minor annoyances such as kobolds, to enormously powerful dragons. Ancient ruins are strewn across the landscape, and dungeons sprawl belowground.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a high fantasy setting are Assassin, Criminal, Doctor, Entertainer,

Explorer, Gambler, Hunter, Lawman, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Wizard.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature. Mutations may be found among certain types of chaos-imbued monsters, and there may be races that use psychic abilities. Powerful supernatural beings may use super powers in the guise of divine or infernal abilities.

Technology: Nearly identical to the high medieval setting, with less realism. Somewhere, there exist vast numbers of merchants and laborers manufacturing items solely to support an apparent adventuring class, and most anything a character could want, he or she can find.

Inspirations: *The Lord of the Rings* is the prime example of this setting, inspiring many, many books, comics, movies, computer games, and other roleplaying games. Too many to list, but *Dungeons & Dragons* and *World of Warcraft* are the best known examples.

Adventures: Adventures tend to follow a certain pattern—the characters are hired to perform some lucrative activity, often involving some daring activity in a dangerous locale. Generally, they must voyage to the place, evade traps, monsters, and other obstacles and then use their individual abilities to overcome any threats. Combat often plays a huge part of this. The goal achieved, there is often some complication, but usually the next stage is to regroup, re-equip, train, and become ready for another such (more dangerous) excursion.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-Human Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills.

Imperial Asia

This is a generic term for the vast period of time in Chinese history marked by the heyday of a mighty culture that rose and flourished, mostly stable for millennia. This can cover the real world of historical Japan or China, to the magical world of the martial arts genre, where light-footed duelists clash blades and wield strange Taoist sorcery. Imperial Asian settings are sometimes full of anachronistic elements and cross-cultural influences. This category can also describe Mughal India.

Character Types: Professions suitable for an imperial Asian or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective,

Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the most common powers, and may be based on elemental principles. Intense study of esoteric martial arts disciplines allows players to achieve results best modeled with psychic or super powers.

Technology: Isolated from Europe and the medieval world, the arts and sciences of China, Korea, and other Asian countries such as Japan were in ways leaps and bounds beyond their counterparts in the Western world. The earliest printing presses were mass-producing novels of astonishing size, and gunpowder was commonly used in military and industrial applications, such as explosives and some of the first firearms. Though Buddhist injunctions against contact with corpses prevented surgical exploration of the human body, the fields of acupuncture, acupressure, and herbalism flourished, allowing for a variety of treatments of human ailments. Personal armor, though focusing on the full-metal styles of the Europeans, was ornate and highly suitable to the battlefield. Sciences were advanced, and though Confucianism stymied research, the understanding of the physical world was equal to or surpassed that of the West.

Inspirations: Chinese *wuxia* films such as *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon*, *Hero*, and *The House of Flying Daggers*; historical epics such as *The Emperor and the Assassin*; books like Barry Hughart's *Tales of Master Li and Number Ten Ox*; *The Outlaws of the Water Margin* (book and television series); *Shogun* (book and television miniseries); or Lafcadio Hearn's Japanese folktales and ghost stories.

Adventures: Adventures set in this idealized era can range from realistic and historical battles such as those which united the Five Kingdoms, stately tales of samurai battling ninja and folkloric beasts in old Japan; to wild anime- and manga-inspired fantasies rife with anachronisms and blue-haired characters wielding giant swords.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Arabian Nights

This is another generic term for the areas encompassing the ancient Arabian or Persian world (now splintered into Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and others). This

is the world depicted in famous stories such as those collected in *The 1001 Nights* or (more popularly) “The Arabian Nights”, the journeys of Sinbad, the adventures of Ali Baba and Aladdin, as well as countless others.

Character Types: Professions suitable for an Arabian Nights or equivalent setting include Assassin, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Laborer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Wizard.

Common Powers: Traditionally, the main sources of power in this setting are magic and sorcery, though many magical beings have abilities best adapted from the super powers.

Technology: Knowledge of the physical world was quite advanced in this area compared to Europe or even China. Mathematics and other sciences were highly developed, and as a result, many of the physical sciences stemming from these were further along than other areas of the world. Chemistry, astronomy, and metallurgy were highly refined, and Damascus steel was famed throughout the world. Medicine, also, flourished, and a detailed understanding of the anatomy of the human body had been developed through dissection. Environmental elements (scarcity of wood, difficulty of long-distance transport, etc.) prevented many of the major advances in warfare such as siege engines to be used. Body armor was uncommon at best in this place and time, though not unknown.

Inspirations: The actual stories are the best inspiration, such as *1001 Nights* (or *The Arabian Nights*), the tales of Sinbad, Aladdin, Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves, and films such as *Thief of Baghdad*; the *Prince of Persia* computer games.

Adventures: This setting can range from lyrical and almost entirely like a fairy tale, to brutal, with desert Bedouin tribes battling one another and the invading forces that threatened their native sands. Characters can embark on expeditions of exploration across the seas to strange new lands, or delve into ancient tombs to steal untold riches.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Renaissance

This setting primarily covers Europe in the Renaissance period, though it can be expanded to include elements of fantasy and exaggerated reality, such as the fantastic inventions of Leonardo da Vinci. This setting is mostly known for a flourishing in the arts and the sciences, a

flourishing of popular architecture, with political and social maneuvering given special focus. The Renaissance is also marked with a reestablishment of the importance of the Classical World’s influence in European history, with elements from ancient Greece and Roman culture emphasized in art and literature.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a Renaissance or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, though their use may be forbidden by the religious institutions of the period. Alchemy (creation of magic items and elixirs) is a popular pursuit for scholars.

Technology: As with the medieval period, described above, this era shows a strong preponderance of exquisitely made goods. It is the height of skilled craftsmanship, and early science is being developed that expands the types of items that may be owned. Still, though, the gross inequities of wealth distribution have not changed overmuch, and availability of equipment is largely a matter of finance. Clockworks, gunpowder, precision tools, and principles such as steam, water, and wind power are being explored. The introduction of the crossbow virtually eliminated the use of armor. During this period, armor worn in battle began to dwindle from its prominence in the High Medieval period, usually consisting of only stout leather jackets and the occasional breastplate and helm. This differed slightly from country to country, but “less armor” was the dominant theme throughout this age.

Inspirations: Many of Shakespeare’s plays (or their adaptations), the *Blackadder II* television series, Gregory Keyes’ *Kingdom of Thorn and Bone* (albeit a fantasy Renaissance setting), the film *Flesh & Blood*, Robin Hood.

Adventures: All manner of interesting hi-jinx can be gotten into in this world, with the rich political atmosphere, the number of astounding thinkers and shifts in the understanding of the natural world, and the increasing schism between the worlds of faith and science. Characters can be patrons of the arts drawn into intrigue in the courts of the land, or they can be wayward inventors whose discoveries lead them into trouble. Alternately, they can take to the high seas or voyage to the New World.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll,

Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills.

Colonialism

This is a rough period in Europe's history, marked by expansion across the sea to the newly discovered continents of North and South America, and south into Africa for slavery and opportunism. The rise in naval conflict during this period earned it the nickname as the Age of Sail. In England, this period was marked with Queen Elizabeth I's reign, considered by many to be a golden age; an outpouring of poetry, literature, fashion and theater. The European continent, however, was torn apart by wars. Spain was rife with conflict from within and without its borders, and France was torn asunder by religious and political infighting. Swashbuckling adventure is a classic convention of this period. The period mostly ended at the American or French Revolutions.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a colonialist or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Sorcery, if it is practiced, is likely based on infernal origins. More primitive native cultures may use magic or sorcery in the form of shamanic knowledge or witchcraft.

Technology: Specifically describing the period where Europeans spread across the North American, South American, and other continents, the technology of this time period was not a substantial improvement over the Renaissance. The most significant change in the world was the commonplace use of gunpowder, whether used for explosives or firearms, the use of which virtually eliminated armor from the battlefields of the era. Water wheels, early machinery, and significant advances in the medical sciences are also characteristic of this period. This era was known as the Age of Exploration, was made so by significant improvements in shipbuilding, and a greater understanding of navigation, now that the flat Earth theory had been disproved. The indigenous people whose lands were annexed by various countries during this period were less technologically advanced, often at a tribal level of development.

Inspirations: Robert E. Howard's tales of Solomon Kane, the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films.

Adventures: As noted above, simply the process of finding and arriving safely in a newly "discovered" country can provide an incredible framework for a campaign, and the subsequent colonization and exploration

of that new world is rife with opportunities for discovery, diplomacy, and (unfortunately) conflict. Adventures in this setting can also be centered on a nautical theme, perhaps with the player characters the crew of a small sailing ship, privateers, or even pirates. In later periods of the colonization of the New World, the supposed threat of witchcraft both divided communities in suspicion, and united them in fear.

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills.

Age of Sail

The first part of the nineteenth century saw France as the center of Europe due to the actions of one military leader, General Napoleon Bonaparte, who later took the title of Emperor. This era was marked by wars that swept across Europe as the First French Empire consolidated Napoleon's rule. It is a time of gallant soldiers and officers on each side of the battlefield, while life in the high courts remains largely untouched. The working classes suffer the brunt of war.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a Napoleonic or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, and Writer.

Common Powers: Sorcery, if practiced, is likely to be banned by the religious institutions present in the setting.

Technology: Technologically, this period was nearly identical to the Colonial era, though there were advances in ship-making and large-scale warfare devices.

Inspirations: Patrick O'Brian's Sir Aubrey Maturin novels and the film *Master and Commander*, the *Sharpe's* novels and television series. Ridley Scott's film *The Duelists*. Naomi Novik's recent *Temeraire* novels posit a Napoleonic age of sail where trained dragons are used in air and sea battles. Though not entirely in-period, Alexandre Dumas' novels are invaluable resources for swashbuckling adventures. *The Three Musketeers*, *The Man in the Iron Mask*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, etc. are all wonderful examples.

Adventures: In a time when some of the world's greatest land and sea battles were being fought, there is no limit of military themed source for adventure. Characters of other types may find themselves enmeshed in intrigue within the capitols of warring states, on secretive missions fraught with danger, spies

behind enemy lines, or hotheaded duelists in the baroque cities of the period.

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills.

Industrial Age

This era, comprising the later period of the Western era, and corresponding with the Victorian era in the United Kingdom, is rife with invention. Defined almost entirely by the technological advances, the Technology section below is the most informative description of the setting.

Character Types: Artist, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Cowboy, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, and Writer.

Common Powers: This age saw another divide between spirituality and modernization. Magic and psychic abilities would represent one side of the struggle, while technology may offer a variety of super powers in the form of unusual and experimental technology.

Technology: The Industrial Age is upon the world, and mass-production and factory-style manufacture have made standardized goods widely available and considerably cheaper than at any point in human history prior. Brand names become commonplace for manufactured goods. Additionally, the establishment of the British Empire across the globe and international trade expands the widespread availability of most goods and services. Gunpowder is widely available, and firearms are commonplace. Steam, coal, gas, and other energy sources are widely-known and utilized in home and cities, with cities illuminated by gaslight, steam engines crossing the expanses of the United States and Europe, and the seas traversed by great ships with coal-burning, steam-powered engines. Chemistry is being refined, and scientists are beginning to discover many of the secrets of the universe. In the later part of this era comes the automobile, radically transforming human travel. In alternate history versions of the Industrial Age, steam-powered airships and mechanical men herald the majesty of scientific achievement, strange inventions such as submarines cruise the ocean depths, and the skies are darkened with invading space capsules and walking machines from Mars or elsewhere.

Inspirations: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *The War of the Worlds*, and other novels by Jules Verne and H. G. Wells.

Adventures: Adventures should reinforce the themes of industry versus spirituality, with exploration and new technology coming into dramatic contact with old ways of life. Adventures set in this time period can emphasize the new, and are often set around a particular innovative new device.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points.

Victorian

This era is known as both the height of the British industrial revolution and the greatest influence of the British Empire. Technically, it overlaps and encompasses the Industrial Revolution (above). Characterized by a lengthy period of relative peace in England, it nonetheless saw a great disparity between the working folk and the privileged classes. British imperialism, though thwarted in Europe, extended into Asia and Africa, with the Indian subcontinent under British rule. It was also known as a time of great austerity in personal expression, with "Victorian" a modern synonym for prudishness or repression.

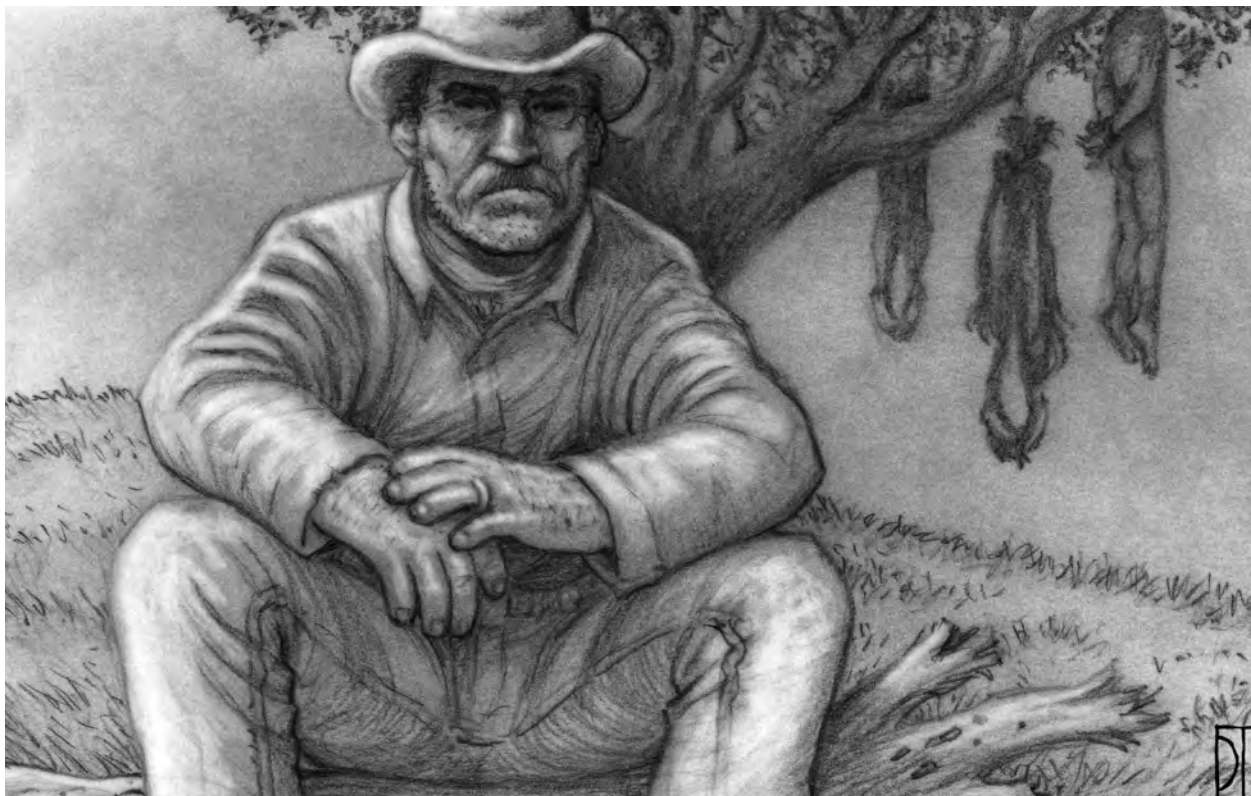
Character Types: Professions suitable for a Victorian or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Computer Tech, Cowboy, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery may be practiced by occultists and intellectuals seeking the outer limit of experience, while native cultures use these same powers in their religions. Strange, blasphemous creatures might be mutants, and the era's burgeoning interest in mentalism utilizes psychic abilities.

Technology: Identical to that described in the Industrial Age (above).

Inspirations: Any books about Victorian mores and morals are appropriate to this setting, as are the film adaptations. The Sherlock Holmes stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are applicable, as are most of his other works. *Cthulhu by Gaslight* (a sourcebook for the Chaosium, Inc. *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game)

Adventures: The Gaslight period presents an amazing dichotomy, with upper crust dilettantes and the rich living side-by-side with a seething dark underbelly containing some of the most unjust, inhumane conditions humanity has been able to inflict upon itself. The crim-



In the American West, a rude sort of justice prevailed—might made right.

inal underworld extends upwards to a surprising degree, and the gradual decline of the British Empire's influence has become apparent.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Sanity.

Western

This is the Old West of U.S. history, complete with bison, cowboys, gunslingers, range wars, and the movement to expand the country to the west. The West is being transformed by new rail tracks and a steady influx of Easterners and former slaves, seeking to make a place in the wild new world. Dangers include Native Americans, cold-blooded killers, and bandits.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a Western or equivalent setting include Artist, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Cowboy, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, and Writer.

Common Powers: Magic and sorcery may be used to simulate the shamanic powers of Native Americans.

Technology: This setting, specific to the United States between 1850 and the turn of the century, was a stage

for the incredible social change of the Industrial Age and the more parochial ways of an America that had just ended a massive civil war to preserve an older means of life. Trains became the most commonly used form of mass transit, and the end of the era saw the introduction of some of the first basic automobiles. Submarines were first utilized in the Civil War and the Wright brothers were beginning to experiment with the first flying machines. Electrical current was replacing gaslight technology, and ships were increasingly manufactured of metal rather than wood. The telegraph enabled near-instantaneous communication across the country, and photography became commonplace in use, enough so that most folks with any means had photographic images of themselves and their families.

Inspirations: Any number of Western novels, television series, films, comics, or stories told in other media.

Adventures: These can be realistic; focusing on land wars, the spread of the railways across America, and battles with Native Americans; or they can focus on the mythic West, with legendary gunfighters enacting tales of vengeance and heroism against a stark backdrop. Almost anything can be added to this setting—weird science, Lovecraftian monsters, zombies, samurai, magic, etc.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points.

Pulp Era

In the decades following the turn of the twentieth century through the beginning of World War II, entertainment was rich and vital, ushering in the pulp era, a setting characterized by action, daredevils, and exotic international adventure. This era is also known for weird horror and the early appearance of masked crime fighters. In pulp-era adventure, heroes can explore lost worlds where dinosaurs roam, fight the sinister footmen of mysterious criminal organizations, and battle in the skies in custom-designed airships.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a pulp era or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, and Writer.

Common Powers: Any powers can be used in this wildly imaginative setting.

Technology: The heydays of the 1930s from pulp adventure are known for strange science, particularly of the evil genius variety, such as death rays, evil robots, flying death saucers, mind-altering devices, weather machines, and gigantic bombs. In response, many brave inventors and engineers created amazing marvels—ships capable of interstellar flight, jet packs, wrist radios, flying cars, and other incredible wonders of science and technology. Depending on the importance of weird technology in this era, it isn't impossible to find devices far advanced from those in the modern world. Anachronistic tech is a staple of weird science in the pulp era.

Inspirations: The pulp magazines of the 1920s and 30s, with *Weird Tales* being the most obvious inspiration. Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* game.

Adventures: Mysteries; thrillers; grisly horror; exploration of the world, of space, and beneath the earth; lost cities; aerial adventure; cliffhangers; military campaigns at the ends of the earth; weird and lurid tales of strange crime; square-jawed heroes fighting sinister criminal overlords and their minions; alien invasion; and even masked avengers dispensing cold justice . . . all of these are wonderful elements of pulp adventure.

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Power Use in the Action Phase, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Planetary Adventure

A staple setting of the pulp era, planetary adventure transcends it as it journeys beyond this world to strange alien vistas. In the planetary romance setting, humans are drawn through mysterious and oftentimes sketchily described means to strange planets, habitable but alien. On these planets are alien species that range from barbaric to highly advanced and their ancient technology exists side-by-side with the trappings of sword-and-sandal adventure. The heroes in planetary adventures often find acceptance and love, and achieve tremendous renown far beyond that achievable on Earth.

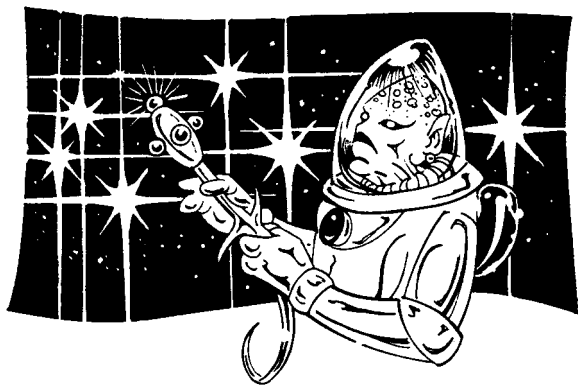
Character Types: Professions suitable for a planetary adventure or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Craftsman, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Gambler, Hunter, Laborer, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, and Warrior.

Common Powers: Generally, the powers in a planetary adventure setting are either mutations or psychic abilities, or some extraordinary abilities best modeled with the less flashy super powers.

Technology: Planetary adventure settings are usually a crazy mix of ancient, ruined, nearly-forgotten technology of incredible power and utility, though it is almost always disdained or feared by the inhabitants of the world. Warriors might carry radium pistols along with swords, though a rigid code of honor may forbid them to shoot a foe that is not similarly armed. Sophisticated devices such as airships are often commonplace, though the principles that drive them are often known to only a few, or utterly lost. Scientists who seek to learn the secrets of old technology and create new devices are often villainous in planetary adventure settings, though the protagonists are, as a rule, more comfortable with technology and its applications.

Inspirations: The Martian stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs and Michael Moorcock. David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*. C. S. Lewis' Planetary novels.

Adventures: Characters in planetary adventures will be drawn to these alien worlds through sometimes mysterious and unexplained means, and will often struggle to understand their new environment as well as overcome the initial challenges facing them. They will discover epic and longstanding racial hatreds between rival cultures and species, and in many cases, will bring peace through their heroic deeds and courageous hearts. Betrayal, epic love, dramatic betrayals, sudden reversals of fortune, alliances with strange creatures, lost cities full of ancient and forgotten technology... these are all staples of planetary adventure.



Try non-human characters for a change of pace.

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Non-Human Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Splitting Attack and Parry Skills, Total Hit Points.

World War II

This covers the period immediately before and after World War II, an era marked by international turmoil, strong nationalistic fervor, global conflict, and espionage. This is also a good setting for war-era super hero activity.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a World War II or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, and Writer.

Common Powers: World War II settings can include magic and sorcery (the upper echelon of the Third Reich were believers in magic as a means to power), or super powers with the rise of some of the world's first costumed superheroes.

Technology: Once more the call of war speeds the pace of technological development. Improvements in manufacturing were devised to increase the speed at which supplies and needed equipment could reach the war front, as well as to accommodate a smaller and newer work force (since the men were at war, women filled their roles in industry). New developments in war machines included bigger and better battleships, increased use of submarines, tanks, and airplanes, but the most noteworthy change to science and technology was the development of the atomic bomb. This fundamentally changed the world and the shape of science and politics forever.

Inspirations: Any World War II movie, book, or even television series can be influential, from *Das Boot*, *Saving Private Ryan*, to *Hogan's Heroes*. Computer games using World War II as a setting are commonplace.

Adventures: Characters can be resistance fighters in Occupied Europe, Allied soldiers or agents on the battlefield, spies behind enemy lines, crime-fighters and government agents fighting saboteurs back home, or even costumed super heroes battling at home and abroad.

Suggested Optional Rules: Education/Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Sanity.

Noir

This is the world that originated in the novels of the 1940s and 1950s, epitomized in films. Noir, as a setting, is almost always urban and defined by a bleak worldview (*noir* is French for *black*). World-weary heroes with troubled pasts, alcoholic socialites, bad marriages, unexpected but inevitable betrayals, passionless seductions, etc. are all common in this genre. Usually the protagonists in noir settings are haunted by inner demons, jaded and struggle to survive, alone against a hostile and uncaring universe. Most noir settings are in the United States, though there is little reason they cannot be set elsewhere, and there are many compelling reasons for noir settings in postwar European countries, such as Germany, Russia, and France.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a noir or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Clerk, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Entertainer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Thief, and Writer.

Common Powers: Powers rarely play any part in noir settings, though psychic abilities may be an interesting addition. There is a small subgenre of magic noir, where hardboiled private eyes either oppose sorcery or use it, and it may be an accepted part of the background or relatively unknown.

Technology: Equivalent to postwar America and Europe.

Inspirations: The novels of Dashiell Hammet, Mickey Spillane, etc. and the films based on their works, such as *The Maltese Falcon*, etc.

Adventures: Noir adventures are often mysteries or concerned with ethical and moral quandaries, such as 'no way out' scenarios where normal people are trapped by bad circumstances and resort to desperate measures.

Suggested Optional Rules: Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points.

Modern

This era is our own, at the eve or dawn of the twenty-first century, with a considerably-advanced civilization and technology progressing at an unimaginable pace. This setting is also the default era for thrillers and modern horror. The Modern era could also incorporate any period post World War II, through the 1950s, 1960s, the Cold War, the turn of the millennium, and even the next decade or so.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a modern or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Computer Tech, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Farmer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, and Writer.

Common Powers: Any power can be made to fit in a modern setting, provided it is accommodated in the background. Strange government experiments might create mutations or super powers, and occult thrillers can use magic or sorcery. The former Soviet Union spent vast resources exploring the existence and use of psychic abilities—who knows what they discovered?

Technology: The modern world, depending on where you define it, can range anywhere from post-WWII to the current year. You are the best judge of what technologies existed in that period, and what was available. Depending on how old you are, you could even remember scientific breakthroughs and when new kinds of vehicles, equipment, etc. became commercially available. You may even find a valuable resource in your parents and grandparents, or other relatives who've lived through these years and have firsthand knowledge to share with you about the sort of things that were available to them.

Inspirations: Any contemporary television shows, movies, books, newspapers, and especially tabloids can provide inspiration for modern adventure settings.

Adventures: As noted above, adventures can range from horror, thrillers, military action, spies, corporate intrigue, and many other potential avenues of action to explore. Isolated elements of science fiction or fantasy can be added here to great effect. The Cold War itself presents a wonderful number of adventure ideas for international intrigue and conspiracies, and adding the aliens-among-us element broadens the net considerably. Usually with modern settings, it's best to set a single theme (military, occult horror, modern espionage,

etc.) and stick with it, only throwing in alternate elements when they're required or would not invalidate the main premise. It's also useful to come up with a background for the setting if it differs significantly from our own world.

Suggested Optional Rules: These can vary by genre.

Super World

This is the modern world, but one where costumed super heroes have been a part of history and the fabric of society. Their powers grew as time marched on, and their numbers swelled from a few almost 75 years ago to hundreds, or even thousands. Super powers first became known in the 1930s as mysterious masked crime-fighters and criminal masterminds waged war in the streets. In the trenches of World War II, they fought alongside the troops on either side. In the 1950s, their adventures became incredibly bizarre and expansive, while the 1960s saw sobering revelations as they were forced to deal with social issues and political turmoil. Things settled down for the super heroes for a while. Then, in the 1980s things got dark. Many super heroes were forced to face their own mortality, and villains went to previously-unimagined extremes of depravity and ruthlessness. This continued through the 1990s, until a veritable explosion of super powered humans emerged into the world. Some thought it was a genetic quirk meant to inspire heroism in humanity, while others feared mutation as a principle threat to humankind. Only in the early years of the 21st century has a respite emerged from the time of darkness.

Character Types: Any profession is suitable for a super world setting.

Common Powers: Any power works in a super world setting, and many characters have more than one power type.

Technology: Exactly as the modern era. Though super science is commonplace among super heroes and villains, it has yet to make a meaningful impact on the lives of most normal men and women.

Inspirations: Super hero comic books, graphic novels, novels, television series, cartoons, and movies.

Adventures: Super hero adventures virtually write themselves. Usually, it is only a matter of determining what a particular super villain or malevolent organization wants, and a means for the characters to become aware of it. Super heroes often wrestle with the challenges of dealing with alter egos and secret identities, and sometimes must deal with complex and thorny issues of right and wrong. They may even be on the wrong side of the law, whether they deserve to be so or not. A super world campaign can vary from a flashy

four-colored setting with vaguely ridiculous villains, a near-mythical treatment of super heroes as modern demigods, giddy exploration of the galaxy and strange corners of the earth, gritty street crime distinguished only by spandex, or even a paramilitary framework for world-changing super hero intervention. The gamemaster should come up with a few elements of alternate history, such as other non-player character super heroes, a brief history of super heroes in the world, and the different ways that the world treats super heroes (mockery, adulation, contempt, etc.).

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-Human Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Post-Apocalyptic

This setting assumes a catastrophe that forever shatters the modern world, plunging it into a primitive state where humankind must struggle to survive. The causes are often unimportant—a limited nuclear exchange, aliens attack, the breakdown of society, an unstoppable disease, some biological experiment run amok, an environmental catastrophe, or some other instance where Things Fell Apart. Staples of this setting include mutants, recovered technology, and gangs of powerful thugs who prey upon the weak. In some cases, post-apocalyptic settings are like Westerns, with small enclaves of suspicious townsfolk and wandering loners, usually relying on their wits and weapons to survive. Another take on the post-apocalyptic setting is that the catastrophe wasn't biological or brought about by human means . . . instead, it was a supernatural apocalypse, either religious (a battle between Heaven and Hell, where Earth loses) or perhaps the stars were finally right, and heralded a dark victory, such as the alien gods of H. P. Lovecraft's stories rising from their eons-old exiles and claiming the Earth as their prize.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a post-apocalyptic or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Computer Tech, Cowboy, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: The most likely forms of powers are mutations, from radiation, while psychic and super powers may also have developed from the fallout.



*Roleplaying is great for What-If adventures.
What if that virus hadn't been so effective?*

Centuries or even millennia after the cataclysm, people may have rediscovered magic or sorcery as well.

Technology: Depending on when the bombs dropped (or the cataclysm happened), technology can be antiquated compared to that of the modern world, or it can feature scientific advances far removed from our own time period. A recommendation to the gamemaster is to stick closer to home with the level of pre-apocalypse technology, as it makes players have an easier time of identifying the world they know, though in ruins. However, gamemasters may wish to spice up their post-apocalyptic world with jet packs, flying cars, and laser pistols, creating a retro-future setting that has elements of post-apocalyptic society mixed alongside the futuristic elements of ruined technology that has yet to be invented.

Inspirations: *The War of the Worlds* (book and film), the *Mad Max* film trilogy, the *Planet of the Apes* movies and book, *A Boy and His Dog*, *Damnation Alley*, Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* movies, *The Matrix* films, *The Dark Tower* novels, the *Fallout* series of computer games.

Adventures: Post-apocalyptic adventures are often dealing with the brutality of survival, or the efforts at rebuilding some corner of society. Depending on the nature of the catastrophe and the pre-war world, there may be an element of discovering old technology and learning what can be found within the ruins. Other ele-



ments can be easily added to post-apocalyptic settings—zombies, intelligent ape overlords, and aliens are popular choices. Another popular motif is to advance the setting by so far that magic works, and the ruins of our own culture are like ancient mysteries to an otherwise fantasy-based setting.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-Human Characters, Sanity.

Near-Future/Cyberpunk

This setting assumes a natural evolution of darker trends in the modern world, with humanity continuing to interface with technology and losing something in the process. Mega-corporations have assumed near-governmental levels of control over citizens, and knowledge (usually about tech) is the most valuable currency. Life is quick, convenient, cheap, and readily disposable. The union of humanity and machines has led to astonishing developments in genetic manipulation, and the informational world of cyberspace has become more real to some than the dark, crowded streets of the urban world.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a near-future, cyberpunk, or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Beggar, Clerk, Computer Tech, Cowboy, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest,

Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Any power can exist in this setting, though almost all of them will be simulated by technology.

Technology: These settings are often described as the modern world on overdrive, where the budding technologies of the present day are antiquated and quaint. Brand names should be everywhere, implying that some of the emergent companies of today will become ubiquitous in the future.

Inspirations: *Blade Runner*; most novels or stories by William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, or Neal Stephenson; the *Matrix* films; anime like *Appleseed*, *Akira*, *Ghost in the Shell*, etc.

Adventures: Cyberpunk settings are often dystopian, where protagonists are loners or hustlers, trying to survive in the shadows. Technology has increased depersonalization, and social structures are superficial, controlled by some corporate interest. Rebellion and the quest for identity are usual themes in these adventures, and characters can find themselves running for their lives, trying to stay ahead of monolithic, impersonal foes that seem to be everywhere.

Suggested Optional Rules: Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Space Travel

A setting where humanity has not yet encountered alien life, or where such an encounter has been minimal, the world of space exploration is either underway or has been recently established. In a space travel setting, life continues much as it did previous to the expansion into the stars. Political conflicts have shaped humanity's spread across the stars, and ever-present corporations and monolithic governments are a common feature. Most of humanity spends their time in colonization of habitable planets, or transporting goods from one place to another across a sea of darkness.

Character Types: Professions suitable for a space travel or equivalent setting include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Clerk, Computer Tech, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, and Writer.

Common Powers: Mutations and psychic abilities are the most likely to be encountered in a space-faring setting.

Technology: The theme of this setting is that humanity has developed ships capable of traveling the immense distances of space, making space travel to other planets achievable in human lifetimes. Alien life forms have yet to be encountered, or have had a minimal impact on human technology.

Inspirations: *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the *Mars* novels by Kim Stanley Robinson, the *Alien* films, *Mission to Mars*, *Red Planet*, *Silent Running*, or even a science-fiction horror film like *Event Horizon*. Television series like *Firefly* or *Battlestar Galactica* (either version). Many of Larry Niven's novels such as *The Mote in God's Eye* and his early *Known Space* books are also suitable for their attention to scientific plausibility in humanity's exploration of the galaxy.

Adventures: One of the more obvious adventures is a first contact scenario with unknown alien life, where the protagonists must deal with an alien species and all that it represents. Such an encounter could be hostile, or benevolent. Exploring the edges of known space will likely thrust humanity face-to-face with other mysteries, and in some cases, will present a challenge to survival.

Suggested Optional Rules: Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Non-Human Characters, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

Space Opera

This is a catch-all setting description for the fusion of space travel and mysticism, where adventure is writ large against a galactic background. In space opera settings, characters can be lowly serfs on backwater planets who save the universe from evil galactic empires, or even officers onboard a flagship of a space faring government as they attempt to map and bring order to the reaches of known and unknown space. In some space opera settings, mystical powers may exist—psychic or alien belief systems that give strange powers to their users. Space opera is rife with alien, non-human species that work and live alongside humanity, though non-human-centered space opera is rare.

Character Types: Professions suitable for space opera settings include Artist, Assassin, Athlete, Clerk, Computer Tech, Craftsman, Criminal, Detective, Doctor, Engineer, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, Gambler, Hunter, Journalist, Laborer, Lawman, Lawyer, Mechanic, Merchant, Noble, Occultist, Pilot, Politician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist, Servant, Shaman, Slave, Soldier, Spy, Student, Teacher, Technician, Thief, Tribesman, Warrior, Wizard, and Writer.

Common Powers: Depending on the setting, mutations, psychic, and super powers may all be encountered. Some may be alien abilities, while others may be granted by technology, or represent an advanced understanding of the universe. You may also wish magic and sorcery to operate under the same premise.

Technology: The level of technology in space opera is almost always erratic, differing wildly from planet to planet. Some planets may have only primitive weapons and engineering, while others will be extremely technologically advanced. This latter group often will utilize their superior technology to exploit those less developed. Energy weapons, lasers, personal space ships, energy shields . . . these are all suitable tech for a space opera setting.

Inspirations: The *Star Wars* films, E.E. 'Doc' Smith's *Lensmen* novels, etc. *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (comic strip, television series, etc.). *Star Trek* (television series, books, films, games, etc.).

Adventures: The space opera is essentially a high-tech update of a sword and sorcery setting. Substitute magic for psychic abilities, broadswords for energy blades, and elves and dwarves for aliens. Add robots and you're dealing with the same adventure elements. Sailing ships become space ships, and horses are now small one-man fighters. Prophecies and ancient relics abound, though their origins may be different. Characters in space opera



Roleplaying can take you back to those T.V. shows of yore: relive that "three hour tour", journey where "no one has gone before", or take some other fantastic journey.

settings will embark on high adventures, fighting evil overlords, and attaining grand goals such as kingship or restoration of a previous, golden age.

Suggested Optional Rules: Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-Human Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

Combined Settings

You may take one of the aforementioned sections and combine it with some new element, creating a unique setting full of interesting and exciting adventure opportunities. Following are a number of short examples of this sort of thing:

Samurai and Six-Guns: This crushes the Imperial Asia and Wild West settings, based on a unique historical bit of trivia. When Commodore Perry opened Japan up to the West, he brought back with him almost a hundred Japanese officials, scholars, envoys, and samurai who explored the Old West on a train's whistle-stop tour. The juxtaposition of the American West with the near-alien Japanese of the time period has been explored in films such as *Red Sun*, *Shanghai Noon*, and *Shanghai Knights*. Players would be either visiting samurai or Japanese nobles, set adrift in an unfathomable new world.

Holy War of the Worlds: Imagine that the Martians from H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* arrived a thousand years earlier, just in time to be thought of as the heralds of the end of the world, with the first millennium about to end. Believing the alien conquerors to be the warriors of Hell, the nations of old Europe unite and strike back, using siege engines and divinely-granted magic as their strongest weapons. This setting combines the Post-Apocalyptic and Dark Ages settings.

Shogun of the Rings: Another trip to the Far East, this one mixes J. R. R. Tolkien's settings with ancient Japan, where a band of plucky heroes must carry an indestructible ring of ancient and evil power across a war-torn countryside, to throw it into the volcano that has awakened inside Mount Fuji. They are opposed every step of the way by the baleful watching eye of the Dark Shogun. Monsters from folklore such as *oni* and *bakemono* replace trolls and orcs, Gollum becomes a demented little *kappa*, the nine Black Riders become demon hags known as *hannya*, and one of the goals becomes the restoration of the true Emperor to the throne.

Multiple Settings

One tremendous advantage to *Basic Roleplaying* is that it is suitable for many different settings. If you can't figure

out what setting to use, why not use them all? You can easily move the player characters through dimensional gateways, through time, or through some other means of transport between settings that allows them to experience a number of different settings. With this method, you can even jump all over the place through time, space, and into alternate realities. The television shows *Sliders* or *Quantum Leap* depicted this situation, where the protagonist or protagonists were drawn across the universe, righting wrongs and attempting to return home.

Alternately, you can do something like the *Highlander* film and television series, where the player characters are essentially immortal and have experiences throughout human history. You can either move everyone forward through time, chronologically, or you can jump back and forth in time. This is somewhat more difficult, given the two problems of coordinating skill and characteristic experience across different timeframes, and the lack of tension in that the player characters know they will survive to be present in later eras.

Powers and Setting

Chapter Four: Powers presents five different systems for powers of various types, giving sample systems for magic, sorcery, super powers, psychic abilities, and mutations. However, the descriptions of powers are not provided with any context—such as what settings these powers are suitable in. This is up to the gamemaster to decide. Many of these will be obvious. For example, sorcery seems a natural fit for a sword and sorcery game, and basic magic is well suited for a high magic environment. Super powers are required for a super hero game. Psychic abilities are ideal for modern games where people exhibit unusual paranormal powers. Mutations go hand-in-hand with post-apocalyptic settings. Each setting description includes the power types it is traditionally associated with. While these are natural combinations, more intriguing settings can come from combining powers in settings that are not immediately obvious. *For example, you might combine the Dark Ages setting with mutations, with the player characters being unlucky enough to have these strange powers. The folk of this era might think these strange abilities and deformities are the result of demonic blood, or that of faeries, and the players are hunted and feared by a world they must protect.*

Adaptation

One of the most obvious means of turning the setting from a particular book or book series, movie, television show, comic book, etc. into a game setting is to adapt it using these rules. The most obvious reason to do this is where a setting appeals to the gamemaster and the players, and there is no available set of rules to play in that world. Though there are a great many licensed games

on the shelves (*Call of Cthulhu*, for example), the number of licensed settings to open settings is quite small.

There are many methods you may choose to use to adapt a setting for use with *Basic Roleplaying*, and the amount of work entailed is almost entirely up to your preferences and available time. Following is an outline of one method for adapting a setting from another medium for use as a game setting:

Fidelity to the Source

The first step is to determine how slavishly you, as the gamemaster, are going to be with the setting. Are you going to try to emulate it exactly, with every piece of known information being treated as inviolable canon, or will you use it as a template and source for your own improvisation and expansion? This can shape the entire focus of what you need to do—some settings are remarkably open for expansion, while others are more limited. You should determine how much you're going to put into evoking the verisimilitude (the completeness, or realism) of the setting, and how much you're going to allow your own tastes and ideas to dominate—using the basic setting as a springboard for your own ideas as a gamemaster. Neither way is better than the other—they just appeal to different styles of game mastering and different player expectations.

The first method has an undeniable appeal to fans of the original setting the game is based on, though players may feel like they are straight-jacketed based on how slavishly you decide to enforce the setting. Having players who are familiar with the setting and are able to 'buy into' it helps immensely. This decision will also strongly influence the issue of how to treat the player characters in the world, described in "Player and Non-player Characters in an Adapted Setting" below.

The second method is useful for settings with a great deal of improvisation and allowances for new ideas and concepts. Some of the best genres for this are science fiction, super heroic, and fantasy. These allow players a lot of leeway in the degree to which they have to accept the setting, but on the other hand, sometimes this runs into the trap of diverging so greatly from the inspiration that it might have been easier or more fulfilling to create one from whole cloth.

One great idea for gamemasters with established groups of players is to ask the players themselves what they'd like to see in an adapted setting. Open it up for discussion, and see how far they want to stretch the boundaries of the setting.

For example, if you as a gamemaster suggest a Robin Hood campaign, find out how the players want things to go. Do they want to maintain the shape of the stories, where the embattled heroes remain in their woods, trying to win the hearts and minds of the people of Nottingham, until they are captured or killed? Or do they want to play a Robin Hood game where,

once they've slain the Sheriff of Nottingham and Guy of Gisborne, King Richard anoints them the wardens of Sherwood Forest and they become his vassal? Or do they want to play in a supernaturally themed Sherwood game, where they fight werewolves (with silver arrows), encounter the dwindling denizens of Faerie, and deal with ancient gods and magic from before the Normans came?

Ideally, they players will have an idea for what they want to play in that meshes well with what the gamemaster would like to provide, and everyone will be happy. Others may be very clear on what 'breaks' a setting for them, and in the best case, the gamemaster can learn about it ahead of time and get some good player investment in the setting beforehand. Having players who are interested in the setting and eager to explore it can make a great deal of difference in the day-to-day play experience. Don't expect a ton of feedback, though. It might be that your gaming group is happy to let you run the show, and sit back and let you surprise them with whatever you come up with. Some players aren't very specific with what they want—they're just happy to be gaming!

Player and Non-player Characters in an Adapted Setting

Adapting a setting from some other medium for use with a game is easier if you first determine what the standing of the player character is in the setting. If the setting is strongly character-based, around a small group of heroes, do you want the player characters to be like them, or do you want the player characters to replace them, or do you want the player characters to cross paths with them? These are three entirely different ways to approach a setting with "native" protagonists.

Often, the main reason for wanting to use a setting is to play through adventures like the characters depicted in the original medium, so the first option ('be like them') is usually a safe bet. *For an example from history, a game set in the time of King Arthur might have a group of knights who go out and face the challenges that the Knights of the Round Table did, though the setting does not need to be in old England. Only the kinds of adventures and tones are similar.*

Some players resent the notion that they might live in the shadows of a much more famous group of characters, and the best option for these kinds of players is to actually have them replace the heroes. This can be done with their own main characters, or allowing them to play the originals, and make decisions for themselves. *To reuse the previous example, in this type of game, the player characters are King Arthur's major knights instead of Gawain, Lancelot, Kay, etc. Those knights never existed in this world. Alternately, the gamemaster can allow the players to actually take on the roles of Arthur, Gawain, Lancelot, Kay, etc. Hopefully, they'll avoid using their fore-*

knowledge of events from the Arthurian stories, and may avoid the same fates as these mighty heroes.

The third of these methods is where the player characters exist in the same world as the protagonists from the original medium, and may know them, be related to them, or may even cross paths (and swords) with them. *The Arthurian example might have the player characters be a band of knights loyal to Arthur and members of the Round Table, who regularly break bread with the likes of Gawain, Lancelot, and Kay. Another way of doing this might be to have the player characters as the knights in Mordred's household, a place where Arthur and his band of thugs are held in low esteem. In such a campaign, Arthur's knights may be viewed as the bad guys, and the player characters on the side of angels. Perhaps the gamemaster has introduced a twist to the background where this is absolutely correct.*

Once you know what the players will be doing in the world, and how any potential non-player characters will be treated, it's time to move onto the exact setting.

Know the Setting

First, you should become familiar with the tone and details of the original setting. If it's a movie or television show, you may want to buy the DVD and take notes on any information that may be important. If there's a sourcebook or novelization (many movies and television shows have these), that might make things easier. It's even easier to turn to the Internet, where in many cases fans of the setting may have already done a lot of the footwork for you, putting together online encyclopedias, etc. The quality of the information you might find varies widely and is sometimes unreliable, however, so be careful about sources. These rules assume you're doing it yourself, but the guidelines provided here can aid in organizing and dealing with information from other sources.

If it's a book or comic you want to adapt, the work is a bit easier: one trick is to read the book slowly with a pad of paper (notebook, laptop, etc.) alongside. Any time you read something interesting about the world, the major characters, the geography, customs, food, languages, etc., write it down. You should be the judge of how much information is too much. If it's the kind of thing you don't think will ever come up in play, and doesn't really impact the plot... don't bother learning it, or write it down and file it away.

If you're doing it on paper, then you might want to start a bunch of different pages, with headers to collect the information. Here's a sample list of potential sections you could use to organize the info you want to utilize:

- ❖ **CHARACTER OPTIONS:** This may be professions, races, etc. that your player characters are likely to be drawn from.
- ❖ **NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS OF NOTE:** Important non-player characters from the setting that you want players to know about, or will use in your game. Not

everyone who's named is important, but sometimes it's a good idea to know who the kings, warlords, or possible religious leaders are in a setting.

- ❖ **GROUPS/ORGANIZATIONS:** This could be large groups like a particular mercenary army, a terrorist organization, a secret cult, an elite order of assassins, or a brotherhood of wizards.
- ❖ **WEAPONS & ARMOR:** Whatever type of gear is commonly used in combat—though not all settings are based on combat, so many are that is usually necessary to know this.
- ❖ **VEHICLES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT:** A general overview of the technology or items of note from the setting.
- ❖ **RACES:** This can range from ethnicity (using the optional "Cultural Modifiers" rules on page 38) to different races (in the 'Elf, Dwarf, Lizard-Man, Insectoid, etc.' variety, some of which can be found in **Chapter Eleven: Creatures**).
- ❖ **GEOGRAPHY:** Places of note. If you can find a map of the setting somewhere, you're ahead of the game. If geography and travel doesn't play a part of your game, then give this only fleeting attention. The setting often dictates how much attention you need to pay to geography—fantasy settings are often very tied into geographical locales and travel, while superhero adventure is usually set in a generic city, with more focus on travel from extreme (and nonexistent) locations like lunar bases, secret underground lairs, and flying fortresses than the differences between Paris and Lyons, for example.
- ❖ **RELIGION:** If the setting supposes that there is a god (or gods), and that this divine being (or beings) has some actual effect on the world, this is fairly important. If the optional Allegiance rules are being used (see the end of this chapter), this will become necessary to flesh out as much as possible.
- ❖ **SOCIETY:** This covers any elements of the society, such as the type of government, the family unit, and any other such information that may be important to player characters and the campaign.
- ❖ **ANIMALS:** Animals common to the setting, and potential monsters or supernatural beings characters would know about and may fight.
- ❖ **POWERS:** Is there magic in the setting? Super powers? Psychic abilities? What kind of magic is there? Is it inspired by the gods, or is it secretive and ineffective? Notes about these, including specific powers, may help a lot if you want to make sure that the powers presented in the rules match those from the setting. The power systems from **Chapter Four: Powers** may be adapted, or provide inspiration for new systems.
- ❖ **ADVENTURE SEEDS:** Most dramatic settings are full of inspiration for adventures, and this is a good place to put the ideas you get for player characters in the setting. You may choose to rigidly adapt the events of the setting, sending your players down the same encounters and plots of the protagonist or protagonists, or you can use the information from the setting to explore entirely new aspects of the world. Choose what feels best for you and for your players, and look at the game setting with that in mind.

- ❖ **HISTORY:** If any events prior to the events of the source material are mentioned, you may wish to make note of them. They can provide jumping-off points for new adventures, or give your background a bit of authenticity when you mention some significant (or insignificant) past event. You may even choose to set your campaign in the past or future of the setting, which would increase the need for these sorts of notes—though in the future, the current events are the past history.
- ❖ **TRADITIONS:** What are some of the social customs or traditions that the setting uses? Is there a rite of passage that all characters of a type must survive? How much attention do normal people in the setting pay to old rituals, traditions, etc. These can range from adding a distinctive greeting from the setting, to great sources of potential conflict and adventure.
- ❖ **RULES OF THE SETTING:** Here's a good place to put the "rules" of the setting—that is, the unwritten codes that the setting seems to work under. Some of these might be "sorcery is evil", "an imbalance between order and chaos is bad", or "the universe is full of evil alien gods of immense power, and humanity is fundamentally alone." These themes can guide a campaign, and help you understand the setting from a "big picture" sense.

There are undoubtedly many headings you could use, but those are a good place to start. Obviously some settings won't require many of these—a modern-day game probably doesn't need to delve overmuch into races, religion, and animals, while a fantasy setting may have the most robust entries in these sections.

If you're using an electronic form of recording and storing information, you have it much easier. You can compile everything in one big file, and sort it later. You might even just begin each entry with a specific header and sort them automatically later. *For example, you might write of a supporting character in the espionage novel you're adapting to use as the game setting something like the following: "NPC: Reginald Martin—tall and dark haired, probably British. Spy. Carries a Glock. Educated in France? Long history of black-bag operations. Hates Russia. Long scar on forearm."* You can continue to amend it when you'd like as you learn more about the thing being described, and when you're done, you have a personalized digest of information about everything in the world.

An ambitious or tech-savvy gamemaster may even go so far as to employ a web-based tool such as a Wiki for use cataloging a fictional setting for game use. You can even enlist your players in the effort! If they're willing to help, assign each of them a piece of the source material and ask them to contribute to its development. You can keep a Wiki friends-only and let your players help with the cataloging of the world.

All this aside, beyond a certain point (you will know it when you reach it—and it differs from gamemaster to gamemaster) if a setting requires a great amount of effort to catalog and organize, you should examine how much of what you're doing will actually affect game

play, and allocate your time and energy accordingly. Some gamemasters thrive on exhaustively cataloging all of the elements from a setting, while others will read (or view) it once and decide "*I know enough now to run this. Let's go!*" Figure out which of these extremes you're closest to and act accordingly.



OPTION

Many settings include the belief in, if not the actual presence of, higher divine powers. These could be gods, angels, saints, devils, divine principles, or even abstract philosophical concepts that have been codified and personified. If the player character consistently behaves in a manner indicative of his or her belief in one of these principles, the character is considered *allied* to that force. This alliance with a divine being (or principle) is measured with the player character's *allegiance* total. A player character that performs tasks or behaves in a certain manner favored by their deity (or deities) can earn points that indicate dedication. The player character's allegiance can change during the course of a campaign, as he or she performs actions that are looked upon favorably by his or her god or other being.

Settings can have multiple divine forces, in opposition to one another, or even neutral and coexisting side-by-side. In such cases, the player character does not necessarily need to focus his or her attention on allegiance towards one divine being, but might even be split between multiple forces, earning allegiance points in more than one category. People don't always behave consistently from one day to the next, and even the most moral and ethical person can commit acts of incredible evil. The system of allegiance takes into account the concept that a character can have allegiance scores towards opposed or multiple divinities (or principles).

When a character's allegiance score in one category is 20 points higher than any other allegiance value, he or she is considered *allied* with that force, and may achieve certain benefits as a result of that allegiance. The player character must consciously acknowledge this allegiance however, despite any points accrued. While an allegiance may seem apparent to others based on what they observe of a character's deeds, he or she does not enjoy any benefits from allegiance if he or she does not tacitly acknowledge the allegiance.

Allegiance points are almost never lost. They are always positive or zero. If for some reason they are reduced, they cannot go below a score of zero points. Allegiance points are always a reward for behavior of one

type or another, thus having multiple (or at least opposed) forces is ideal. Behavior that would be punished in one belief system should be rewarded in another, so that the player character is not being penalized allegiance points by acting against the divine force he or she favors, but is instead being awarded points by the force that opposes his or her favored god. As the player character gains higher levels of allegiance, he or she may conceivably attain status within the faith or church of the force that he or she is allied to. The player character will have certainly drawn the attention (if appropriate) of that divine presence.

Starting Allegiance

If allegiance is used, it's likely that a character has earned allegiance points during his or her life prior to the beginning of the campaign (or scenario). To simulate this, roll 1D6-2 (minimum 0) a number of times equal to the number of allegiances present in the campaign. At the gamemaster's discretion, the player can either associate the allegiance scores as he or she sees fit (indicating an element of control over one's destiny and past behavior), or apply the allegiance totals in order as they're rolled (indicating circumstances out of one's control, or a conflicted spiritual background). If a power system is tied to any spiritual allegiance, the learning of magic or sorcery spells may provide a point of allegiance each. Similarly, mutations might be each be worth a point to a chaotic allegiance. The gamemaster may also allow player characters of the occultist, priest, and shaman professions an additional number of allegiance points equal to 1/2 POW (round up) to be distributed among allegiances as desired.

Increasing Allegiance

Actions that favor the allegiance can increase the player character's allegiance score. After an adventure, provided that the player character has behaved in a manner favored by the divine force, you may ask the player to perform an allegiance check. This is performed identically to an experience check (see "Skill Improvement" on page 182 for details of how this works). If successful, the player character's allegiance score increases by 1D6 percentiles, as would any other skill.

If the player character has performed actions encouraged by multiple allegiances, you should call for experience checks for any and all allegiances that apply, each gaining 1D6 percentiles if successful.

Multiple Allegiances

Above any guidelines proposed by allegiance, the player character should have free will, able to act as he or she pleases. The player character can have scores in as many of the allegiance categories as there are forces to be allied with. However, the player character's alliance

is only with the highest of the scores and then only if the score for the highest force exceeds the next highest amount by 20 points or more, and then only if the player character acknowledges the allegiance.

Maintaining Allegiance

When an allied player character acts contrary to the interests of his or her allegiance, you may require the player to succeed in a D100% roll to test the standing of the allegiance. If the roll is above the player character's current allegiance score, you should increase the player character's opposed allegiance score by an amount equal to 1D6 or 1D8, depending on the force and at your discretion. If the roll is equal to or less than the player character's current allegiance score, there is no consequence.

If the player character has an allegiance score of 100 or more, and has made commitment to that cause, you should warn the player that any actions taken against that allegiance are at the player character's peril. A player character with a strong allegiance may lose the benefits of the allegiance and be considered an enemy to anyone who follows that allegiance. You may choose to have some form of divine or karmic punishment inflicted on the player character, or he or she may have to undertake some great penance in order to see benefits reinstated. Suggestions for this could be fasting and prolonged meditation, a quest on behalf of the divine force, a act of significant contrition, a personal sacrifice, or a ritual of purification.

Benefits to Allegiance

If using this system, you should decide whether there are any actual game-specific benefits to allegiance, and what those are. If one allegiance grants a benefit, any others should offer equivalent or competitive benefits. Some suggestions for benefits from allegiance include the following:

- ❖ Once the player character's power points are expended, he or she may use up to 1/10 (10%) of his or her current allegiance score as an extra reserve of Power points. These power points must be drawn immediately after the last of the player character's normal power points are spent, otherwise the player character will fall unconscious. This can be done up to three times during the course of a game session. When the player character has used these power points, he or she must undergo an allegiance check at the end of the adventure (see "Increasing Allegiance", above). The allegiance points do not change with this benefit. This allegiance is suitable for divine forces emphasizing disorder, magic, or other chaotic principles.
- ❖ The player character can use up to 1/5 (20%) of his or her current allegiance score as temporary Hit Points, once per game session. These hit points are expended before the player character's normal hit points, and are not regenerated or restored in any way if lost. At the end of the session, any hit points in excess of the player charac-

ter's regular hit points total disappear. If the player character uses these extra hit points, he or she must undergo an allegiance check at the end of the adventure (see "Increasing Allegiance", above). The allegiance points do not change with this benefit. This benefit from allegiance is suitable for divine forces that represent harmony, endurance, or withstanding extremes.

- ❖ The player character can use up to his or her entire current allegiance score as a reservoir of extra skill points that can be added to existing skill points for specific rolls. This can be done up to three times per session. The player can choose which skills to add these points to, and how many points to add. The increases to these skill points must be declared before dice are rolled, and the adjusted numbers are utilized if determining special successes, etc. These points can only be used for skill checks, and not checks on the resistance table or characteristic checks. Allegiance points do not change with this benefit. These bonus points cannot be used for an allegiance check, and any skills that these points augment are not allowed for experience checks, unless the skill was used in an unmodified fashion before or after the use of the allegiance skill points. When using these extra skill points, the player character must undergo an allegiance check at the end of the adventure (see "Increasing Allegiance" above). This benefit from allegiance is suitable for divine forces emphasizing personal achievement, applications of skill, and faith in the higher force for guidance and victory.
- ❖ Any player character allied with a divine force can attempt to call for divine intervention. The chance of answer or action from the divinity in response to this invocation is equal to a critical success. If a critical success is rolled, you should introduce some level of intervention appropriate to the campaign and the overall level of supernatural presence in the world already. This divine intervention can then take the form of a 100' tall image of the god herself, pointing with a fiery sword at those who threaten the beseeching player character, or it can be subtler, such as a sudden flash of sunlight distracting a foe, allowing the player character to escape.

Similar benefits might be created to provide fatigue points, Sanity points, or even allow for divine inspiration in the form of Idea rolls.

Creating Allegiances

If you decide to utilize the allegiance system in your campaign, you should define the principal force or forces in the setting, and establish what each stands for. It is traditionally better to have at least two forces vying for a player character's allegiance, to emphasize the struggle between one course of belief and action, and another.

For example, you decide that in a high fantasy setting, the principal forces are Order and Chaos. Between these is Neutrality. These forces in this campaign will be represented by divine beings, gods of Order and Chaos, with a balancing force of Neutrality as more of a principle with servants than an outright divine manifestation. The three allegiances are Order, Neutrality, and Chaos.

Next, you should establish what sorts of behavior each of these forces emphasize, and what they will award allegiance points for.

For example, you decide next that Order emphasizes conformity of spirit, taming the wild, encouraging civilization and strengthening the social structures and laws of a realm. Chaos has the goals of encouraging anarchy, individuality, freedom from bondage and conformity, exploration of the new, and challenging authority. Both Order and Chaos advocate the destruction or defeat of the other's forces and allies. Neutrality will encourage self-reliance, learning, harmonious existence, balanced action, and allowing equal representation of all forces, dynamic and passive, in the world. It does not advocate the destruction or defeat of either Order or Chaos, merely the thwarting of each when they go to extremes.

The next step is to determine how many allegiance points will be awarded for various actions. A useful activity is to create a checklist of actions which are likely to occur during the course of the adventure or campaign, and decide which force will award allegiance points for each action. Following is a short list of actions that might draw the attention of divine beings or forces. For each action, it is suggested that you list the allegiance reward for an opposed action. Major activities could be worth as many as 3 points of allegiance, significant ones could be worth 2, and minor ones would be worth only 1 point. It is recommended that most allegiance point rewards be in the 1-2 point range.

- ❖ Aiding someone weaker than yourself
- ❖ Behaving dishonorably
- ❖ Behaving honorably
- ❖ Charity towards the weak or destitute
- ❖ Creating something to honor your allied force
- ❖ Destroying a supernatural being
- ❖ Destroying something sacred to another force
- ❖ Freeing someone from imprisonment
- ❖ Invoking your allied force disrespectfully
- ❖ Invoking your allied force with respect
- ❖ Killing someone in cold blood (murder)
- ❖ Killing someone in self-defense
- ❖ Major service to your allegiance
- ❖ Minor service to your allegiance
- ❖ Protecting someone
- ❖ Saving someone's life
- ❖ Theft

After this, you must decide whether allegiance offers any particular rewards or whether the allegiance points will merely be a measure of devotion to that force. These can be drawn from the 'Benefits of Allegiance' section or can be others more specific to the nature of the divine force. Furthermore, when the player character reaches a score of 100 or more in a

specific allegiance that he or she acknowledges, when no other allegiance is within 20 points of that allegiance score, he or she may be considered to have become an apotheosis of the allegiance, a paragon of that divine force's will in the world. Apotheosis is described below.

The three allegiances in the example above are obvious ones. A campaign incorporating Christian beliefs might have Heaven and Hell as the two opposed allegiances, with the highest allegiance being a strong indicator as to where the player character will go when he or she dies. A campaign setting with a pantheon of gods could conceivably allow the player character to have allegiance to multiple gods, which is not unusual in history. Such a situation might involve the player character choosing to emphasize his or her devotion to a particular allegiance for an activity governed by that being, such as making sacrifices to a sea god before a long voyage at sea.

Allegiance does not necessarily have to be tied to divine beings from fantasy worlds, or even religions. In a science fiction setting, allegiance could be to something like the light and dark sides of the Force from *Star Wars*. Allegiance can be utilized in a super hero setting, with allegiances being Law and Anarchy, or even Good and Evil or Right and Wrong. Super heroes would gain allegiance by defeating evildoers and saving the innocent, while super villains would be rewarded through committing crime and escaping justice.

Apotheosis

If the player character reaches a total of 100 or more in an allegiance score and is committed to that force, he or she may be asked in a vision to become the servant of that force. Scores in other allegiances do not matter. Apotheosis is not automatic. The player character must demonstrate through the quality of conduct and aspiration that this great honor is warranted, and the force must want him or her. The vision is of blinding intensity, never to be forgotten. If the offer is accepted, an *apotheosis* (literally, deification, but here a permanent alliance of purpose) occurs, changing the player character into a living avatar and steadfast champion of the force. This metaphysical encounter should only occur in campaigns where it is appropriate, and may involve encounters in the waking or dream world, depending on the campaign.

Benefits to allegiance continue to accrue. The player character maintains free will, however, and conceivably can even betray the divine force he or she serves. If the player character refuses apotheosis, then his or her allegiance points merely continue to mount until death or retirement. Accepting apotheosis or not, the benefits of allegiance continue so long as allegiance exists.

Accepting apotheosis may confer one or more significant benefits to the player character. You are encouraged

to craft suitable rewards and benefits. Following are some examples of what apotheosis might bestow upon the player character:

- ❖ A chance of the player character achieving some monumental personal goal, such as meeting his or her one true love, or finding a spiritual retreat where it is possible to achieve perfect happiness and escape from the turmoil of the world. This could even end tragically, as well, with the player character achieving an epic destiny where the only suitable outcome is death.
- ❖ The player character may be granted a limited sort of immortality where his or her body does not age normally, and does not suffer from disease or other afflictions. The player character's healing rate does not change, and he or she can still be slain by weapons or other injury. Twisted gods may choose to make this immortal body a mixed blessing, such as hideous scarring or some supernatural marking that cannot be removed.
- ❖ An increase of the player character's permanent HP to CON + SIZ (or simply doubling current HP, depending whether an alternate HP total is used).
- ❖ The player character may be consumed by the divine force and reborn as a living avatar of that force, losing or gaining characteristic points as appropriate, with his or her maximum PP doubling (though the POW characteristic remains unchanged).
- ❖ Double the skill ratings of any three skills of the player's choice, suitable to the force of allegiance.
- ❖ A weapon, item, or significant artifact is provided to the player character through some divine means, either as the result of a quest the player character must undertake, or some other means of gaining it. This item is considerably powerful and will be recognized by any who share the same allegiance, and likely those who are opposed to it.

The divine force will become much more involved with the player character's life, communicating with him or her frequently and directly. This may even become a hindrance; with the divine force interfering with the player character's life when it does not serve to further the divine force's will or wishes. At this point, the player character has a POW x 3% chance of initiating direct and immediate communication with the divine force.

SANITY

OPTION

Not all wounds bleed. The horrors of war, torture, abuse, or other extremely stressful experiences can drive a player character beyond his or her limit of mental stability, resulting in shock or even madness. Direct confrontations

with the supernatural or cosmic horror can be even more damaging. The following system presents rules for character sanity and insanity. They are most applicable to horror-themed games, but offer an interesting change of pace for any setting. Insanity presents a new kind of vulnerability to the player character, and potentially dire consequences for his or her actions. Madness can also provide opportunities for interesting and extreme role-playing.

If you employ this system, each player character will have a pool of sanity points (abbreviated SAN). Severe stress or confrontations with the supernatural can cause the player character to lose SAN—losing too much too fast can result in temporary or indefinite insanity. Unlike physical wounds, SAN does not naturally regenerate, and there are limited methods of regaining lost sanity points. A more comprehensive treatment of sanity and insanity can be found in *Call of Cthulhu*, Chaosium's flagship horror role-playing game.

Sanity Points (SAN)

As described in "Optional Derived Characteristics" on page 21, the player character's starting SAN total is equal to his or her POW x 5. When calculating the player character's SAN, also calculate his or her Madness Threshold, a number equal to 20% (1/5) of their current SAN rating, rounded up. Initially, this is equal to POW.

For example, Professor of Parapsychology Ellen Etheridge has a POW of 13. She begins play with a SAN rating of 65 (13 x 5 = 65), and 65 SAN. Etheridge's beginning madness threshold is 13 (65/5). Every 5 points of SAN she loses will lower her madness threshold by 1.

Maximum Sanity

The player character's maximum potential SAN is 99, but some factors and conditions can lower this limit. Some examples include:

Blasphemous Knowledge: In-depth knowledge or direct experience of true cosmic horror weakens a character's faith in the very structure of reality. In some settings, blasphemous knowledge is embodied as a skill: Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) for the lore of Lovecraftian, cosmic horrors, or Knowledge (Sorcery) for dark magic drawing its power from primal Chaos and the whims of demons. If the campaign employs such skills, subtract the player character's rating in that skill from 99. If this option is used, the player character should be prohibited from taking any points in such a skill during character creation.

For example, after learning several Secrets-Man-Was-Not-Meant-to-Know, Professor Etheridge has gained a Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) skill of 15%. Her maximum SAN is reduced to 84 (99-15=84).

Extreme Horror: You may rule that horrific long-term experiences might lower the player character's maximum SAN. Only the most extreme conditions should result in such losses; being held captive and frequently beaten or tortured might cost 1 point of maximum SAN per month, for example.

Using SAN: Sanity Checks

Whenever the player character confronts an unnerving or horrifying situation, you should test his or her emotional stability and resiliency by calling for a Sanity (SAN) check. Sanity checks are made like a normal skill roll; roll D100 against the player character's *current* SAN. Rolls less than the player character's current SAN are successful; rolls that exceed current SAN fail. Unlike skill rolls, SAN checks do not employ degrees of success or task difficulty. A failed SAN check will always result in the loss of 1 or more SAN. Under the most extreme conditions, even a successful roll can cost SAN, but rarely more than 1 point.

For example, while investigating a haunted house, Professor Etheridge finds herself face to face with an apparition, the ghost of the owner's murdered wife! As the cadaverous wraith flies toward Etheridge, blood pouring from its slashed throat, you ask the player to make a SAN check. Etheridge's current SAN is 65. She rolls a 74, a failure! Etheridge is about to lose some SAN...

The player character should only make one SAN check for a specific cause or monster per encounter, though subsequent events might require other sanity checks. Meeting a demon in battle requires a SAN check, and watching it devour another character two rounds later would prompt another!

Losing SAN

Failed SAN rolls (or even some successful ones) result in SAN loss. The sanity cost for an event is written as two numbers separated by a slash; 0/1D6 for example, or 1/1D4+1. The number before the slash equals the number of SAN lost for a successful roll, the number after the slash (usually the product of a die roll) indicates how many SAN are lost if the SAN check fails. The Sample Sanity Losses table on the preceding page serves as a guide to potential SAN losses.

A Guide to Sanity Loss

A player character may lose SAN when he or she encounters the supernatural, uses certain kinds of magic, gains blasphemous knowledge, or experiences some kind of stressful event. But exactly how much SAN should be lost? Use the following descriptions as a guideline to assigning SAN losses.

1 or 1D2 SAN: Discomfort or slight confusion. A tiny loss, barely noticed by most characters. Losses like these

don't create much excitement or apprehension in players, either, but do serve to remind them that greater horrors may lurk ahead. These losses mostly cover mundane events, and should only be used for the weakest of creatures or spells.

1D3 SAN: *Fright, confusion, or disgust.* Three or four such experiences in a short time might drive an unstable character insane. Most natural events that are not extremely awful or shocking should cost this much SAN.

1D4 SAN: *Panic, disorientation, or loathing.* Few will go insane from one instance of SAN loss at this degree. Bizarre natural events might provoke such a loss, as would mechanical or ethereal monsters. Oversized variants of normal animals or extreme predators (a spider the size of a chair or a great white shark, for example) might also qualify, if the player character is endangered by them. Lesser black magic falls into this category.

1D6 or 1D6+1 SAN: *Nausea or Stupefaction.* This is the lowest level of SAN loss that can cause temporary insanity, and should serve as the average SAN cost for supernatural events. Monsters in this category should be bizarre and alien, but still apparently able to be defeated. Extremely dangerous animals (the great white shark in *Jaws*, for example, or a spider the size of a car) also qualify. Powerful black magic should cost this much SAN to employ.

1D8, 1D6+2, 2D4 SAN: *Shock.* The average loss of these rolls is close to 5 SAN, making temporary insanity a real danger. Few natural events are this shocking, and most patently bizarre or impossible events should fall into this range. Monsters in this category should be truly horrific, and worthy of respect or terror (dragons, tyrannosaurs, or a Balrog from *The Lord of the Rings*, for example). Spells in this category have impressive and horrifying results.

1D10 SAN: *Major shock.* From this level on, temporary insanity is increasingly likely from a single roll: the average result here is 5–6 SAN. Weird events or rash actions should rarely cost this much. Monsters generating such results should be extremely alien or very deadly. Unimpressive deities might fall into this category. Spells in this range are truly extreme.

2D6 or 2D8 SAN: *Mind-damaging horror.* Around half of the time, normal characters will be sent screaming into indefinite insanity with a single loss at this level, and roughly a quarter will go permanently insane. Rarely used for monsters or spells. This level of SAN loss can devastate an entire group or derail a storyline, particularly in the early stages.

1D20, 2D10, 3D6 SAN: *Extreme horror.* This is the highest level of SAN loss most characters can be expected to weather—most will risk indefinite insanity; temporary insanity is nearly certain. Monsters in this

Sample Sanity Losses

SAN lost	Unnerving or Horrific Situation
0/1	Suffer a shock or extreme surprise.
0/1D2	Surprised to find mangled animal carcass.
0/1D3	Surprised to find human corpse.
0/1D3	Having a close brush with death (near fall, car crash, being shot or stabbed, etc.).
0/1D3	Surprised to find severed body part.
0/1D4	Seeing a stream flow with blood.
0/1D4	Unintentionally cause the death of another.
0/1D4	Casting "black magic".**
1/1D4+1	Finding a mangled human corpse.
0/1D6	Awakening trapped in a coffin.
0/1D6	Witnessing a friend's violent death.
0/1D6	Committing willful murder.
0/1D6	Seeing a monster.*
0/1D6	Casting powerful "black magic".**
0/1D6	Seeing something supernatural or patently impossible.*
1/1D6+1	Meeting someone you know to be dead.
0/1D10	Undergoing severe torture.
0/1D10	Casting supremely powerful "black magic".**
1/1D10	Seeing a corpse rise from its grave.
2/2D10+1	Seeing a gigantic severed head fall from the sky.
1D10/1D100	Seeing a primordial god of Chaos in monstrous form.

* These losses should only apply in settings where monsters and the supernatural are not commonly believed to exist. Encountering a beast man or seeing a wizard cast a spell in a sword-and-sorcery style fantasy setting would not normally damage the minds of characters native to that setting.

** In this context, "black magic" means evil magic born of Chaos or cosmic horror. Such magic is rarely beneficial, and can be as harmful to the caster as the target.

range should be appalling, diabolical, hideously lethal, or utterly alien. Minor deities and many of the Great Old Ones of the Cthulhu Mythos fall into this range, as do Michael Moorcock's Lords of Chaos. Few experiences other than resurrection after a gruesome death should so mangle a character's SAN.

3D10 SAN: *Ye liveliest awfulness.* Few encounters in, on, or off this world are worthy of such SAN loss. Single-handedly and willingly causing the destruction of the entire human race or an entire continent might qualify.

D100 SAN: *Ultimate cosmic evil.* You should avoid such losses at all costs unless they are vital to the adventure's plot. One per campaign, at the climax, may be sufficient, and even then only as a consequence for failure. No deed or spell should ever cost this much SAN, and only direct experience of the most powerful and alien of deities provoke losses this great. Somehow witnessing the destruction of the universe might apply.

You may rule that conditions may modify the number of SAN lost from a specific event. *For example, if seeing a zombie costs 0/1D6 SAN, seeing several hundred at once might cost 1D2+4, or even the full 6 point maximum.* Seeing lots of monsters, or being injured by a monster in the same round as seeing it can also cause a maximum SAN loss. Losing more than a few SAN for one check or in a short period of time may drive the player character temporarily or indefinitely insane, as described below. If the player character's SAN is reduced to 0, he or she goes permanently insane and should be removed from play immediately.

For example, in Professor Etheridge's tale of terror, you decide that seeing the terrible apparition incurs a SAN cost of 0/1D6. You roll 1D6, and get a 4. Professor Etheridge loses 4 SAN, bringing her new total to 61. Professor Etheridge remains sane, but decides that discretion is the better part of valor, and flees the attic.

Growing Numb to Horror

Over time, a player character can grow numb to horror, accustomed to a specific kind of event or creature. As a general guideline, once a player character has lost as many SAN points from a specific type of monster or encounter as that event's maximum SAN loss, no further SAN checks are required for a reasonable interval. The interval might be a day, a week, the duration of an adventure, or even forever, at your discretion. The player character can become permanently used to mundane horrors (finding dead bodies, for example), but fear of unnatural monsters or black magic should always creep back into a character's soul eventually.

For example, after running downstairs, Professor Etheridge is horrified to find the bloody wraith staring back at her from the living room mirror! As the ghost moves to attack, the player should make a second sanity check. Etheridge's player rolls an 88, failing again! You roll a 4 on 1D6. Etheridge's current SAN falls to 57. Since Etheridge has now lost a total of 7 SAN from seeing the ghost, you decide that she need not make any more sanity checks for encountering it for the rest of the night. But there's always tomorrow night...

Furthermore, if a player character succeeds in a number of SAN checks against a particular type of creature equal to the maximum number of SAN points the creature's appearance can cause, the player character is assumed to automatically succeed against further viewings of the creature and only loses the lesser amount of SAN (if any) from subsequent encounters. However, this method does

require that you or the player keep track of each successful SAN roll against a specific type of creature.

For example, later in her career, after Professor Etheridge has encountered all manner of terrible apparitions, she has managed to succeed in making her sanity roll six times. As the average SAN loss for a failed SAN roll from encountering a terrible apparition is 0/1D6, Professor Etheridge does not have to make a SAN roll and will lose 0 SAN from seeing another ghostly terror. If the SAN loss were 1/1D6, she would lose 1 point automatically, but still would not have to roll.

Insanity

Traumatic experiences and exposure to cosmic horror can drive the player character insane. The player character needs to worry about three different types of insanity, each with a specific trigger and set of effects. Depending on the amount or rate of SAN loss, the player character can suffer from *temporary insanity*, *indefinite insanity*, or *permanent insanity*.

Temporary Insanity

If the player character loses 5 or more SAN as the result of a single failed sanity check, he or she has suffered enough emotional trauma to go temporarily insane. After the lost SAN is recorded, you should call for an Idea roll from the player. If the Idea roll fails, the player character may act normally, but will have no memory of the encounter once the scene ends. In this case, his or her mind protected itself by locking the painful memory away.

If the Idea roll succeeds, the poor player character realizes the full horrific significance of what he or she has seen or experienced. The player character's psyche crumbles, leaving him or her temporarily insane. The effects of temporary insanity begin immediately. See the Temporary Insanity Tables (next page) for more information about the duration and effects of temporary insanity. You can roll on these tables, choose a result appropriate to the shock, or even collaborate with the player to determine the most effective result. Most symptoms are self-explanatory. When the temporary insanity subsides, the player character may act normally.

For example, after fleeing the haunted house, Professor Etheridge races to her car, only to find her assistant George seated in the driver's seat, covered in blood, his throat torn out! You call for a SAN check. Etheridge rolls a 71—yet another failure! You roll 1D4+1 for SAN loss, getting a result of 4. Etheridge loses 5 points of SAN, bringing her current SAN down to 52. The 5 lost SAN also put her at risk for temporary insanity.

Professor Etheridge makes an Idea roll and rolls a 26, a success! Because of this, the parapsychologist goes temporarily insane. The 5 point SAN loss is less than half of Etheridge's POW, so the temporary insanity will be of short duration. Wanting to keep the scares coming, you look at the table and

choose “delusions and hallucinations”. In the midst of her scream, Etheridge sees George’s corpse lurch to life and reach for her with bloody fingers! (This is a hallucination—George is actually lying there dead and immobile.)

Etheridge flees in terror, screaming, with the ghost from the attic or George’s zombie leaping at her out of every shadow! For duration, you roll 1D10+4, getting a result of 11. After 11 combat rounds (just over two minutes), Etheridge finally comes to her senses while running through the woods, away from that house of terror. Though she’s no longer seeing things, she keeps right on running.

Additional Systems for Temporary Insanity

Following are several possible rule modifications or alternate systems for dealing with temporary insanity. You should utilize these as you see fit, choosing what systems are most appropriate to the campaign or adventure.

Temporary Insanity

SAN loss from a single check

5 or more, less than 1/2 character POW

Result Duration

Short Temporary Insanity (see below)

5 or more, more than 1/2 character POW

Longer Temporary Insanity (see below)

Short Temporary Insanity

Short temporary insanity lasts 1D10+4 combat rounds. You should either roll 1D10 or choose the most appropriate result(s) from this table:

Roll 1D10 Result

- 1 Screaming fit or the player character faints.
- 2 The player character flees in blind panic.
- 3 Physical hysterics or other emotional outburst (laughing, crying, etc.)
- 4 Babbling, incoherent rapid speech, or logorrhea (an uncontrollable torrent of coherent speech).
- 5 Intense phobia, which may root the player character to the spot.
- 6 Homicidal or suicidal mania.
- 7 Hallucinations or delusions.
- 8 Echopraxia or echolalia (the player character does/says what others nearby do/say).
- 9 Stupor (the player character is awake and can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced into simple actions but takes no independent action).
- 10 Catatonia (the player character assumes fetal position, and is oblivious to all events).

“Snap Out of It!”: If you are feeling generous, you may allow another player character to bring a temporarily insane player character back to lucidity by shaking them, slapping his face, etc. Snapping a temporarily insane player character out of his or her madness requires a POW vs. POW struggle on the resistance table. If the insane player character loses, he or she may act normally for a single combat round, and then revert to madness immediately afterward. The lucid round does not count against the duration of the temporary insanity.

Insane Insight: Sometimes, a player character pushed past his or her limit can stumble upon spontaneous revelations: at the edge of madness he or she may make connections that rational minds would normally dismiss. You may allow a player character who has just gone temporarily insane to gain a clue about the entity

Longer Temporary Insanity

Longer temporary insanity lasts 1D10 x 10 game hours. You should roll 1D10 and consult the table below, or choose an appropriate result:

Roll Result

- 1 **Amnesia** (memories of identity, friends and loved ones are lost first; language and physical skills retained, all other mental skills reduced to INT as a %) or stupor/catatonia (see the Short Temporary Insanity table).
- 2 **Severe phobia** (the player character can flee, but sees object of obsession everywhere, must roll POW vs. [(SAN loss) + 10] on the resistance table to overcome fear and act normally).
- 3 **Hallucinations** (each hallucination requires *Difficult Idea* roll to ignore).
- 4 **Hopelessness or despair** (the player character is struck with extreme lassitude, and must be coaxed into action each round by trusted allies). The player character must make a successful *Difficult Luck* roll each round to attempt action without guidance or encouragement.
- 5 **Fetish** (the player character latches onto a person or object as a security blanket; if fetish is removed a Short Temporary Insanity results).
- 6 **Uncontrollable tics, tremors**, or inability to communicate via speech or writing.
- 7 **Psychosomatic blindness, deafness**, or loss of the use of one or more limbs.
- 8 **Brief psychosis** (incoherence, delusions, aberrant behavior, and/or hallucinations).
- 9 **Temporary paranoia** (being watched, followed).
- 10 **Compulsive behaviors and rituals** (washing hands ten times or constantly, constant praying, walking in a particular rhythm, never stepping on cracks, checking one’s weapon constantly, saying everything three times, etc.).

or situation that caused insanity if the player character makes a successful Idea roll. Whether or not the player character can communicate or act on their sudden insight depends on the symptoms of his or her insanity.

Indefinite Insanity

If in one game hour the player character loses a number of SAN equal to or greater than the Madness Threshold, the player character goes indefinitely insane. No rolls are required; the player character's mind has slipped or snapped under the strain, leaving him or her afflicted with some neurosis, psychosis, or other mental illness. Two major factors define an episode of indefinite insanity: symptoms and severity.

Indefinite insanity can take a day or as much as a week to manifest itself. Once the madness appears, however, the condition lasts until it can be cured through use of the psychotherapy skill or other means.

For example, at the next sunrise, Professor Etheridge finally staggers into a police station, visibly shaken, and covered in blood. Her temporary insanity is long over, but her ordeal is only beginning: since Etheridge first saw the ghost in the attic, she lost a total of 13 SAN, all within one hour. The number equals her original Madness Threshold of 13, so she will suffer from some form of indefinite insanity. Etheridge is functional now, but will soon spiral into madness.

Symptoms: A list of mental disorders can be found nearby. You can roll on this table and assign a neurosis, but the results are far more satisfying if you and the player collaborate to construct an insanity that fits the trauma that produced it. Some episodes of insanity manifest as several distinct but linked disorders.

For example, you and Professor Etheridge's player consult with each other on her indefinite insanity. Given that Etheridge's encounters with the ghost took place in a cramped attic and inside the house, claustrophobia might be appropriate. But another element you both think is significant is the blood: the slit throats of both the ghost and her partner George were the scariest parts of the experience for Etheridge's player. Because Etheridge's temporary insanity was delusional in nature, you decide that Etheridge occasionally sees bloodstains on her hands or clothes. In addition to the horror and anxiety the visions produce, Etheridge also manifests compulsive behavior, especially hand washing and grooming.

Disorder Severity: To measure the severity of an indefinite insanity, you should assign a POW rating to the disorder. The POW of an indefinite insanity should equal either the total amount of SAN lost in the critical hour, or the greatest single loss, at your discretion. For extreme SAN losses (15 or more), you mercifully might even halve the rating. If the player character is beset with multiple disorders or symptoms, you should divide the POW rating between them.

In a stressful situation (combat, a tense argument, or anything that might trigger a SAN check), match the

POW of the insanity vs. the player character's POW on the resistance table. If the player character wins, he or she overcomes his or her fears or neuroses and act normally. If the disorder wins, the player character is driven by madness, not reason, and is left ineffective for the rest of the scene.

For example, in the fateful hour Professor Etheridge went mad, there was no single extreme loss, so you opt to use the total SAN loss (13 points) for the hour as the severity of her disorder. The next day, Etheridge returns to the haunted house with police. The mere sight of the house triggers her disorder: Etheridge sees blood on her hands and clothes. She matches her POW of 13 against the POW of the disorder, also 13, giving her a 50% chance on the resistance table. Etheridge's player rolls a 55. Overcome by the sight of the blood, Etheridge screams and falls to her knees, trying to clean her soiled hands. The police exchange knowing looks, and then take Etheridge back to the station.

Overcoming Indefinite Insanity

There are two cures for indefinite insanity: therapy and time. Both of these can reduce the POW rating of an indefinite insanity, as described below. Once the POW rating of a mental disorder is reduced to half its original value (rounding down), the symptoms disappear and the player character can function normally.

Therapy: As described in the Psychotherapy skill description on page 72, successful use of the Psychotherapy skill can reduce the POW rating of a mental disorder by 1 point per month of treatment. Two consecutive successes must be rolled: the first to identify the root of the disorder, and the second to actually begin a cure. In settings or campaigns where the Psychotherapy skill is inappropriate, such cures are impossible. Once the symptoms disappear, additional therapy has no effect.

Time: Time heals all wounds, and damaged psyches are no exception. Make a *Difficult Luck* roll for every month that passes after the player character goes insane. If you succeed, the POW rating of the disorder drops by 1 point. This reduction is cumulative with the POW reduction from therapy, if any. Once the symptoms disappear, do not make any subsequent rolls. Failure has no benefit.

*For example, in the weeks that follow, Professor Etheridge seeks therapy. After extensive treatment (and a successful Psychotherapy roll), the therapist determines that the guilt Etheridge feels about George's death lies at the root of her troubles. In the three months that follow, successful therapy reduces the POW of Etheridge's disorder by 3. Professor Etheridge also succeeds at 3 consecutive *Difficult Luck* rolls, reducing the disorder's POW by 3 more. The adjusted POW of the disorder is now 7, half of the original 13, rounded up. The spectral bloodstains haunt Etheridge no longer.*

Relapsing Into Madness

Once an indefinite insanity has faded, there is always a chance that future shocks will bring the old neurosis back, stronger than ever. The next time the player character goes indefinitely insane, there is a chance equal to 5 times the rating of the dormant insanity that the disorder returns, with a POW rating equal to the POW rating of the new disorder, plus the leftover rating of the dormant disorder.

For example, in the following winter, Professor Etheridge runs afoul of the Tetlow clan while on another investigation. At the sight of the howling thing the degenerate cannibals worship, Etheridge loses 15 SAN, facing another bout of indefinite insanity. There is a 35% chance (her dormant delusion's POW of 7 x 5) that her delusions return. If they do, the disorder's POW will increase to 22 (15 plus the dormant 7), a crippling relapse. Even if the delusions do not return, Etheridge will suffer from a new indefinite insanity with a POW rating of 15. Her POW of 13 will only have a 40% chance to resist it.

Indefinite Insanity: Mental Disorder Descriptions

Usually the symptoms of the affliction are obvious. You can roll on the table below, but given the profound effect indefinite insanity can have on the player character, tailoring a disorder to the shocking event that created it is far more satisfying.

The disorders below are chosen with an eye toward rich roleplaying possibilities, not clinical authenticity. In the real world, many of these disorders are genetic, and cannot be acquired by shock at all. This list is also by no means comprehensive. You are encouraged to develop new disorders if desired. For more mental disorders, see Chaosium Inc.'s *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game.

Addiction: Overcome by the terror and stress of what the player character has experienced, he or she finds solace in alcohol, opium, stimulants, or other chemicals. The drug has deleterious effects on physical and mental skills, depending on the specific drug. Details are left to you, but anywhere from a -5 to -20% penalty is appropriate. Over time the addict grows tolerant of the drug, and must consume more of it to get the proper buzz or kick. Issues of expense and legality can ruin an addict's life, and in extreme cases addicts are driven to violent crime to support their habit. Prolonged drug use can also lead to characteristic loss (DEX, CON, INT, or APP are all possible), and even death. The player character must overcome the POW of his or her addiction on the resistance table to endure a stressful situation without a fix. If denied his or her drug, the player character must make a *Difficult Stamina* roll or suffer debilitating consequences, including tremors (see below), hallucinations, or skills penalties that surpass the normal effects of the drug.

Amnesia: The player character locks away unbearable experiences, effectively erasing his or her memories. The severity of the disorder indicates how selective or total the amnesia is. Amnesiacs tend to lose memory of specific incidents first, followed by the names and identities of friends and loved ones, their own identity, and finally all mental skills. If confronted with forgotten faces or facts, the player character can overcome the POW of the disorder to gain a bit of recall, usually no more than a cryptic hint or short flash of memory.

Catatonia: As with temporary insanity, the player character assumes a fetal position, and is oblivious of events around him or her. A catatonic player character will not resist being moved and can be made to stand, but will always revert back to his or her fetal position if left alone. Unlike most indefinite insanities, catatonia becomes the player character's default state: in time of stress, overcoming the POW of the disorder on the resistance table brings the player character a brief (1D6 rounds) window of lucidity.

Criminal Psychosis: A dangerous disorder, suffered by sociopaths and serial killers. If the player character suffers from criminal psychosis, he or she has the calm belief that human beings are absolutely separate from one another, and that social bonds like love, truth, friendship, and compassion are all lies, tools to be used for personal gain. Life has no ultimate meaning. Once the player character has this insight, temptations like bullying, threats, fraud, or even murder become simple calculations about being caught, not questions of right or wrong. The player character becomes a slave of his or her desires and impulses, and must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table to refrain from resorting to extreme methods to get what he or she wants, or to feel remorse for something he or she may have done. You should be very careful of this disorder, assigning it to an insane player character only after carefully considering the consequences.

Fetish: The opposite of a phobia (see above), victims of a fetish become unreasonably attracted to a thing or condition. The fetish becomes an emotional security blanket or the object of an obsession (see below). If denied the fetish, the player character must overcome the POW of that fetish on the resistance table to keep in control. If the player character fails, he or she suffers severe distress (treat this as an episode of temporary insanity). See "Sample Phobias" on page 326 for a list of potential fetishes.

Hysterical Disability: The player character's mind "turns off" a sense or limb as part of a coping mechanism, leaving the player character physically disabled. You should describe to the player the ways in which the disability manifests: either a particular sense (sight or hearing are the most common) is compulsively ignored,

Mental Disorders

D100 roll	Disorder
01-05	Addiction
06-15	Amnesia
16-20	Catatonia
21-25	Criminal Psychosis
26-30	Fetish
31-35	Hysterical Disability
36-40	Megalomania
41-45	Multiple Personalities
46-50	Obsession
51-55	Panzaism
56-65	Paranoia
66-75	Phobia
76-80	Quixotism
81-90	Schizophrenia
91-95	Stupor
96-00	Tremors/Physical Symptoms

leaving the player character blind or deaf, or a limb or limbs (a hand, one arm, or both legs) become paralyzed. The player character, despite his or her best effort, cannot control or respond to stimuli that affect the paralyzed limb or sense. Medical examinations will reveal nothing physically wrong with the player character, but he or she will continue to steadfastly refuse to see, hear, or walk. If the player character's life is in danger, he or she can act morally to preserve themselves if successfully overcoming the POW of the disorder, but as soon as the crisis ends, the handicap returns (possibly in a more severe state).

Megalomania: The player character's ego and self-confidence surpass all reasonable bounds—he or she has a personal understanding of reality that surpasses all others. Once in the grips of megalomania, the victim believes that he or she cannot be wrong, and is only misunderstood. The player character feels singled out for future greatness, and exudes an unshakeable confidence that some may find attractive. Should events prove the megalomaniacal player character wrong or should the results of plans not suit his or her sense of destiny, then clearly the player character has been the victim of faulty or deceptive information, or has run afoul of the incompetence or treachery of their friends or subordinates. The player character must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table to listen to reason, or to avoid bitter or even violent outbursts when his or her wishes are unfulfilled.

Multiple Personalities: The player character is host to their original personality and an increasing number of derived personalities who evolve as strategies in response to or compensation for perceived dysfunctions or inabilities of his or her original personality, or to give

voice to thoughts or emotions the original personality normally represses. Divide the POW of the disorder by 5 to determine the number of additional personalities, rounding up. The additional personalities need not be the same gender or age as the player character: a fractured psyche might create a fearless, aggressive persona to deal with adversity, or a helpless child who regresses into helplessness to hide behind other adults, or both. Each personality will have a name and a distinct mode of behavior: they are often associated with a general emotional quality such as sweet, merciless, pushy, child-like, angry, nurturing, or frightened. During times of stress, if the disorder POW wins the resistance roll, a new personality takes over the player character's functioning—you should decide which one as appropriate. Each personality may or may not be aware of the others: the player character's original personality is usually oblivious to their existence, or perceives the other personalities as separate beings. In time, the personalities can evolve into well-rounded beings, with distinct mental skill sets.

Obsession: Obsessed player characters are preoccupied with a particular goal (avenging a loved one's death, clearing their name, or rescuing lost kittens) or a personal behavior (washing hands repeatedly to avoid bacteria, checking locked doors ten times a night, etc.). The preoccupation overshadows every other aspect of life; friends and family are ignored, career is forgotten, and communication becomes erratic and secretive. Penalties to Communication skills become commonplace. The exact obsession is usually based on fear (of germs, failure, etc.). The obsessed player character must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table to avoid these behaviors, and must make this roll to embark on any course of action that does not help achieve this goal. In time, the victim becomes insomniac, and experiences random fits of manic exhilaration and deep depression.

Panzaism: Overwhelmed by the terror of the supernatural, the player character resorts to extreme denial, refusing to see even the most extraordinary things as anything but ordinary. Hideous monsters are simply men, or at most men in suits. The player character must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table to see the paranormal for what it is. A panzaic player character does not need to make SAN rolls for seeing monsters, though gruesome sights and stress still affect him or her. While panzaism seems like a blessing, denial can leave the player character oblivious to danger.

Paranoia: Creeping suspicion rules the player character's mind: he or she cannot trust anyone. In such cases, the player character enters rooms last, compulsively stands against walls, never eats anything he or she did not prepare, etc. Even fellow player characters become

suspicious, though strangers are far more threatening, especially people who are somehow different. Some paranoids give voice to their feelings, becoming disagreeable misanthropes, while others turn inward, keeping a brave face while developing complex rituals of protection or schemes of revenge. The player character must overcome the POW of his or her disorder on the resistance table to be convinced that another person is not trying to harm him or her. Over time, a paranoid player character will become convinced that a particular person or a shadowy conspiracy is watching him or her, plotting to do harm. If the paranoia is severe enough, the insane player character may become afraid to leave home, or may murder his or her own family.

Phobia: Terror takes hold, manifesting as an irrational fear of something associated with the experience that drove the player character mad. Whenever confronted with the object of the phobia, the player character's first impulse is to flee or avoid it; he or she must overcome the POW of the phobia on the resistance table to take any other action. If the player character fails but is forced to deal with the object of the fear, an episode of temporary insanity results. See the list of phobias for an appropriate one.

Quixotism: The opposite of panzaism, a victim of this disorder becomes obsessed with the supernatural, and believes that he or she is constantly surrounded by and confronted by unnatural creatures. Every passing dog is obviously a werewolf and any abandoned house is obviously haunted. Even the slightest headache must be the product of a psychic attack. A quixotic player character must overcome the POW of the disorder to avoid hallucinations and realize that his or her suspicions are groundless. You may decide that quixotic characters can make SAN checks for seeing hallucinatory horrors and may even suffer symptoms of temporary insanity for major shocks, but all SAN lost to delusions should regenerate after a few hours.

Schizophrenia: Victims of this disorder cut themselves off from reality, building a web of private delusions that serve as the foundation for a different reality. These delusions can take the form of hallucinations or simple beliefs, but are often systematic and intricate. The player character believes that a single unseen cause (aliens, faeries, ghosts, divine intervention, or some conspiracy) is at work in his or her life, and its actions form an unseen link that binds together every significant event. Discovering and confronting this mysterious cause reveals the secrets and mysteries of life itself, and the player character becomes obsessed with researching or searching for traces of the cause. Delusions and hallucinations ensure that he or she will always find meaningful evidence, but that the truth is still out there. Career, family, and even personal well-being become secondary

Sample Phobias

Choose a phobia (or fetish) from the following list, based on the events that caused the indefinite insanity. Fetishes manifest themselves as the opposites of a phobia—the victim craves the object of the fetish, and cannot be calm, at peace, or truly happy unless it is present. This list is by no means exhaustive: a little research can turn up dozens of additional disorders. If inventing a new phobia, try to focus on factors that are related to the shock that caused the disorder and will create interesting or amusing roleplaying.

ACROPHOBIA: Fear of heights, high places, or falling.

AGORAPHOBIA: Fear of wide-open spaces, the opposite of claustrophobia.

AILUROPHOBIA: Fear of cats.

ANDROPHOBIA: Fear of males (recommended for female characters only).

ASTRAPHOBIA: Fear of thunder, lightning, and storms.

BACTERIOPHOBIA: Fear of germs or infection.

BOTANOPHOBIA: Fear of plants.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA: Fear of tight or confined spaces.

DEMOPHOBIA: Fear of crowds.

ENTOMOPHOBIA: Fear of insects.

GYNEPHOBIA: Fear of females (recommended for male characters only).

HEMATOPHOBIA: Fear of blood, especially the sight of blood.

MONOPHOBIA: Fear of being alone.

NECROPHOBIA: Fear of dead things.

OPHIOPHOBIA: Fear of snakes.

PYROPHOBIA: Fear of fire.

SCOTOPHOBIA: Fear of darkness.

THALASSOPHOBIA: Fear of the sea.

XENOPHOBIA: Fear of foreigners, strangers, or "different" people (literally, *fear of aliens*).

ZOOPHOBIA: Fear of animals.

concerns, and the schizophrenic player character is convinced that his or her delusions are completely normal and understandable. The player character must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table in order to not seem completely crazy in conversations, or to lead normal lives, remembering to groom



Poor Festus, the cowpoke above, will suffer from phobias for the rest of his days. Wise gamemasters inflict appropriate insanities upon unfortunate characters, depending on the cause. Festus, for example, might need Sanity rolls to enter close-growing forest or brush, and might forever after walk with a hitch in his gait after this fall from his horse.

him- or herself, or go to work instead of embarking on some new scheme to find it or them. Confinement, restraints, and medication are needed to keep the player character under control. Advanced schizophrenics withdraw from reality altogether, going on endless quests through interior dream-worlds and talking to the voices in their heads. Note that some player characters who run afoul of the paranormal and insist on telling the truth or their experiences are dismissed as schizophrenics with alarming frequency.

Stupefaction: As with temporary insanity, the player character is stupefied but awake but unaware: he or she can stand and walk (if led), but has no will or volition of his or her own: if an arm is lifted, the player character will hold it there. The player character is incapable of speech, and does not react to any outside stimuli. Unlike most forms of indefinite insanity, stupefaction becomes the player character's default state: in time of stress, overcoming the POW of the disorder on the resistance table brings the player character a brief (1D6 combat rounds) window of lucidity.

Tremors/Physical Symptom: Powerless in the face of fear or anxiety, if the player character suffers from this disorder, he or she will experience extreme symptoms whenever he or she is under stress: twitches, nervous tics, screaming fits, uncontrollable sobbing, even vomiting or seizure-like tantrums. Depending on the severity

of the disorder, lesser tics and spasms may become constant. The player character must overcome the POW of the disorder on the resistance table or suffer penalties to all physical skill rolls made while under stress. The degree of penalty depends on the symptoms: minor twitches might impose a -10%, severe ones could make all actions *Difficult*, while a seizure makes most actions *Impossible*. Some victims of this insanity bear the stigma of this disorder openly, while others steadfastly refuse to acknowledge their tics or tremors, insisting that they are perfectly fine.

Permanent Insanity

If the player character's SAN score is reduced to 0, he or she will go permanently insane: the combined weight of previous shocks and terrors destroys his or her personality utterly to a degree from which there is no recovery. You may rule that an existing disorder now dominates the player character's brain, or choose a new psychosis to sweep in and dominate the player character's behavior. Permanently insane player characters are not functional, not curable, and should be removed from play. You may even choose to have the player character might become a villain—a victim of criminal psychoses, or the pawn of an evil cult or ancient demons. No conventional methods (medicine or therapy) can cure permanent insanity. Magic, miracles, or

psychic abilities might be able to undo the damage, at your discretion.

Regaining Sanity Points

If the player character constantly confronts terror and the unnatural, you may find the constant loss of SAN points too relentless and fatalistic. There is hope, however. Just as there are many ways to lose SAN points, there are numerous ways to regain a measure of lost SAN. You should make careful use of these methods, and the "Growing Numb to Horror" option (on page 321) to ensure that player characters in horror-based campaigns are not driven mad too quickly. Any of the following conditions can restore lost SAN points.

Through Gamemaster Award: At the end of a successful adventure or under other special circumstances, you can assign SAN rewards to player characters. Foiling plots to destroy the world or saving loved ones from gruesome fates should definitely be worth SAN points. Use the SAN loss guidelines on page 320 as benchmarks for determining the amount rewarded (for example, thwarting someone trying to cast supremely powerful black magic may be worth 1D10 SAN). Rest and relaxation, typically in a very calm or luxurious setting, is another mental balm. You can reward 1 point of Sanity to the player character if he or she is able to get away from it all for at least one month, if the player character is willing to pay the price in money and lost time. Such awards can raise the player character's SAN above his or her initial total of POW x 5.

Through Increasing POW: The player character can increase his or her POW characteristic through magic or other extraordinary means. Such increases should be profoundly rare, but they do bring additional benefit: each point of POW gained raises the player character's current SAN total by 5 points, and increases his or her default POW x 5 SAN value. Such gains cannot exceed the player character's new POW x 5 value.

Through Achieving Skill Mastery: Mastering a skill brings with it a tremendous degree of discipline, confidence, and self-esteem, which has a tangible effect on the player character's state of mind. Whenever the player character raises a skill rating to 90% or higher, he or she immediately gains 2D6 SAN points. Blasphemous Knowledge skills that limit maximum SAN do not offer any mastery benefits. Skill mastery can raise the player

character's SAN points above his or her POW x 5.

Through Defeating the Unnatural:

Animals or natural enemies might terrify, but they usually do not horrify their victims. As a general rule, whenever the player character defeats any creature or force that caused or could have caused loss of SAN, the player character regains some SAN as a measure of relief and renewed confidence. "Defeat" is intentionally left vague: slaughtering an unnatural entity, dispelling a ghost or demon, or even foiling an entity's plans all qualify. The number of SAN points rewarded should be proportional to the enormity of the victory. As a general guideline, killing or otherwise defeating a creature should reward a number of SAN points equal to the SAN cost for encountering it (for example, defeating a normal monster will reward 1D6 SAN). Driving a creature away without destroying it might grant 1/2 the normal reward (round up). Use 1D6 to determine a reward in unclear situations. Victory over the unnatural can raise the player character's SAN total above his or her initial score of POW x 5.

Through Psychotherapy: As described in the Skills section, successful use of the Psychotherapy skill can heal 1D3-1 or more SAN per month of successful treatment. If the player character is seeking psychotherapy, he or she can find a competent therapist with a successful Luck roll and one week of searching (this may be more or less, depending on the setting). The therapist's skill rating is equal to 4D10+20% (this is halved for campaigns set before the modern era). Therapy cannot increase the player character's current SAN total above his or her POW x 5.

Through Use of Magic, Psychic Abilities, or Super Powers: You may allow spells or other powers to restore lost SAN points. See **Chapter Four: Powers** for more information. You should ensure that mental scars are harder to heal than physical ones, or else the threat of SAN loss loses all its weight. Powers should not be able to increase the player character's current SAN total above his or her POW x 5.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

CREATURES

This chapter provides the GM and players with a wide range of potential encounters, ranging from stalwart allies, loyal pets, and vicious animals or supernatural beings. It also serves to demonstrate the flexibility of the system, with a number of sample characters drawn from across a variety of settings—past, modern, and future. The inhabitants of this chapter are divided into two categories: creatures and the NPC digest. From a rules standpoint, however, there is no difference systematically between a creature and an NPC—it is up to the GM to characterize them differently through description and role-playing.

The beings listed in this section follow the same rules as PCs—their characteristics, skills, equipment, powers, and other aspects all behave the same with NPCs as they do with PCs. However, they have been created to represent an appropriate standard of abilities, rather than being balanced with an arbitrary set of restrictions. GMs wishing to use these creatures may use them “as is”, or can increase or decrease their characteristics, skills, powers, and gear as desired to customize them for the specific use in the game session or campaign.

The creatures and NPCs in this section have been created using the core rules system presented in this book: no optional rules have been utilized, though it is easy to extrapolate them from the descriptions. *For example, if skills are allowed to increase beyond 100%, it is easy to increase the provided skill levels to meet the higher ceiling.* Similarly, once a being’s HP are known, it is easy to assign their HP per location.

This chapter provides creatures and NPCs chosen primarily for their utility in a wide range of adventuring settings, from prehistoric to far-future, supernatu-



ral to mundane. It is not a representative sampling of creatures—instead, it's a selection based on setting-appropriate creatures. Future BRP releases will expand the roster of creatures dramatically. Following are the creatures in this chapter, listed in the section in which they appear:

Natural Creatures: Alligator (or Crocodile), Bear, Brontosaur, Dog, Gorilla, Hawk, Horse, Insect Swarm, Lion, Rat Pack, Shark, Snake (Constrictor, Venomous), Squid (Giant), Tiger, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Wolf.

Fantasy Creatures: Centaur, Dragon, Dwarf, Elf, Ghost, Ghoul, Giant, Griffin, Halfling, Mummy, Minotaur, Orc, Skeleton, Troll, Unicorn, Vampire, Werewolf, Zombie.

Supernatural Creatures: Angel, Demon (Greater, Lesser), Elementals (Air, Earth, Fire, Water).

Science Fiction Creatures: Alien (Grey, Xenomorph), Blob, Robot (Giant, Killer, Utility).

Non-Player Character Digest: Criminal Mastermind, Cyborg, Demigod, Detective, Galactic Knight, Gunslinger, Knight, Maniac, Mutant, Ninja, Pirate, Police Officer, Priest, Primitive, Psychic, Soldier, Sorcerer, Spy, Super Hero, Super Villain, Thug, Tribal Warrior, Viking.

Format for Creature Entries

Every creature or sample NPC described in this chapter will be presented in the same format, with entry descriptions explained below.

Name

A generic name the creature is best known for. In most cases, these are generic versions, representative of a variety of species or subtypes. GMs are encouraged to personalize or customize the creatures by whatever name is most appropriate to the setting. See "Customizing Creatures and NPCs" at the end of this chapter.

Description

This section provides a brief description of the creature, including its appearance, behavior, lifestyle, or culture, including information about its preferred habitat and food, if appropriate. Any other useful or interesting details may be provided here, as well as a note about any special abilities, powers, and limitations.

Characteristics

Characteristics are presented in both a range and an average. The range is for determining unique versions of each creature, while the average is provided for instant use and for reference. In some cases, the number will be

fixed, with no range provided. Almost every creature described here has some measure of STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, and APP. Some creatures may be missing characteristics: they either have absolutely no measurable amount of this quality or it is simply not applicable. These will be marked either 0 or "n/a" for "not applicable". See the section "Creatures Without Characteristics" on page 332 of this chapter for more information on this. Some creatures have variable characteristics, such as SIZ if they can grow or shrink, and these will be explained in their entries. As noted in "Customizing Creatures and NPCs" at the end of this chapter, the GM should use these statistics as a guideline, and feel free to change them as desired to create more appropriate versions as desired.

Hit Points (HP)

In most cases, the HP for a creature are determined exactly as for a normal character: as an average of SIZ and CON. In the case of unusual or special races, hit points may be figured differently, such as by POW or another appropriate characteristic. In most cases for living creatures, when a creature is at 1 HP (unless it normally only has 1 HP), the creature is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and when HP fall to 0 or to a negative value, the creature is dead.

The combat effects for the special results in combat (bleeding, crushing, entangling, impaling, and knock-back) are primarily for humanoid or relatively human-sized characters that are assumed to be living. If the creature is of a sufficient SIZ (larger than SIZ 50, for example), the GM may choose to have it immune to the extra effects of a special result, or immune to the special result entirely (no extra damage, etc.) to simulate the creature's vast bulk and physical mass. It is not recommended, however, that the effects of a critical strike be ignored. They represent a pinnacle of success, and should be sufficiently devastating in combat, regardless of the creature's enormous size.

Power Points (PP)

These behave in the same fashion for creatures as they do normal characters. If the creature has a power that uses power points, they are expended at an appropriate rate. When the creature reaches 0 power points it is unconscious, unless the creature normally does not have power points.

Movement Rate (MOV)

If two or more numbers are separated by slashes, the trailing number is the creature's MOV rate in another medium, such as water, air, etc. in addition to their ground MOV rate. Some creatures have no MOV rate. These creatures are generally stationary, although they may still have means of attack. Other creatures may

move so fast or in such an unorthodox manner that they have incalculable MOV rates.

Damage Bonus

This is the average damage bonus for the creature's normal attacks. If a customized version of the creature is larger or smaller than average, the GM should calculate its damage bonus from its actual SIZ+STR. The notation "+db" indicates that the damage bonus should be included in the damage rolled. Damage bonus is halved when a creature is unable to utilize its full strength and size against an opponent (or is unused to the form of attack). *For example, a horse does not usually bite foes to defend itself, so its damage bonus is +½db.*

Armor

This is presented in a simple value of a number followed by the type of armor. *For example, a horse may have 1-point hide.* This armor may actually be a hard shell, thick hide, gelatinous flesh, metallic scales, etc. As with armor worn by player characters, the GM should subtract the amount for armor from any damage inflicted by a successful attack. If the creature has any additional immunities or resistances to damage, these will be noted in its "Other Features" entry below. Armor values are presented with the 'fixed point' value, though the GM may choose to introduce random armor values based on the guidelines provided in "Random Armor Values" on page 195 of **Chapter Six: Combat**.

Weapons and Natural Attacks

Combat skills are listed first. These are provided in the order of weapon type, the percentage chance to attack, the weapon's damage roll, and a note if the attack has a special success or special type of damage. Some creatures, due to their natural ability and despite their skill level, can attack more than once in a round. This is noted at the end of the creature's weapon and natural attack section. *For example, a lion may claw as well as bite in the same combat round.* This gives it two attacks each round. Creatures with multiple attacks are considered capable both of Dodging and of making all possible normal attacks each round. *For example, each melee round the lion can attack twice, as well as being able to Dodge.*

All of a creature's available attacks occur on the same DEX strike rank, unless specified otherwise. Exceptions to this rule are presented in a specific creature's description.

In most cases, the creature's weapons are natural, as opposed to some weapon it may have learned to use. The skill value provided here is a combination of attack and parry, and does not include any bonus from the optional characteristic bonus system. Generally, creatures do not get the chance to improve skills based on

successful use, though in special cases (such as recurring villains) the GM may wish to keep track of this.

Generally, a creature's claw attack will do 1D6+db, and a bite or horn will do 1D3+db, unless the natural weapon is poorly- or well-suited for its form of attack, which case the damage attack will be higher or lower.

Special Effects and Damage

If the creature's weapon is capable of a special success result, the special success type is provided after the damage value. A creature's natural weapons never suffer from the ill effects of a special success. *For example, a unicorn can impale with its horn, but the horn will not become stuck in a target's body as would a spear or lance.* Additionally, some creatures are able to inflict other types of damage with their attacks. This may be in the form of a characteristic drain, suffocation, drowning, burns or electrocution, freezing, hypnosis, paralysis, poisoning or infection, some sort of transformation, engulf or swallow, aging, devolution, or even automatic death. If these can be quantified in terms of a power (see **Chapter Four: Powers**), this information is provided in this section. The text of the individual creature's entry describes any special damage or effects inflicted with a successful attack. If a creature drains any characteristic points of from a target, those points are permanently lost unless the entry clearly states that the loss is temporary.

Skills

Most creatures have only a few skills shown, rather than the entire range available to player characters. These skills are those most likely to be used by the creature in an average encounter. Most creatures will have basic survival skills such as Listen, Stealth, Spot, or Track. The GM should feel free to add or delete skills as desired, or to adjust the suggested skill ratings. In the case of an intelligent race, all skills not listed are assumed to have the same basic chance as for humans as described in **Chapter Three: Skills**.

Powers

These are any powers the creature may possess, whether conferred by some training or as a natural ability, as well as what effects the power has on the creature. If the creature has a power that modifies its characteristics, these have been figured into the creature's basic characteristics. Powers are identified by their basic type (magic, mutation, etc.), based on the categories presented in Chapter Four: Powers. As with skills, the GM is encouraged to add or subtract powers to customize creatures, or to change their potency as appropriate.

Other Features

This section describes any further abilities the creature possesses that fall beyond the scope of skills or powers. Some creatures may have abilities above and beyond those available to player characters, and they are defined in the creature's description. This section is left out of some descriptions if it is not applicable.

Creatures and Intelligence

Intelligent, sentient creatures possess normal Intelligence (INT). Animals and other unintelligent creatures possess "fixed" INT.

For example, all dogs have INT 5 and all cows have INT 4. No die roll is involved. This does not mean that all dogs are equally intelligent, but it does mean that any dog (INT 5) is considered to be more intelligent than any cow (INT 4) and less intelligent than any gorilla (INT 7). A creature such as a ghoul (with INT determined by 2D6) has normal INT and is considered sentient. A dog might show more common sense than a ghoul with an INT of 4 or less, but the dog's common sense is derived from instinct and experience, rather than logic or intuition, and is less flexible.

Creatures with fixed INT are ruled by instinct. They can learn neither Knowledge nor Communication skills. They will neither disobey nor betray their instincts, though circumstance may modify their reactions. Creatures with high fixed INT scores have complex and elaborate instincts, and even some reasoning power.

Creatures with normal INT also possess instincts, some as powerful as those of any animal. However, creatures with normal INT are capable of defying their instincts and acting according to logic. *For example, if placed in a situation where a sentient creature is placed in continual pain with death as a consequence for fleeing, the sentient creature will conquer its fear and withstand the pain, while the nonsentient creature will attempt to flee from the initial threat (and will be killed).*

Creatures Without Characteristics

Some creatures have characteristics without a default value, or a value equal to 0. In these cases, a creature without a specific characteristic is invulnerable to attacks directed against that characteristic. *For example, a ghost without a CON characteristic is invulnerable to disease, radiation sickness, etc. as these forms of damage require a resistance roll versus the target's CON.*

Following are guidelines for creatures lacking specific characteristics:

Strength (STR): A creature without STR cannot interact with physical objects. It may not lift or move any tangible thing. Such a creature may not use any weapons or skills involving physical interaction with the physical world. If it has some form of physical

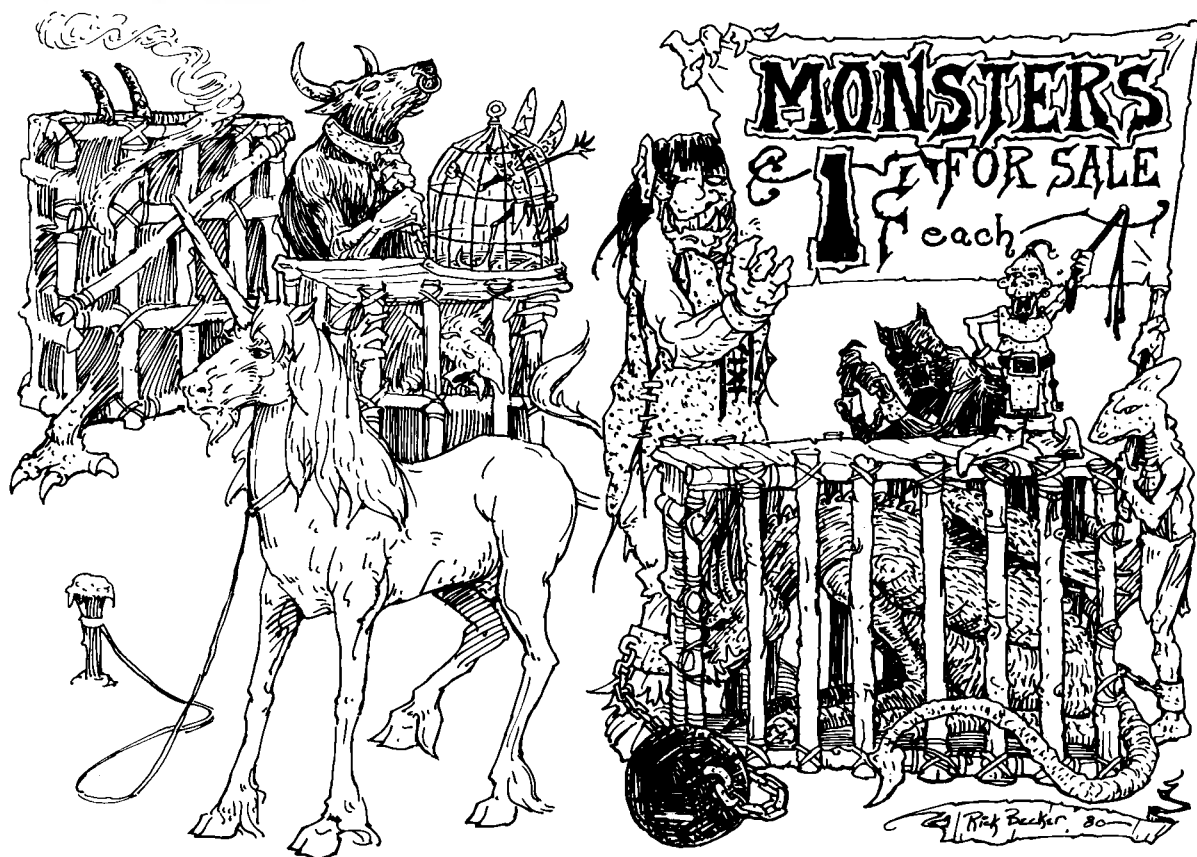
attack, it does not have a damage bonus. Additionally, it has no Fatigue score and never gets tired from "physical" exertion. If the creature gains a STR value, it is then treated as a normal character in reference to skills, weapon use, resistance rolls, damage bonus, and optional characteristics like Fatigue.

Constitution (CON): A creature without CON is immune to disease, radiation, poison, and other attacks requiring a resistance roll versus CON. If the creature possesses SIZ, it has HP based on a separate characteristic (usually unmodified SIZ). Additionally, it has no Fatigue score and never gets tired from "physical" exertion. If a creature gains a CON value it may or may not retain immunity to disease and poison, depending on its nature (at the GM's discretion). If the creature has a SIZ value it now has HP equal to the average of CON+SIZ. If the creature has a STR value, it will have Fatigue points if that optional system is used.

Size (SIZ): A creature without a SIZ lacks a physical body or has one so microscopic it would have a negative SIZ value. It cannot interact with physical objects in an effective manner. Usually, its method of attack or interaction with the physical world is based on power use. If a being without SIZ has a CON value, its HP are equal to its CON. If it lacks CON, it has no HP whatsoever. If a creature without SIZ gains a SIZ value, it now has a physical form. If it possesses CON, its HP become equal to the average of CON and SIZ.

Intelligence (INT): Some creatures have fixed INT values, as described above in "Creatures and Intelligence". Unlike an animal, a creature with no INT value is no more sentient than a rock or piece of wood. A creature with a fixed INT or lack of an INT value may not learn or use communication or knowledge skills. A creature with fixed-INT or with no INT is unaffected by powers that affect rational thought, such as some psychic powers and some spells. The GM may allow the creature to be affected by powers that manipulate or evoke emotions a fixed-INT creature would understand, such as pain or fear. A creature with no INT is unaffected by any power that affects thought at either the rational or instinctual level. A creature that gains an INT value may now learn Communication and Knowledge skills (with a base chance of 00%). After gaining INT, the creature is considered to be sentient, though possibly stupid. If the creature formerly had fixed-INT, it is now considered to have normal INT. The creature also becomes susceptible to thought and emotion-affecting powers.

Power (POW): Though a creature may lack a POW value, it is still capable of having power points. However, it does not regenerate power points as normal characters do. Usually, a creature with no POW characteristic and power points has some power or special abil-



ity allowing it to gain additional power points. For example, a vampire may use the *Drain* power to gain additional power points. A creature without any such powers must carefully hoard its power points, as when it reaches 0 it will fall unconscious forever, or until some outside source provides it with power points. A creature without a POW value is considered to be soulless; all undead fall into this category. If a soulless creature gains POW, it becomes capable of regenerating power points up to its POW, as normal. If the creature uses a power or ability to increase power points, it may not use the ability to increase its power points higher than its normal limit. Any points in excess of the normal limit are lost unless the power point gain was part of a power explicitly designed to heighten power points above the normal maximum.

Dexterity (DEX): A creature without a DEX value is either immobile or moves so slowly it is essentially stationary, though it may still be able to make attacks of a sort. If the creature does have an attack listed, this attack is at the very end of each combat round on DEX 1 (or strike rank 10, if that optional system is being used). A creature without a DEX value may only use its natural attacks, and may not learn physical or combat skills. If a creature formerly without DEX gains a positive DEX value and has a positive STR characteristic, it may learn these skills. The creature will now attack on its DEX rank, and if the

optional strike rank system is used, its strike rank will be based on its DEX alone (if it has no SIZ, otherwise as normal).

Appearance (APP): Though all creatures are considered to have some form of APP, an APP value may not be provided due to their inapplicability to player characters. If necessary, the GM should assign an APP value using a sliding scale of 1D6 for plain and featureless creatures, up to 6D6 or higher for beings of divine beauty. Non-human creatures are considered to have species-specific APP (therefore, while a particular creature may have a higher APP value than a human character, it is not necessarily 'better looking' than the human). A creature with an APP of less than 3D6 is considered to be intrinsically more ugly to any observer, while one with an APP of over 3D6 is intrinsically more striking, awe-inspiring, or beautiful. An easy rule-of-thumb is to temporarily subtract 10 from the APP of any individual of another species when it is first encountered by a player character (to reflect its strangeness and difference). This can be ignored if the player character has some prior knowledge or experience of the creature's species. Later, when the player character has encountered more of the species, he or she has a better basis for judgment, and the rule-of-thumb can be ignored.

This bestiary is only a sampling of the wide variety of creatures encountered, and only a few of the creatures presented here lack a characteristic value. The GM should use the above guidelines when creating new creatures.

Natural Animals

These creatures are (or were) found in the 'real' world and while they may not be common, they are certainly familiar to most players. This list has not been drawn from those creatures most commonly encountered in the real world, but instead from classic creatures that may be utilized as foes or threats in an adventure or combat encounter. Additionally, these are generic versions of creatures rather than being based on specific breeds or species, and can be modified by the GM where appropriate.

Alligator or Crocodile

Though they are distinctly different species, alligators and crocodiles are treated similarly in this bestiary. Both are four-legged, long-tailed, egg-laying, shallow-water-dwelling carnivores covered with scales. These statistics describe crocodiles, with modifications for alligators presented afterwards.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D6+12	26
CON	3D6+8	18-19
SIZ	4D6+12	26
INT	3	3
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	2D6	7

Move: 8 (10 swimming)

Hit Points: 22-23

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 5-point scales

Attack: Bite 50%, 1D10+db (bleeding)

Skills: Hide 50%, Stealth 75%

Alligators are generally smaller and weaker (-1D6 to STR and SIZ) and have smaller jaws (1D8+db rather than 1D10+db). They are generally less aggressive than crocodiles and are less likely to be encountered in large numbers.

Bear

Large land predators, bears are four-legged, thick-furred, clawed omnivores. Most bears live in forests, while polar bears dwell in arctic regions. They are generally

fierce when protecting their young. The statistics below are for black bears, while modifications for grizzly and polar bears are provided afterwards.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+10	20-21
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	3D6+10	20-21
INT	5	5
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move: 14 (8 swimming)

Hit Points: 17

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 3-point fur

Attacks: Bite 25%, 1D10+½db (bleeding)

Claws (2) 40%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Slap 25%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Bears can attack twice in a round, using either two separate claw attacks or one claw and one bite attack.

Skills: Climb 40%, Listen 75%, Sense 75%

Grizzly bears are larger and stronger than black bears (STR +1D6, CON +2, SIZ +2, +1 point of armor) and are generally fiercer (+10% to attack skills), especially when guarding their young. They are often encountered as scavengers near civilized areas.

Polar bears are the largest and most powerful land predators in the world (STR +2D6, CON +1D6+2, SIZ +2D6, +3 points of armor, +20% to attack skills). They are powerful swimmers (Swim 80%) and they prey upon fish, seals, and other polar creatures. Polar bears have a very thick layer of blubber and fur to protect them from the harsh elements of their habitat.

Brontosaur

Brontosaurs are colossal dinosaurs (roughly 20 meters long) with relatively tiny heads, elephantine bodies, and whiplash tails. Vegetarian grazers, they often wallow in lakes and rivers either alone or in herds. They are not aggressive, and generally ignore creatures smaller than them so long as they do not present a threat.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D10+40	62
CON	2D10+30	41
SIZ	4D10+50	72
INT	3	3
POW	1D6+8	11-12
DEX	1D6	3-4

Move: 7

OPTION

Creatures as Player Characters

Players may want to experience the game by role-playing members of non-human races (this bestiary calls every non-human a “creature”), especially in settings where they’re appropriate such as fantasy or science fiction. Wanting to play radically different creatures from humankind is a natural desire for role-playing, and if doing so fits the GM’s choice of setting, it should be allowed. However, certain creatures are easier to role-play than others.

Incomplete creatures (those without a value in one or more characteristics) are often too limited for enjoyment. Additionally, it may be less enjoyable for a player attempting to role-play a creature with whose INT characteristic is generated with a roll of less than 3D6 (or 2D6+6).

The GM may also discourage players from trying to role-play extremely powerful or philosophically unappealing beings, based on the setting and the particular campaign. *For example, in a fantasy setting where the majority of the player characters are playing elves, the GM may not allow players to create trolls or dwarf PCs due to the strife that these (traditional) elfenemies will bring to the player character group.* Additionally, a modern horror campaign where players are fighting occult threats may be wholly inappropriate for a demonic or angelic PC (despite their appropriateness to the setting). Similarly, if the creature would create undue difficulties due to its very nature, such as extreme size, social enmity, or cultural role, the

GM should disallow players to choose to run it as a player character race. All such decisions are at the GM’s discretion, and the player should ask the GM if he or she is permitted to run a particular type of creature in the campaign.

These warnings aside, all creatures in this chapter are presented in as much detail as is required for use as a player character, though the GM may wish to expand these entries to suit his or her particular setting and campaign. It is assumed in most cases that these statistics represent full-grown or mature versions of the creatures, meaning that the GM should be able to limit the range of powers available to a player character version of the creature, with the assumption that in time, the player character creature may learn these additional powers and special abilities.

To choose whether or not a particular creature is suitable for the campaign as a player character, the GM should ask three questions:

Is a player character version of this creature inappropriate for the campaign setting?

Will this creature cause difficulties for other players or the course of the campaign?

Will this creature unbalance the rest of the campaign?

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes”, the GM is advised to disallow the creature for use as a player character, or to do so with the most stringent of conditions or special allowances.

Hit Points: 57

Damage Bonus: +7D6

Armor: 14-point skin

Attack: Tail Lash 50%, 1D6+½db (crushing)

Trample 75%, 7D6+db (crushing)

Brontosaurus may attack once per round, using either a tail lash or a trample if they are moving. The tail lash is an area-effect sweep attack. See the rules for sweep attacks on page 233 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. The trample attack is only used against targets who are prone, or have a SIZ characteristic of less than 1/3 the brontosaurus’s SIZ.

Skills: Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%.

Dog

Among the more popular pets in the world and prized for loyalty and affection, dogs are also used for security purposes. Whether domesticated or wild, dogs are pack-oriented creatures. In the wild, they often form packs of 1D8+3 or more. These statistics represent a standard dog of no specific breed suitable for guard duty: the GM is encouraged to provide more detail to model specific breeds if desired. Larger dogs should use the statistics for wolves, presented on page 336 of this chapter.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6	7
CON	3D6	10–11
SIZ	1D6+1	4–5
INT	5	5
POW	2D6	7
DEX	2D6+6	13

Move: 10 (6 swimming)

Hit Points: 7–8

Damage Bonus: –1D4

Armor: None.

Attack: Bite 30%, 1D6+½db (bleeding).

Skills: Dodge 55%, Listen 75%, Sense 90%.

Gorilla

Gorillas are large and strong jungle-dwelling apes. They’re quadrupeds but can walk and stand on their hind legs when they wish to. Though they are vegetarians and are usually non-aggressive, an angry gorilla can tear a man to pieces. They live in small family groups usually led by an old silverback male.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	6D6+15	36
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	4D6+12	26
INT	1D6+1	4–5
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	3D6+3	13–14

Move: 10 (5 in trees)

Hit Points: 20

Damage Bonus: +3D6

Armor: 3-point skin, muscle, and hair

Attacks: Bite 45%, 1D6+½db (bleeding)

Brawl 25%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Grapple 50%, special

A gorilla will attack twice each round. It may strike twice with its fists (brawl), bite and strike, or bite and grapple. If a grapple succeeds, the gorilla grips its opponent and does full damage modifier (usually 3D6) each round. If grappling, it may continue to bite, an Easy attack.

Skills: Climb 65%, Dodge 45%, Hide 50%, Listen 35%, Sense 25%, Stealth 35%

Female gorillas are smaller than the males, and have –1D6 to STR and SIZ.

Hawk

Hawks are predatory birds sometimes trained by humans as hunting pets. The statistics below are for a large hawk, but can also be used for an owl or other bird of prey, such as a falcon.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	1D3	2
CON	2D4	5
SIZ	1D2	1–2
INT	3	3
POW	2D6	7
DEX	3D6+18	28–29

Move: 1 (12 flying)

Hit Points: 4

Damage Bonus: –1D6

Armor: None

Attacks: Claw 45%, 1D4-db (bleeding)

Bite 30%, 1D3-db (impale)

A hawk attacks with both claws simultaneously and bites 5 ranks later.

Skills: Dodge 75%, Spot 100%.

Horse

One of the most common domesticated animals on the planet, horses have been used throughout history for transportation, combat, and labor, and are prominently

featured in many adventure genres and settings. These statistics are for a generic riding horse, with modifications to a warhorse provided afterwards.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+18	28–29
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	4D6+12	26
INT	4	4
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	3D6	10–11

Move: 12

Hit Points: 20

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 1-point muscle and hide

Attacks: Bite 25%, 1D3+½db (bleeding)

Kick 25%, damage 1D8+db (crushing)

Rear and Plunge 25%, 2D8+db (crushing)

Trample 25%, 2D6+db (crushing; warhorses only)

Skills: Dodge 45%, Hide 25%, Sense 50%.

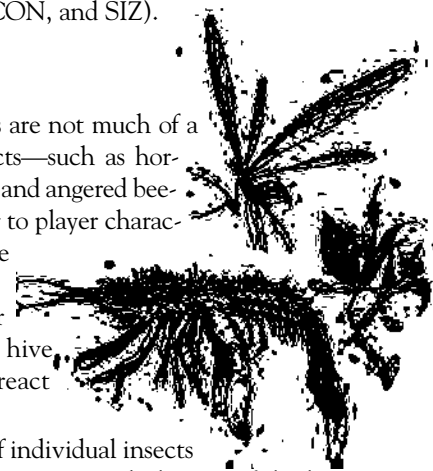
Most horses panic at supernatural presence, and horses not trained for combat will flee when encountering blood, fire, gunfire, screams, or explosions. Warhorses are trained for violent situations and hold ground if the rider succeeds with a Ride check. Warhorses are usually bred for ruggedness (add +2 to STR, CON, and SIZ).

Insect Swarm

Singularly, most insects are not much of a threat. Groups of insects—such as hornet nests, wasp swarms, and angered beehives—can be a danger to player characters. Most of the time insects will not go out of their way to sting or harass humans but, if a hive is threatened, they react violently to protect it.

Creatures the size of individual insects do not have characteristics. Instead, the size of the hive determines the number of stings inflicted on player characters each round. Consult the chart below to determine how many stings will automatically strike each player character caught in an insect swarm. The GM may adjust the dice type if desired. *For example, instead of a D6, the GM may use D4s for a merely noxious insect swarm or D10s for particularly vicious predatory insects like 'killer' bees.*

Hive Size	Stings
Very small (small wasp nest)	1D6
Small (large wasp nest, small beehive)	2D6
Large (very large wasp nest, average beehive)	4D6
Very large (large beehive)	6D6
Huge (very large beehive, army anthill)	8D6



Each player character attacked by an insect swarm will automatically be stung the rolled number of times each combat round until he or she is able to escape from, disperse, or even destroy the swarm. An attack by an insect swarm will usually attack for 2D6 combat rounds before halting pursuit. Unless the targets are completely covered (netting, being enclosed in a vehicle or sealed structure, diving underwater, etc.) there is no protection against an insect swarm.

Players can attempt a *Difficult* Dodge check to avoid an insect swarm, or can use some other means (GM discretion) to attempt to drive them away. Fire, smoke, poison, etc. are usually effective. Any protective gear the character may be wearing will reduce the number of stings per D6. See the chart below for more information.

Protective Gear	Sting Modifier
Normal armor	-1 sting per D6
Heavy clothing (with or without armor)	-2 stings per D6
Preventive steps to avoid stings	-3 stings per D6
Beekeeping gear	-4 stings per D6
Protective power use (GM discretion)	-1 to above
Complete covering (GM discretion)	No stings

For example, a character wearing normal armor subtracts 1 from each D6 of bee stings, and if a protective power is in effect (GM discretion as to what qualifies), it increases the protection to -2 to each D6. When the stings are rolled, the GM should subtract the sting modifier from each D6 rolled to see how many stings each character suffered each combat round. After the insect swarm is no longer a threat, the GM should total the number of stings received and then divide that total by that venom factor of the insect type, from the following chart. The GM should determine how large the hive size was based on the number of D6s rolled for stings.

Insect Type	Venom Factor	Hive Size
Bees	20	2D6 to 8D6
Wasps	15	1D6 to 4D6
Army Ants	10	2D6 to 8D6

The total number of stings divided by the venom factor gives the venom potency (POT) introduced into the targeted character's body. After 1D6 hours have passed from the insect swarm attack, each stung character should make a resistance roll of his or her CON versus the venom's POT. If the character's CON successfully resists the venom's POT, he or she takes half the venom's POT (round up) in HP damage. If the character fails the resistance roll, he or she takes the venom's full potency as HP damage.

At the GM's discretion, successful intervention with an antivenom or equivalent treatment can reduce the number of stings by another 1D4-1 per 1D6, with a successful First Aid roll and the proper medical supplies. Additionally, the GM may allow a character with a successful First Aid check to attempt to make a *Difficult*

Chemistry roll to improvise an antivenom from available chemicals or substances.

Lion

Large predatory wild cats, lions usually travel in prides of a dozen or so animals, hunting cooperatively. A pride of lions is usually headed by a male lion, leading several lionesses and adolescent lions, but prides may occasionally have multiple leaders, or even be all male. Lionesses do much of the hunting and will fight defensively for the pride.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+12	19
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	3D6+6	16-17
INT	5	5
POW	2D6+6	13
DEX	2D6+12	19

Move: 12

Hit Points: 13-14

Armor: 2-point skin

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Attacks: Bite 50%, damage 1D10+½db (bleeding)

Claw 60%, damage 1D6+db (bleeding)

Ripping 80%, damage 2D6+db (bleeding)

A lion can make one claw attack and one bite attack each combat round. If both attacks hit, the lion hangs on for the next round, continuing to bite. Instead of clawing, it will attempt to rake with its hind claws.

Skills: Climb 45%, Dodge 50%, Hide 70%, Jump 60%, Listen 50%, Sense 50%, Spot 55%, Stealth 75%, Track 25%.

Rat Pack

As with insect swarms, an individual rat is not much of a threat, but dealing with a pack of them can be dangerous. If characters are attacked by rat packs, assume that there are ten rats in a "pack". The GM should multiply the number of rat packs by x5. This value is the percentage chance of each rat pack to attack each combat round (each attack is rolled separately; the more rats, the more effective they are). For example, a character attacked by 10 rat packs has a 50% chance to be successfully bitten by each pack. Each successful attack will do 1D3 HP in damage to a character it is attacking. Armor counts against each individual attack, and a special success will do slashing damage. At the GM's discretion, a rat bite may also be diseased. A character can Dodge a rat pack attack, but cannot parry it. A successful attack against a rat pack (such an attack is *Difficult*, due to the size of the rats) automatically kills one rat and chases away the rest of that pack, lowering the general effectiveness of further attacks.

Shark

Dangerous and feared throughout all of the world's oceans by humanity and sea-creature alike, these predators have been called the perfect killing machine. These statistics are for a generic example shark, with instructions below to modify it into a giant shark. The more common types of sharks are bull, great white, and hammerhead, and these sharks vary greatly in size, temperament, and appearance. Sharkskin is extremely tough and covered with tiny enamel "teeth", and sharks are often hunted for their skin.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+12	22–23
CON	2D6+16	23
SIZ	3D6+12	22–23
INT	2	2
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	2D6+3	10

Move: 10 (swimming)

Hit Points: 23

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 5-point skin

Attacks: Bite 75%, 2D6+db (slashing)

Fin Slash 50%, 2D3+½db

If the shark's bite misses or is dodged, it will attempt a fin slash five DEX ranks later (or 3 strike ranks). If the shark's bite is parried or hits, it does not attempt a fin slash. Some sharks like great whites will, upon a successful bite attack, attempt to keep biting and thrash around for subsequent combat rounds (an Easy attack for the same damage) until dislodged or the death of the target.

Skills: Sense 95%, Swim 100%.

To create a giant shark, increase STR and SIZ to 6D6+24 and CON to 4D6+18. A giant shark's HP are 39 and its average damage bonus is +5D6.

Snake (Constrictor)

Pythons and similar gigantic constrictors usually live in jungles and rain forests. Some types (such as the anaconda) are water snakes, some live and hunt in trees, and some are ground dwellers. Usually they are no threat to human-sized targets, though depending on the setting, they may be provoked to attack a player character.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+12	22–23
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	5D6	17–18
INT	3	3
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	2D6+6	13

Move: 6 (4 swimming)

Hit Points: 15–16

Armor: 2-point skin

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Attacks: Bite 65%, 1D4+½db (impaling)

Constrict 40%, 1D6+db (crushing)

Swallow 100%, special (see below)

A constrictor can attack twice in a combat round, first biting and then attempting constriction five DEX ranks later. If the constriction attack hits, the target is wrapped in the constrictor's coils. The target can gasp but cannot yell or shout. Each round of constriction does damage to the victim's total HP. Only rigid armor or chest armor (if armor by hit location is being used) reduces this damage. If a limb is free, a character can make Difficult attacks against the constrictor. If no limb is free, the character cannot attack unless he or she has another means of attack (GM's discretion).

To attempt to become completely free from constriction, the targeted character must make a successful resistance roll of his or her STR against the constrictor's STR, instead of attacking in a round. For partial freedom, a Difficult Agility roll will free a single arm or other limb. The GM may require the constricted target to succeed in a Stamina roll or fall unconscious.

Once a character is either unconscious or dead, the constrictor will swallow him or her whole. Unless wearing breathing apparatus that survived being crushed, the character will suffocate using the rules provided on page 219 of Chapter Seven: Spot Rules.

Skills: Climb 85%, Dodge 60%, Hide 75%, Sense 75%, Stealth 90%, Swim 50%.

For a giant constrictor, the GM should increase the STR and SIZ by +2D6, giving it HP 19 and an average damage bonus of +2D6. Giant constrictors have 4-point scaly armor.

Snake (Venomous)

The example provided here represents a generic poisonous snake of no specific breed. Though they're usually only encountered in the wild, venomous snakes are often utilized by villains as weapons, or inhabit ruins and other spooky locations. Common varieties of venomous snakes are asps, cobras, copperheads, coral snakes, rattlesnakes, and water moccasins. As always, a GM wishing for more specific species variation is encouraged to further define this sample creature as desired.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D4	5
CON	2D6	7
SIZ	2D4	5
INT	3	3
POW	1D8	4–5
DEX	3D6	10–11

Move: 6 (4 swimming)

Hit Points: 6

Damage Bonus: -1D6



Armor: None

Attack: Bite 70%, 1D2+1/2db (impaling) + poison (see below)

Consult the sections on poison on page 229 of Chapter Seven: Spot Rules and on page 268 of Chapter Eight: Equipment for more information and some sample poisons from various types of snake.

Skills: Climb 50%, Dodge 50%, Hide 80%, Sense 65%, Stealth 90%, Swim 50%.

For a giant venomous snake, the GM should increase the STR and SIZ to 4D6+12, giving it HP 17 and an average damage bonus of +2D6. Giant snakes have 3-point scaly armor.

Squid (Giant)

Ten-tentacled cephalopods, squids are frequently associated with evil and many myths concern their attacking ships and other great sea-beasts such as whales. An average-sized squid (as described below) has a body roughly four meters long, with tentacles that can extend up to an additional twenty meters in length.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	10D6	33
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	10D6	33
INT	4	4
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	2D6+12	19

Move: 4 (10 swimming)

Hit Points: 23

Damage Bonus: +3D6

Armor: 2-point hide

Attacks: Beak 45%, 1D10+1/2db (impaling) + poison (see below)
Tentacle 45%, 1D6+db (crushing)

A squid can attack up to five different targets simultaneously with its beak and ten tentacles. A squid's poison has a POT equivalent to its CON characteristic value. The first tentacle successfully striking a

target will hold onto it, and when a second connects, the two constrict the target until the target can escape or cut free (for a quick rule, each tentacle has 2 HP). Each tentacle remaining around a target will do normal damage each combat round. To escape from a tentacle, a character must make a successful STR vs. STR resistance roll opposed by the squid's STR, or must make a Difficult Effort roll to get a hand free to attack. Attacks against a squid while being held by its tentacles are Difficult.

Skills: Hide 70%, Swim 100%.

To make a leviathan-sized squid capable of taking on boats and whales, add 1D6 of SIZ and STR for every meter of increased span from tentacle tip to tip, increasing HP and damage bonus accordingly.

Tiger

Tigers are the largest of the big cats. They hunt alone, and live in jungles and grassy areas. They survive well in cold climates. Tigers hunt by ambushing their prey, and are intelligent enough not to attack clearly dangerous foes.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+12	22–23
CON	3D6	10–11
SIZ	3D6+6	16–17
INT	5	5
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	2D6+12	19

Move: 12

Hit Points: 13–14

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 2-point skin

Attacks: Bite 45%, 1D10+1/2db (impaling)

Claw 70%, 1D8+db (bleeding)

Ripping 80%, 2D8+db (bleeding)

A tiger gets two simultaneous claws and one bite each combat round. The bite comes 5 DEX ranks after the claw attacks. If both claws successfully strike the target, the tiger will hang on and rip with its hind claws on the next round while continuing to bite.

Skills: Dodge 45%, Hide 80%, Jump 55%, Stealth 75%, Track 50%

Tyrannosaurus Rex

Largest and most well-known of the carnivorous dinosaurs, tyrannosaurs reach up to 13 meters in length and almost four meters tall at the hip. Bipedal, they walk with their bodies roughly horizontally, long balancing tail extended straight behind them, rearing upwards only while attacking. Though their forearms are relatively small, they still possess considerable strength.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	10D6+32	67
CON	4D6+21	35
SIZ	6D6+32	53
INT	3	3
POW	2D6+6	13
DEX	2D6+9	16

Move: 12

Hit Points: 44

Damage Bonus: +6D6

Armor: 10-point hide

Attack: Bite 50%, 2D6+db (impaling)

Foreclaw 35%, 1D4+½db

Kick 45%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

A tyrannosaurus attacks first by biting. If this is successful, 5 DEX rounds later it will attack with both foreclaws to seize the target for further tearing. For larger targets, it will substitute the foreclaw attacks for a single kick attack, sometimes even climbing onto the target and attacking with bite and two kicks in the next combat round.

Skills: Jump 50%, Listen 45%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Track 50%.

Wolf

In reality, wolves are somewhat shy and rarely bother humans, though they've long been viewed as evil creatures with sinister motives and characteristics assigned to them. Wolves hunt in packs ranging from a dozen to forty or more.

The GM may use these statistics to represent a large dog.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+6	13
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+1	8
INT	5	5
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	2D6+6	13

Move: 10

Hit Points: 9-10

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 2-point fur

Attack: Bite 30%, 1D8+½db (bleeding)

In combat, wolves will often fight cooperatively. Several wolves may attack the same target, ensuring that most of them will not be parried or Dodged. Or one or two large wolves may attempt to knock their target down—when it falls over, a bunch of wolves rush to tear at the target while down.

Skills: Dodge 35%, Listen 75%, Sense 90%, Spot 60%, Track 80%.

Fantasy Creatures

These creatures are common to a variety of fantasy and horror settings, and most (if not all) will be familiar to players. This roster covers many of the classic creatures of fantasy or horror that may be utilized as foes or threats in an adventure or combat encounter. The GM should modify these descriptions as desired.

Centaur

Centaur are hybrid beings composed of the upper half of a human and the body and legs of a horse, joined at the human's waist and the horse's neck. They are traditionally thought of as wise and pastoral beings, keepers of lore, fine craftsmen, able musicians, and fierce warriors in combat. They often dwell in plains or forests, and freely intermingle with humans, often serving as mentors or guardians as appropriate.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+6	16-17
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	4D6+12	26
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6+3	13-14
APP	3D6	10-11

Move: 12

Hit Points: 19

Damage Bonus: +1D4 or +1D6 (human); +2D6 (horse)

Armor: 1-point hide (can wear armor)

Attacks: Composite Bow 45%, 1D8+1+½db (impaling)

Lance 35%, 1D10+1+db (impaling)

Bastard Sword 40%, 1D10+1+db (bleeding)

Target Shield 50%, 1D2+db (knockback)

Kick 50%, 1D6+db (crushing)

Rear and Plunge 5%, 2D8+db (crushing)

Trample 25%, 2D6+db (crushing)

A centaur can kick 5 DEX ranks after striking with a melee weapon, though not when charging with lance. Because of the centaur's nature, their damage bonus is based upon STR alone (doubled) when using melee weapons. Figure damage bonus normally when centaurs kick, trample, or charge.

Powers: Centaurs usually prefer to use magic spells rather than sorcery. A centaur with enough POW for magic will likely have the following spells: Enhance 35%, Heal 60%, Illusion 45%, Perception 40%, and Vision 50%. The GM may choose to make the centaur more or less capable, as required.

Skills: Appraise 50%, Bargain 35%, Command 25%, Dodge 35%, Etiquette 35%, Insight 40%, First Aid 40%, Jump 60%, Knowledge (History) 50%, Listen 35%, Perform (Lyre) 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 40%, Swim 35%, Track 25%.

Dragon

Dragons are gigantic flying flame-breathing reptiles with huge claws and teeth, and tough armored hides. They present a bane to the existence of all who encounter them. Traditionally, dragons are solitary creatures, living alone and devastating the nearby countryside. Some dragons are intelligent, but many are merely cunning animals. They are often hoarders, collecting shiny items (like gold and other treasures) and piling it within their lair. Some can speak, while others are mere beasts. These statistics represent a bestial dragon. Depending on the setting, dragons may come in a variety of types, usually distinguished by colors and their breath weapons (see 'Powers' below). Some of these dragons may even be flightless, or have significantly different characteristics. The GM is encouraged to develop these additional types of dragon, if desired.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	20D6	70
CON	10D6	35
SIZ	20D6	70
INT	10	10
POW	4D6+6	20
DEX	3D6	10–11

Move: 4 (10 flying)

Hit Points: 53

Damage Bonus: +8D6

Armor: 12-point scales

Attacks: Breathe Flame 75%, 4D6+special (see below)

Bite 65%, 3D6+db (impaling)

Claw 50%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Tail 50%, 1D6+½db (crushing)

Dragons frequently fight by flying overhead and blasting fire down upon their targets. A dragon's fire covers an area 3 meters in diameter and has a range equal to the dragon's POW in meters, using the rules for area of effect attacks on page 213 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. A dragon's flame breath does 4D6 points of damage to the target, though armor will protect against this damage. If the optional hit location system is being used, this damage affects each of the target's hit locations: 4D6 is rolled once; and the damage is applied to all hit locations equally. A dragon must expend 1D6 power points to belch forth flame (or fatigue points, if that optional system is being used). Additionally, the target is likely set on fire. See the spot rules for fire on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. When flying, a dragon only has the breath attack unless it is in close combat with an airborne target, at which case combat is handled as normal.

When encountered on the ground, a dragon can make two attacks each combat round: it may either bite or breathe flame for one attack, and will either use a claw strike or tail sweep for the other. The second attack will come 5 DEX ranks after the first attack. A dragon's tail sweep attack is handled as an area of effect sweep attack, as described in the rules for area of effect attacks and sweep

attacks on pages 213 and 233 (respectively) of **Chapter Seven:**

Spot Rules.

Skills: Dodge 35%, Fly 100%, Listen 65%, Sense 50%, Spot 60%, Track 45%.

Powers: Dragons are intensely magical beings, as demonstrated by their unnatural abilities of flame breath and flight. Intelligent dragons have an INT of 4D6 and can know spells, usually magic spells or sorcery, following the normal rules for those power types and being assigned spells at the GM's discretion. In such cases, the dragon likely has additional skills such as language, knowledge, and even Appraise. Dragons may also have types of breath other than flame projection: the GM is encouraged to use the guidelines for Energy Projection in **Chapter Four: Powers** for creating alternate dragon breath types.

Dwarf

Dwarves are small humanoids that traditionally live underground in caverns and giant underground catacombs. They're famed for short tempers, fine craftsmanship, ancient grudges, excessive drinking, and long beards. Though male and female dwarves are similar in size and strength, dwarf women rarely venture forth into the outside world. The GM is encouraged to devise different dwarf cultures, complete with rivalries and prejudices between them.

Characteristics	Roll	Average
STR	4D6	14
CON	1D6+12	15–16
SIZ	1D4+4	6–7
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	3D6	10–11
DEX	3D6	10–11
APP	3D6	10–11

Move: 6

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 8 points (chain and a light helm)

Attacks: Hammer 35%, 1D6+db (crushing)

Battleaxe 50%, 1D8+2+db (bleeding)

Heavy Crossbow 40%, 2D4+2 (impaling)

Buckler 50%, 1D2+db (knockback)

Skills: Appraise 50%, Bargain 45%, Brawl 50%, Craft (blacksmithing) 45%, Dodge 40%, Grapple 45%, Knowledge (Dwarflore) 35%, Language (Human) 35%, Language (Dwarf) 65%, Listen 45%, Repair (weapons and armor) 35%, Spot 45%, Status 35% Throw 35%.

Powers: Traditionally, dwarves shun magic, though some use magic spells or sorcery. Dwarves usually have a natural ability equivalent to the Super Sense (Dark Vision) power, with levels equivalent to ½ (rounded down) the dwarf's POW.

Elf

Elves are slender humanoids with pointed ears, and are traditionally forest dwellers (whether in trees or cities integrated into natural surroundings). They are attractive and often dress in natural tones and colors to emphasize their connection with nature and the wild. They are also long-lived, sometimes even immortal, and are often considered aloof and mysterious. The GM is encouraged to devise different elf cultures, usually themed after their environment or some other distinction (snow elves, sea elves, night elves, high elves, etc.).

Given their physical and emotional compatibility, humans and elves often form relationships, though offspring are uncommon. Half-elves (as they are called) inherit traits from either parent. To create a half-elf, roll each characteristic as if for both races and average the result (rounding down). Any inherent powers from the elf lineage are similarly halved or averaged as appropriate.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+2	9
CON	3D6	10–11
SIZ	2D4+4	9
INT	3D6+6	16–17
POW	2D6+6	13
DEX	3D6+3	13–14
APP	3D6	10–11

Move: 11

Hit Points: 10

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 1 point (soft leather)

Attacks: Longbow 55%, 1D8+1+½db (impaling)
 Short sword 45%, 1D6+1+db (bleeding)
 Short Spear 40%, 1D6+1+db (impaling)
 Short Spear (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)

Skills: Climb 65%, Dodge 55%, First Aid 45%, Hide 35%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Elf-lore) 45%, Language (Human) 40%, Language (Elvish) 85%, Listen 55%, Perform (Sing) 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 45%, Swim 35%, Track 40%.

Powers: Elves commonly use magic spells rather than other powers, and have a natural ability similar to Super Sense (Night Vision) with levels equal to ½ (rounded down) the elf's POW. Common magic spells (and sample skill levels) an elf might use are Dispel 45%, Heal 50%, Illusion 35%, Perception 60%, Resistance 50%, and Vision 60%. Other elves might have a more combat-oriented arsenal of spells. The GM should choose magic spells appropriate to the type of elf and its role in the adventure.

Ghost

A ghost is the spiritual remnant of a human being (or similar creature) still attached to the world of the liv-

ing, either aware or unaware of its deathly nature. They haunt locations (castles, mansions, graveyards, etc.), objects (weapons, vehicles, etc.) or even a specific person. A ghost will usually haunt something connected with its death or former life. Most ghosts are malignant, and hate the living. Ghosts are frequently insane, driven by a desire to right whatever wrong they feel was committed against them so that they might be allowed to "pass on" to a higher plane, free from the world of the living. The ghost may not even understand this compulsion.

Ghosts can appear as wispy humanoid figures, glowing manifestations, solid-looking creatures, cloudy figures, headless things, vehicles such as trains, coaches, ships, or cars, animals, etc. They are known by any number of names: ghosts, spirits, shades, spooks, haunts, poltergeist, apparitions, phantoms, specters, phantasms, etc. Ghosts are often highly specific to the conditions of their death and their environment, and ideally should be crafted by the GM to fit the circumstances of the setting. Each particular type of ghost has specific manifestations and powers. Following are some options and suggestions for utilizing ghosts in a setting:

- ❖ Ghosts of redemption may appear as figures from a character's past, returned from the dead to provide warnings of ill futures. On the other hand, a ghost may be drawn to protect someone it loved in life, and to provide a character with aid and assistance in time of great need.
- ❖ A ghost may appear as a spiritual advisor, bidden to pass along messages in service to some higher power. Such a ghost may not physically threaten or harm a character, and may even provide guidance and be a mentor of sorts.
- ❖ A poltergeist can be violent, telekinetically throwing items and victims around a room and using objects as improvised weapons.
- ❖ Ghost vehicles tend to appear in the same spot at the same time and date all the time. Boarding a ghostly train or ship is usually a method of transportation to another dimension or time. Characters who do this may disappear forever, or may have to solve the riddle of the haunting before being released.
- ❖ An entire building may itself be a kind of ghost. If the building's mystery or dark secret is discovered, the building itself may disappear forever. Hopefully, the characters will get out before this happens.

Ghosts usually possess only INT and POW, though some ghosts may have APP. A ghost may be solid, and have characteristics (STR, SIZ, and DEX) as a living being, though it will never have a CON value.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	4D6	14
APP	3D6	10–11

Move: 14 (equal to POW)

Hit Points: None

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None (immaterial, see below).

Attacks: Ghostly Combat POW vs. POW, 1D3 power points (see below).

Powers: Ghosts can attack in ghostly combat, consisting of a POW vs. POW resistance roll. This will appear as if the ghost is glimpsed as clawing at, enveloping, or otherwise physically attacking the target. If the ghost overcomes the target's POW, he or she loses 1D3 power points. If the character can overcome the ghost, he or she causes it to lose 1D3 power points. More powerful ghosts may drain 1D6 power points (or even more) from a target in a single combat round, but will only lose 1D3 power points if overcome by the intended target. This combat continues each combat round until the target is unconscious, or either side has fled. A ghost will flee before it reaches 0 power points. A ghost that reduces a character to 0 power points may possess him or her, usually causing the victim to commit suicide or harm another person. Even if a ghost possesses a character, it remains tied to the site of its haunting and cannot leave.

In addition to ghostly combat, a ghost may have powers suited to its former existence and role in the setting, usually drawn from the psychic and super powers provided in **Chapter Four: Powers**. Ghosts are immaterial, and are not subject to the limitations of the Intangibility super power on page 158.

Traditional powers for ghosts include psychic powers such as Cryokinesis, Mind Blast, Mind Control, Pyrokinesis, Telekinesis, or super powers such as Drain, Energy Control, Invisibility, Teleport, and even Weather Control. At the GM's discretion, ghosts may or may not be vulnerable to powers such as magic, sorcery, psychic powers, or super powers, though it is suggested that if they are able to attack the living, the characters have some means of fighting back or banishing them.

Skills: As suited to the nature of the ghost.

Ghoul

Ghouls are hideously deformed humans consigned to feeding on the dead, and existing in a state somewhere between life and death. Ghouls look like they emerged from an open grave, wearing clothing they've looted from graves or their victims. They're bestial in temperament, and have little guiding intelligence. Ghouls are magical incomplete creatures lacking POW, formed when a malignant spirit possesses a freshly dead corpse. The corpse is transfigured and animated, and must now devour human flesh (living or dead) for sustenance.

Ghouls gain power points by consuming corpses, at the rate of 1 power point per 3 SIZ points devoured. As creatures with no natural POW, ghouls must expend 1 power point every morning or collapse, the malignant spirits forced to return to the otherworld. If this happens, the ghouls' animated corpse will rapidly decompose and it will be dead. Additionally, every hour of exposure to sunlight forces the ghouls to spend 1 power

OPTION

Sanity Loss and Creatures

This chapter contains many creatures that might cause characters to lose sanity points (SAN) if viewed. See the section on Sanity in **Chapter Ten: Settings** for more information on sanity rolls and SAN loss. Following is a list of these creatures and their relevant SAN loss values:

Creature	SAN Roll Succeeds	SAN Roll Fails
Alien, Grey	0	-1D6
Alien, Xenomorph	1	-1D8
Angel	0 (or +1D3 SAN)	-1D3
Blob	1	-1D20
Cyborg (grotesque)	0	-1D4
Demon, Greater	1D3	-2D6
Demon, Lesser	1	-1D6
Elemental	0	-1D4
Ghost	0	-1D4 or more
Ghoul	0	-1D6
Mummy	1	-1D8
Mutant (grotesque)	0	-1D4
Robot, Killer	0	-1D4
Skeleton	0	-1D6
Vampire	1	-1D4 (or more)
Werewolf	0	-1D8
Zombie	1	-1D8

At the GM's discretion, other natural creatures may cause SAN loss, depending on their activities and the circumstances surrounding their appearance. SAN loss may also be adjusted based on the setting and the genre. For example, a character from a world where undead are commonly encountered would not necessarily need to roll when encountering zombies.

point. Under normal circumstances, a ghoul will have 2D6+6 power points stored.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D6	14
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move: 8

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None (may wear armor)

Attacks: Claw 30%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Bite 30%, 1D6+db (bleeding) + venom (see below)

Howl 100%, special (see below)

A ghoul attacks simultaneously with both claws and a bite. When it bites, the ghoul can inject the target with venom with of POT equal to the ghoul's CON. The target must make a resistance roll of his or her CON versus the venom's POT. If the target of the

bite loses the resistance roll, the venom's full POT enters his system. If it is successfully resisted, only 1D3 of the venom's POT is injected. When the total POT injected is equal to or greater than a bitten character's CON, he or she is paralyzed until an antidote counteracts the venom. The unfortunate character will live in this state for as many days as he or she has points of CON, but loses a point of current CON each day. A character bitten by a ghoul but not paralyzed, purges the venom from his or her system at the rate of 1 POT per day.

Ghouls use a blood-chilling howl in combat against anyone in relatively close proximity ($\frac{1}{2}$ the ghoul's CON in meters). When a ghoul howls, make a resistance roll of its current power points versus each target's INT. If more than one ghoul howls, use only the power point total of the ghoul with the highest number of power points for the resistance roll. If a target is overcome, he or she becomes stunned until all howling stops. If a character resists the howl's effects, he or she must try again on the next round. A character that successfully resists for five successive combat rounds becomes immune to its effects for a period of time at the GM's discretion (weeks, months, years, or even permanently, or until the character has forgotten the howl the howl sounds). The ghoul's howl costs 1 power point to use. The magic spells of Countermagic and Resist Magic do not protect against ghoulish howling.

Skills: Climb 60%, Dodge 45%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Listen 60%, Sense 40%, Spot 50%, Stealth 60%

Powers: See above for details on the ghoul's howl. Ghouls can learn sorcery, and all ghouls have a natural ability similar to Super Sense (Night Vision) with levels equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ (rounded down) the ghoul's INT.

Giant

Giants are huge, ugly humanoids with a taste for human flesh. They are surly and untrustworthy creatures and usually only marginally less destructive than a tornado. Traditionally giants have different sub-races, based on their environment, such as sea giants, mountain giants, fire giants, hill giants, frost giants, etc. These types usually differ dramatically in intelligence, size, and behavior. Some of them have societies, courts, and their own languages.

These statistics cover a fully-grown, 16-meter tall "generic" giant. Giants have a lifespan approximate to humankind, and grow at the rate of 1D6+6 SIZ and 1D6+6 STR every five years. A GM wishing for a less powerful giant should subtract age from the giant until it is the desired STR and SIZ.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	24D6+48	132
CON	16D6+48	104
SIZ	24D6+48	132
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	2D6	7

Move: 18

Hit Points: 118

Damage Bonus: +15D6

Armor: 21-point skin (see below)

Attacks: Club 35%, 3D6+db (crushing + knockback)

Kick/stomp 35%, 1D6+db (crushing + knockback)

Thrown rock 35%, 2D6+ $\frac{1}{2}$ db (crushing)

Giants use enormous clubs or tree trunks in battle, and specialize in sweep attacks (see the rules for sweep attacks on page 233 of

Chapter Seven: Spot Rules). A giant's club has hit points equal to 10 + number of damage modifier dice. For example, the sample giant above has a club with 25 HP.

Powers: Some powerful and older giants use magic spells or sorcery, though it is rare that they are taught these powers.

Skills: Sense 60%, Spot 40%, Throw 35%

Giants have tough skin worth 6 points plus their damage modifier in D6s. A giant with a 15D6 damage modifier has 21-point skin. In addition to this, some giants wear leg armor (often plate), which adds to the armor protection. If the optional hit location system is being used, normal-sized characters fighting giants should roll only 1D10 to determine the location struck, unless they are using missile weapons.

Griffin

Griffins are chimerical creatures, combined of the body and rear legs of a lion, and the head, forelegs, and wings of an eagle. These flying predators traditionally have mountaintop nests, and are often depicted in heraldic imagery.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	10D6	35
CON	3D6+12	22-23
SIZ	10D6	35
INT	6	6
POW	3D6+6	16-17
DEX	3D6+12	22-23

Move: 8 (12 flying)

Hit Points: 29

Damage Bonus: +3D6

Armor: 6-point hide

Attacks: Bite 70%, 1D6+db (impaling)

Claw 70%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

A griffin attacks with two claws simultaneously and bites 5 DEX ranks later.

Skills: Dodge 30%, Fly 100%, Listen 50%, Sense 65%, Spot 75%.

Halfling

Halflings are small human-like creatures of a generally peaceful nature and are quite civilized. Traditionally, they are fond of eating, pipe-smoking, and drinking, and they seek out quiet professions such as farming,

crafting, and innkeeping. Halflings usually live in small rural communities in farmhouses or underground warrens. They often forsake wearing shoes.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6	7
CON	2D6+12	19
SIZ	1D3+3	4-5
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	2D6+3	10
DEX	2D6+10	17
APP	3D6	10-11

Move: 6

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: -1D6

Armor: None (may wear armor)

Attacks: Short Sword 35%, 1D6+1+db (bleeding)
Sling 35%, 1D8 ½db (crushing)
Thrown Rock 50%, 1D4 (no damage modifier, crushing)
Halflings are expert at throwing rocks and do not suffer a negative damage modifier.

Skills: Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Craft (farming) 75%, Dodge 60%, Drive (wagon) 45%, Grapple 35%, Hide 65%, Knowledge (Halfling-lore) 35%, Language (Halfling) 75%, Language (Human) 65%, Listen 65%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Throw 50%.

Powers: Traditionally, halflings shun magic, though some rare few use magic spells. Fewer still use sorcery.

Minotaur

Minotaurs are humanoids with bull's heads and hooved feet. Surly and violent, they are tools-users, though have little civilization of their own, preferring to dwell in ruins or in the wild. Some can speak, while others are bestial and have no language abilities.



Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+12	22-23
CON	1D6+12	15-16
SIZ	3D6+12	22-23
INT	2D6	7
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	2D6	7

Move: 6

Hit Points: 19

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 3-point hide (can wear other armor, usually leather)

Attacks: Great Axe 55%, 3D6+db (bleeding)
Head Butt 35%, 1D6+db (knockback)
Brawl 50%, 1D3+db (crushing)
A minotaur can use either a head butt or weapon attack in combat round. A minotaur can only use both in a round if it is otherwise capable of making two attacks in a round.

Skills: Dodge 40%, Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%, Track 55%

Powers: Minotaurs normally disdain powers of any sort, though some rare minotaurs occasionally use sorcery or magic. If a minotaur is wounded or achieves a special success while striking an opponent, it will go berserk for 24-CON turns. This has similar effects to the sorcery spell Fury, described on page 131 of **Chapter Four: Powers**. A berserk minotaur can attempt to shake off the rage by making a successful roll of INTx1%. After this berserk rage, it is considered fatigued (if the fatigue system is not used, all rolls are *Difficult*).

Mummy

A mummy is an undead creature formed from a preserved, dried corpse, brought back to a semblance of life through some curse or powerful necromancy. Some cults keep mummies in their temples as guardians, while other mummies rise from the dead to protect their tombs from grave robbery. Some mummies may speak, while others remain silent. Not all mummies are wrapped in bandages—some wear jewelry and items of great value as befitted their status in life.

Because of the bandages and dry, desiccated state of their flesh, fire is particularly effective against mummies. It is twice as easy to set a mummy afire as it is another normal target, and though damage is normal, the fires are more difficult to extinguish (lower the chance the fire will die out by ½). Powers that utilize fire will have the same effect.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	6D6	21
CON	4D6+3	17
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	1D6+12	15-16
DEX	2D6	7

Move: 8

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 3-point skin (may wear armor)

Attacks: Fist 70%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Grapple 25%, special
Short Sword 45%, 1D6+1+db (bleeding)
A mummy can attack with two fist attacks each combat round. If it

succeeds with both attacks, it will attempt to grapple and choke its target in the next round. A mummy may use ancient weapons appropriate to the era of its former life.

Skills: Language (ancient tongue) 90%, Listen 50%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%.

Powers: Mummies may remember sorcery from their former existence, though they rarely improve their abilities or learn new spells. A sorcery-using mummy will usually have the following spells in memory: Brazier of Power (4), Gift of the Earth (4), Pox (1), Sorcerer's Talons (2). If the mummy's tomb is intact, it will likely have access to its grimoire or scrolls containing many spells.

Orc

Orcs are a savage, somewhat bestial humanoid species often opposed to humanity, elves, dwarves, and almost any other race they encounter. They usually have dark skin, fangs, and pointed ears, and are sometimes referred to as goblins. Orcs prefer darkness, but can function well enough in daylight. They have a rough civilization based almost entirely on brutality and enslavement of their own as well as any unlucky captives. They even practice cannibalism on weak or unlucky members of their own species. Orcs often are found in service to the forces of darkness, or preying upon others for their own amusement and enrichment. Many different species of orcs could exist, based on environmental, cultural, regional, or other variances. Some orcs ride giant wolves, bred as mounts. The gamemaster is encouraged to further define these as he or she sees fit. Common variants are the formidable "greater" orcs (STR 5D6, CON 3D6+3, and SIZ 3D6+6) and the pestilential "lesser" orcs (STR 3D6, SIZ 2D6).

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D6	14
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+2	9
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	2D6+3	10
DEX	4D6	14
APP	2D6	7

Move: 8

Hit Points: 10

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 6-point ring and light helmet

Attacks: Scimitar 35%, 1D8+1+db (bleeding)
 Composite Bow 35%, 1D8+1+½db (impaling)
 Short Spear 35%, 1D6+1+db (impaling)
 Short Spear (thrown) 35%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)
 Spiked Shield 35%, 1D3+db (impaling)

Skills: Climb 55%, Dodge 40%, Hide 35%, Knowledge (Orc-lore) 35%, Language (Human) 25%, Language (Orcish) 60%, Listen

50%, Ride (wolf) 50%, Sense 35%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Track 30%

Powers: Sorcery is the most commonly practiced power in orc society, with sorcerers traditionally being priests or leaders. An orc who knows sorcery will likely know the following spells: Cloak of Night (2), Pox (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (1), Sorcerer's Speed (2), Ward (3).

Skeleton

Animated skeletons are not true undead, but are instead created or summoned by magic or an ancient curse. They are generally human skeletons, but other types are known to exist. Animated skeletons are almost always encountered guarding some treasure, ancient tomb, or some other place of ill omen. Skeletons move at the same speed they did in life, but cannot fly or swim (if they could when alive). They have no fatigue points and never tire.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	1	1
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13 (see below)

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None (may wear armor, also see below for immunities)

Attacks: Broadsword 55%, 1D8+1+db (bleeding)
 Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)
 Large Round Shield 55%, 1D4+db (knockback)

Skills: Dodge 40%

Skeletons have no CON, and thus have only their SIZ as HP. Because they have no fleshy matter, they are immune to the special effects from bleeding and impaling hits. They take no damage whatsoever from thrusting weapons, unless the hit was an special success or critical hit, in which case, the damage is considered while the secondary effects are ignored.

Dried bones are fairly brittle, and snap and splinter easily from a heavy blow. Any blow striking a skeleton has a percentage chance of destroying the skeleton equal to or less than the damage done multiplied by 4, in addition to the normal HP loss and regardless of the skeleton's current HP. *For example, if an axe hit a skeleton and did 8 points damage, there would be a 32% chance of destroying the skeleton by shattering it. If the roll is successful, the skeleton instantly shatters and is out of the fight. If the roll fails, the skeleton has still lost 8 HP.*



Troll

Trolls are huge (almost three meters tall) bestial, cannibalistic humanoids with rough greenish-black hide, hairy shoulders and arms, and long claws. They traditionally dwell in mountains and forests, preferring to live in caves or sometimes beneath bridges. Some trolls can speak, while others are bestial and cannot. They are nocturnal creatures, and shun sunlight whenever they can. At the GM's discretion, there may be other species of troll, usually named after elemental or natural aspects (stone, ice, wood, rock, hill, mountain, sand, sea, lake, swamp, bog, etc.). These different species will vary wildly in coloration, and may be larger or smaller, faster or slower, smarter or duller, stronger or weaker, etc. than this classic variety presented here. Smarter trolls will use more sophisticated weapons, while some will even wear heavy armor.

Most trolls encountered will be males, while female trolls (called *trollwives*) are smaller and weaker (–6 to STR and SIZ) but smarter and faster (+1D6 to INT, POW, and DEX).

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+12	22–23
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	4D6+12	26
INT	2D6	7
POW	2D6	7
DEX	2D6+3	10
APP	1D6	3–4

Move: 6

Hit Points: 20

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 3-point skin

Attacks: Tree Trunk Club 45%, 1D10+2+db (crushing)

Claw 50%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Grapple 50%, special

A troll's usual tactic is to strike with its club then hit with a claw, but the troll cannot parry if it does so. Like a giant's club, a troll's tree trunk club has HP equal to 10+ the number of damage modifier dice. For example, the troll described here will have a club with 12 HP.

Powers: Trolls are able to regenerate from injuries. They heal 1D3 HP of damage per combat round, unless they are dead. If the optional hit location system is used, trolls heal 1 HP per wounded hit location per combat round. If a troll is in sunlight, or if the damage was done by fire, it does not regenerate in this manner. Trolls can see in the dark as if they have the Super Sense (Night Vision) power with levels equal to ½ (rounded down) the troll's POW. Trollwives are almost always sorcery-using witches, and will be equipped with spells such as Curse of Sorcery (4), Pox (1), Undo Sorcery (2), and Witch Sight (3).

Skills: Dodge 35%, Sense 55%, Spot 55%.

Unicorn

The unicorn is a horse-like creature with smallish hooves and a single long straight horn protruding from the center of its forehead. Unicorns are almost always white, though black or grey ones are not unheard of. They are solitary, peaceful forest-dwellers, and are highly sensitive to magic and their environment. It is believed that they are immortal unless killed or their horn removed, and for this reason their horns are thought to grant immortality. Unicorns are often featured in heraldry and are a sign of chivalric and maidenly virtue. They are especially trusting of maidenly human or elf women.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+24	31
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	2D6+18	25
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	2D6+12	19
DEX	2D6+6	13
APP	4D6	14

Move: 12

Hit Points: 19

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: None

Attacks: Horn 75%, 1D10+db (impaling)

Kick 40%, 1D8+db (crushing)

Rear & Plunge 40%, 2D8+db (crushing)

Trample 75%, 2D6+db (crushing)

A unicorn can attack once a round, preferring to use its horn. A unicorn can parry with the horn as well as either simultaneously kick or gore with its horn.

Skills: Dodge 35%, Hide 65%, Insight 50%, Jump 90%, Listen 70%, Sense 80%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%.

Powers: A unicorn can heal wounds with its horn by touching the wound and expending 1 power point per HP to be restored. This healing can even reattach a severed limb, if at least 6 power points are expended. Attribute points lost through poison or disease can also be cured, but this takes a point of permanent POW per point cured, so unicorns are reluctant to perform this. Additionally, a unicorn can detect poison with a touch of its horn. If a unicorn horn is made into a cup it will shatter if poison is placed into it.

Vampire

Vampires are undead who survive by drinking the blood of the living. Created when they share blood with a vampire and are killed, they reawaken as almost bestial creatures. However, many vampires regain their former intelligence and are able to move undetected through human society, immortal and careful when they feed. Some are urbane and civilized, and have turned to feeding on lesser animals or other semi-legal means of procuring blood. Others are like wolves, killing with impunity.

Like ghosts, vampires can come in a variety of types, ranging from beautiful, urbane and intelligent reclusive celebrities to horrifically ugly creatures with bat-like features and protruding fangs, living in sewers and barely sentient. Some vampires may even strive to atone for the misdeeds of their previous life and the killings they committed. Following are some qualities or aspects ascribed to vampires in myth, folklore, and popular media. The gamemaster should decide which of these are true and which are false.

- ❖ A vampire casts no reflection.
- ❖ The third bite from a vampire causes a character to die, and then to become one of the undead. When a character is turned into a vampire, his or her STR and CON double.
- ❖ Vampires have hairy palms, repulsive breath, and cry tears of blood.
- ❖ Killing the original or "chief" vampire cures his victims of their vampirism. Alternately, killing the lead vampire instantly kills all those vampires he has created.
- ❖ Vampires cannot cross moving water such as a river.

❖ Garlic wards off vampires. Garlic has a POT of 2D6+6 (to vampires only) and must be resisted by the vampire's current power points. If the vampire succeeds, it can act against the garlic-holder. If it fails, the vampire is considered stunned until it leaves the presence of the garlic. If a vampire eats garlic, it takes 1D2 HP per clove consumed.

❖ Vampires employ human servants to guard their secrets and protect them during daylight hours.

❖ A vampire cannot enter a home or residence uninvited.

The GM should feel free to come up with different types of vampires based on what's appropriate for the setting and the adventure. A popular method of differentiating vampires is a clan-based typing, with different clans having different appearances, tendencies, and even powers available to them. As noted in "Powers" below, vampires have a wide range of capabilities, or potential abilities at the GM's discretion.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6 x 2	20-22
CON	3D6 x 2	20-22
SIZ	3D6	10-11
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	(13)	13 (of drained power points)
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	3D6	10-11

Move: 12

Hit Points: 15-17

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: None (can wear armor)

Attacks: Bite 50%, 1D4+½db (bleeding) + Blood Drain (see below)

Claw 50%, 1D4+db (bleeding) + Chill Touch (see below)

Hypnotic Gaze, POW vs. POW, (special see below)

Grapple 75%, special

A vampire can make one bite and two claw attacks per round, or it may attempt a single claw and a hypnotic gaze attack. If it succeeds in both claw attacks and a bite attack, it will grapple its target and drain their blood temporarily each round until the target is incapacitated. It cannot attempt to Dodge during a round it bites or uses hypnotic gaze. See below for details.

Powers: Vampires have a wide range of powers attributed to them. The following are the ones that almost all vampires have.

Blood Drain: A vampire that successfully bites and damages a target can drain 1D6 STR or 1D6 power points (GM's choice) from that target on each subsequent round it is able to stay attached to the target, using normal grappling rules. If the target has lost all his or her STR, the vampire can choose instead to drain CON from the victim. At 0 CON, the victim dies.

Providing that the victim has not died, these characteristic points are not permanently lost and regenerate at the rate of 1 point per day of relative rest, or twice that long if the character is not resting. If more than one characteristic is drained, alternate recovery each day to recover 1 point of STR, then 1 point of CON, etc. Power points regenerate normally.

A vampire uses Blood Drain to recoup its own power points—being undead it has no POW characteristic of its own to regenerate power points naturally. STR, CON, or power points drained are transferred by the vampire to its current power point total. A vampire cannot store more power points than its CON characteristic. Any points in excess of this amount are lost.

Chill Touch: A vampire who touches a target can attempt to drain power points from a victim instead of the blood drain (above). To attempt this, the vampire must have succeeded in a claw attack against the target (or touched an incapacitated or unaware target), and on the subsequent round can attempt a resistance roll of its current power points vs. the target's current power points. Armor does not protect against this attack. If the vampire succeeds, it drains 1D3 power points from the target, which are transferred to the vampire's current power point total. The vampire must remain in contact with the target each round to continue this drain, and must succeed with a resistance roll each combat round while it attempts this power. The victim will recover these lost power points normally.

Hypnotic Gaze: If the vampire overcomes a target's POW with its current power points on the resistance table, the target is hypnotized, and can be made to follow simple instructions. If these instructions are self-destructive, at the start of a round the character can attempt an Idea roll to snap out of it.

Night Sight: Vampires have a natural ability similar to the Super Senses of Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, and Night Vision at a level equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ (rounded down) the vampire's current power points.

Regeneration: Unless it is killed through one of the traditional means (see below), a vampire will regenerate 1D3 HP per combat round. If it is in direct sunlight or in the presence of a holy symbol, it cannot regenerate this damage and must heal normally. Additionally, the damage from holy water, a holy symbol, sunlight, or fire cannot be regenerated and must heal at the vampire's normal healing rate.

Skills: Dodge 50%, Etiquette 50%, Fly 90%, Hide 70%, Insight 60%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (History) 75%, Language (ancient) 75%, Language (modern) 50%, Listen 60%, Persuade 60%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Stealth 80%, Track 75%.

In addition to the powerful abilities given above, vampires have had many other powers ascribed to them. Following are some other powers vampires may have, at the GM's discretion:

Legions of the Night: Vampires are known to control lesser creatures such as bats, rats, and even wolves. The vampire can summon 1D6 rat or bat swarms (see the rules for these earlier in this chapter, treat bat swarms as rat swarms but with Fly 100%), or 1D6 wolves. Each swarm costs 1 power point to summon, while each wolf costs 3 power points to summon and control. These creatures may be created as sidekicks as per the rules on page 160 of **Chapter Four: Powers** (but use the vampire's current power point total instead of POW when determining control), or can merely be an example of multiple uses of sorcery spells such as Bird's Vision (substitute a bat for a bird) and Rat's Vision.

Mist Form: The vampire can transform itself into a mist, able to move through the tiniest of cracks and float through the air effortlessly. A vampire with this power may be forced into mist

form when it is reduced to 0 HP, but is not slain in the traditional manner. This could represent use of the magic spell Change or the super powers Alternate Form or Intangibility. While in mist form, the vampire has MOV 5 and is immune to most forms of physical damage, though magic spells may still affect it.

Shape Shifting: The vampire can transform itself into a wolf, a bat, or even a swarm of rats at a cost of 3 power points. As with Mist Form, the power is identical to either Change or Alternate Form. Use the statistics for a wolf or rat swarm for the vampire's abilities in either of these forms, using the same game effects for rats as bats (though with Fly 100%).

Spellcasting: Vampires are often powerful spellcasters, with an assortment of spells ready for use. Given their immensely long-lived existence and their relative access to forbidden tomes, scrolls, and other powerful undead, a vampire may know a wide range of powerful sorcery or magic spells. Vampires use their current power point total to overcome targets or for their magic.

Weaknesses: Vampires, as cursed and unholy undead, are also subject to several weaknesses that set them apart from the living and other forms of undead. Following is a list of the traditional vampire weaknesses; the GM should decide which of these a particular vampire possesses, if not all.

Blood Thirst: A vampire loses 1D6 power points each night merely getting up and moving around, spent when the vampire first arises. If the vampire reaches 1 or 2 power points, all of its rolls are considered *Difficult* due to its weakness and the roaring thirst that consumes it.

Daylight: Vampires suffer 1 point of damage per combat round of exposure to direct sunlight. While in direct sunlight, the vampire cannot regenerate, shape change, turn into mist, or use its hypnotic gaze. Sunlight may cause additional problems for vampires, such as making all skill rolls *Difficult*, at the GM's discretion. For this reason, vampires are traditionally nocturnal.

Decapitation: A vampire who has been decapitated is dead, will not regenerate, and can never rise from the dead.

Fire: Vampires take double damage from fire, whether issued through a power or an environmental effect. Vampires are considered to be flammable, if a character attempts to set one afire using a torch, power, or weapon.

Holy Symbols: Vampires presented with a holy symbol in the hands of a character with true faith (GM's discretion) are inflicted with intense pain, losing 1D3 power points for each round the character with the holy symbol succeeds in a resistance roll of POW vs. the current power points of the vampire. The character must be concentrating on this and can perform no other attacks each round. The vampire suffers 1D3 points of damage for each round the vampire comes into actual physical contact with the holy symbol. A vampire cannot attempt its hypnotic gaze power versus a character that wins in the resistance roll described above.

Holy Water: As noted in the description of acid on page 211 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**, holy water counts as strong acid against vampires, doing 1D4 points of damage per combat round. A character with at least 50 allegiance (see page 315)

to a benevolent deity may create holy water by spending one full turn in prayer and expending 1 power point over that water. The amount of holy water does not matter.

Sacred Earth: A vampire loses 3D6 power points each day it does not spend at least four hours in a coffin (or equivalent) lined with earth from its homeland; a penalty exacted at sunset. Thus, an ill-prepared vampire could lose 4D6 power points each evening if denied sacred earth and due to blood thirst. If a vampire reaches 0 power points it becomes comatose, not dead but unable move or function until someone transfers power points to it through the use of some power.

Stakes: If a wooden stake is driven through a vampire's heart and causes at least 1 point of damage, it will immediately disintegrate into dust. Using the normal rules, this is whenever a wooden weapon achieves an impaling or critical result on a *Difficult* attack. *For example, someone shooting a vampire with a bow skill of 80% must achieve an impale success on a roll of 40%. In this case, a roll of 01 through 08 will succeed in staking the vampire through the heart.* A traditional wooden stake does 1D3+db and has 6 HP, with a base chance of 15%. Alternately, this merely prevents the vampire from acting and regenerating, and the vampire must be decapitated, the head and body burned separately to be utterly destroyed.

Werewolf

Werewolves are shape-changers able to transform from human, to wolf, with an intermediary hybrid form. This condition is called lycanthropy. Some wolves can make this change voluntarily, while others transform involuntarily on nights when the moon is full. This latter type of werewolf becomes a pure beast at this time, with no human control or even memory of his or her actions while in were-form. Traditionally, someone who survives a werewolf's bite will become a werewolf at the next full moon—a condition that is supposedly inescapable. Some types of lycanthropy are considered to be magical in nature (usually a curse), while other types are almost a disease. It is up to the GM to decide whether a character surviving injury from a werewolf will join it in lycanthropy.

In its human form, a werewolf is outwardly normal and has normal human characteristics. Following are statistics for the hybrid (wolf-man) and wolf forms.

Characteristic	Hybrid Form	Wolf Form
	Roll / Average	Roll / Average
STR	6D6 / 21	6D6 / 21
CON	2D6+6 / 13	2D6+6 / 13
SIZ	3D6 / 10–11	3D6+1D3 / 12–13
INT	2D6+6 / 13	1D4+2 / 4–5
POW	2D6+6 / 13	2D6+6 / 13
DEX	2D6+6 / 13	2D6+6 / 13
Move:	12	13
Hit Points:	12	12–13
Damage Bonus:	+1D4	+1D6
Armor:	1-point fur (immunity to normal weapons, see below)	

Attacks (hybrid form): Bite 50%, 1D4+½db (bleeding)
Claws 65%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Attacks (wolf form): Bite 65%, 1D8+½db (bleeding)
Claws 45%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

In either form, a werewolf can make one bite attack and two claw attacks each combat round.

Powers: Werewolves have the following powers:

Transformation: Werewolves can assume one of three different forms; human, hybrid, and wolf. Shifting from one shape to another takes 5 DEX ranks and does not cost any power points. The werewolf can switch from any of these forms to another.

Regeneration: Werewolves are able to regenerate 1 HP of damage each combat round, unless that damage was done with a silver weapon (see below). Werewolves heal from damage inflicted by a silver weapon at their normal healing rate.

Immunity: Werewolves are immune to most forms of damage other than magic, fire, or possibly silver (at the gamemaster's option). This means that attacks with weapons other than these simply bounce off the werewolf, regardless of the result. Magic, fire, and (optionally) silvered weapons do full damage. A weapon with a spell cast upon it, such as Sorcerer's Razor, will do the magical damage but not the actual weapon's damage or the attacker's damage bonus. An outright magical weapon will do its normal damage, but will ignore the damage bonus. The GM should determine if energy weapons, poisons, or other more sophisticated attacks will do damage against a werewolf.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 65%, Hide 60%, Jump 80%, Listen 70%, Sense 90%, Spot 70%, Track 90%.

Zombie

Zombies are animated corpses resurrected by necromancy, voodoo, demonic possession, or another more modern method such as toxic chemicals, strange radiation, or even a biological plague. Whatever the origin, zombies almost always thirst for human flesh (some prefer brains) and are driven by this grisly motive. Zombies are generally incapable of speech, and often stalk the living in mobs. They are not particularly bright, and are easily fooled.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6 x 1.5	15–17
CON	3D6 x 1.5	15–17
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	6	6
POW	1	1
DEX	2D6	7
APP	1D6	3–4

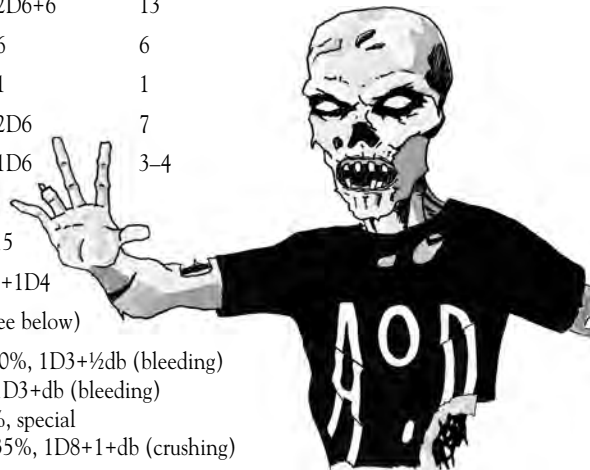
Move: 4

Hit Points: 14–15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None (see below)

Weapons: Bite 30%, 1D3+½db (bleeding)
Claw 25%, 1D3+db (bleeding)
Grapple 35%, special
Large Club 35%, 1D8+1+db (crushing)



A zombie's skill with a weapon is equal to DEX x 5%. Zombies never attempt to Dodge or Parry.

Powers: Most slashing, crushing, and impaling weapons do only half damage to zombies. Fire does full damage against them. Some types of zombie can only be killed by a special success that damages the skull. This is whenever a weapon achieves a special or critical result on a *Difficult* attack. For example, someone using a battleaxe on zombie with a skill of 80% must achieve a success on a roll of 40%. In this case, a roll of 01 through 08 will succeed in damaging the zombie's brains enough to incapacitate it. Some types of zombies are infectious—a successful bite attack will turn the victim into a zombie within his or her CON in hours, without exception.

Skills: Sense 50%.

Summoned Creatures

These creatures are unlikely to be encountered in the wild, as they are not native to this world or are summoned into existence when called. At the GM's discretion, some of these creatures (angels, demons) should only be encountered in campaigns where the optional allegiance system is used, while others (elementals) should only appear if the relevant powers exist to summon them.

Angel

An angel is a holy being, usually an emissary of a divine power. Angels can take on a variety of forms; their appearance is based on the religion they spring from, from Christian cherubim to Hindu devas. Angels can appear if summoned, as messengers, as guardians, as soldiers of heaven, or as harbingers of a greater divine action. These statistics describe a winged humanoid of moderate power equipped with a breastplate and a flaming sword. The GM should feel free to devise angels of other power levels and different cultures if desired.

As noted earlier in the section on "Sanity Loss and Creatures", and at the GM's discretion, a pious character (someone with a positive value in an allegiance favorable to the angel) may actually receive SAN points when viewing an angel if the sanity roll is successful.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D6+12	26
CON	2D6+24	31
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	4D6+12	26
DEX	2D6+12	19
APP	4D6+12	26

Move: 10 (12 flying)



A myriad of creatures, beasts, and monsters inhabit the various planes of the cosmos. A wise sorcerer plans carefully before open pathways between worlds, lest he or she ends up being the one summoned and bound to do another's bidding.

Hit Points: 22

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 10-point plate breastplate + 10-point divine radiance

Attacks: Flaming Broad Sword 200%, 1D8+1+db (slashing)+2D6 (fire)

Holy Fire 100%, 10D6 (fire, see below)

Voice of Heaven 100%, special (see below)

As divine beings, angels are capable of exceeding skill levels of 100% even if the GM is not allowing players to use this optional rule. This allows the angel to make multiple attacks and parries in a round as described in the section on "Attacks and Parries Over 100%" on page 198 of Chapter Six: Combat. An angel can never be separated from its sword, and the sword cannot be broken.

Powers: Angels have a host of powers ascribed to them. The GM should determine which of these an individual angel may possess:

Divine Radiance: Angels are surrounded by a radiance of light that protects them from all forms of injury. This serves as 10-point armor against any source of damage, including the use of powers.

Flight: Whether winged or wingless, angels are able to fly at great speed and with tremendous agility. Angels possess the equivalent of the super power Flight at levels equivalent to the angel's POW. This power does not cost any power points to utilize. At the gamemaster's discretion, the angel may appear wingless, but then manifest great birdlike wings that appear to suddenly grow and unfold from its back.

Healing Touch: Angels are able to lay hands upon the sick, the infirm, and the unhealthy, and heal them. This is not a simple restoring of HP, however. Instead, the angel is able to remove any illness, disease, or infirmity (crippled, blind, insane, etc.) by spending one power point per point of POT in the infirmity (GM's discretion) or if the ailment does not have a POT, spending one point for each of the target's CON. The angel can attempt this for as many power points it has, but if the angel's power points are completely expended, it will return to the higher planes until it is bidden or allowed to return to the world of the living (at least one week, at which time it will be fully restored and healed from any injuries it suffered while in the living world).

Holy Fire: Angels can summon holy fire as a form of divine retribution. This is the equivalent of a flame strike from above with an area of effect of roughly three meters square. At the GM's discretion, a pious character (someone whose allegiance to the force the angel represents is the highest of their allegiance scores) may make a roll of allegiance as a %. If successful, the character takes no damage whatsoever from the holy fire. Failing, or non-pious, targets are engulfed in flame doing damage to all hit locations. Unlike normal fire, holy fire does not linger, and its effects are nearly instantaneous, disappearing at the end of the combat round it was summoned. Use of this power costs the angel 10 power points and it can be performed once per day.

Invisibility: Angels have the ability to become Invisible at will as per the super power, with equivalent to ½ their POW in levels. Use of this power costs the angel only 3 power points per use.

Voice of Heaven: An angel can speak with the voice of Heaven (substitute an appropriate locale or deity). This is an area of effect attack roughly ten meters in diameter from the angel, though it may warn those within range to cover their ears. This voice, booming and regal, stuns anyone in the range if they do not succeed in a resistance roll of their own POW vs. the angel's POW. Failure means that they are stunned as per the normal stunning rules, while success means that they are unaffected this combat round. This power costs the angel 3 power points, and takes the place of any physical attack.

Spells: At the GM's discretion, angels may also use magic spells or super powers. Magic spells likely used by an angel are Countermagic, Dispel, Enhance, Light, Speak to Mind, and Teleport, all at 100%. Angels are disinclined to use sorcery, and are never mutants. They may occasionally utilize psychic powers, though in most cases their own divine abilities supplant the need for these.

Skills: Command 100%, Dodge 100%, Flight 100%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (any) 100%, Language (any) 100%, Sense 90%, Spot 90%, Teach 90%.

Demon, Greater

A demon is an infernal being, usually summoned or brought to this plane for some terrible purpose. A greater demon is no mere guardian or servant—it will be encountered

only because something monumental is at stake. Depending on its personality, it may be bestial and merely concerned with destruction, or it may be witty and urbane, charming and persuasive. These statistics represent a combat-oriented demon, clawed and horned, ready to wreak havoc upon any who defy it. The gamemaster should feel free to devise further types of demons representing other cultures or roles within the setting, as desired. At the gamemaster's discretion, the greater demon may have a number of chaotic features from the list on the opposite page.

While viewing an angel can potentially restore SAN points to a pious believer, those who worship the infernal powers are not nearly so lucky. A character viewing a greater demon is at risk for SAN loss, even if he or she summoned the demon in the first place.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+24	34-35
CON	3D6+12	22-23
SIZ	3D6+12	22-23
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	3D6+6	16-17
DEX	3D6+6	16-17
APP	3 or 21	3 or 21

Move: 10 (12 flying)

Hit Points: 22-23

Damage Bonus: +2D6



Use care when summoning creatures from other planes. Some are so horrific they threaten the mental stability of all who see them. Others have larger and more powerful siblings who might leap at the chance to explore our world.

OPTION

Chaotic Features

Many creatures of chaos such as demons are, from one creature to another, inconsistent in their appearance and powers. This is the influence of chaos at work. Just as living beings have mutations (see **Chapter Four: Powers**), unnatural creatures may have chaotic features. If the GM desires, each individual chaotic creature may have one feature from this list, either chosen or, more appropriately, rolled randomly. This is an entirely optional table and should be ignored if the GM would prefer to handcraft any chaotic opponents.

D100% Chaotic Feature

01-03 POW +1D6

04-05 POW +2D6

06 POW +3D6

07-09 DEX +1D6

10-11 DEX +2D6

12 DEX +3D6

13-14 STR +1D6

15 STR +2D6

16-17 CON +1D6

18 CON +2D6

19-20 Never surprised.

21-22 Absorbs 1 point of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding +1 power point.

23-24 Spits acid of 2D10 POT 1D6 times per day, 6-meter range.

25-26 Breathes 3D6 fire 1D6 times per day; single target, 3-meter range.

27-28 Reflects 1-point magic or sorcery back at user.

29-30 Highly flammable; if ignited burns all within 3-meter radius for 2D6 points damage until extinguished.

31-32 Hypnotic pattern on skin; viewers must succeed in an Idea roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds.

33-35 Appearance is confusing; all attacks against it are at -20%.

36-37 Large and valuable gem clearly visible on body.

38-40 Regenerates 1 HP per combat round until dead.

41-42 Can attempt to befuddle a target each round in addition to any combat, with a POW vs. POW resistance roll. Failure puts the target into a confused and highly suggestive state. To perform any actions, the target must make a *Difficult* Idea roll, and may be ordered by the creature to act contrary to his or her normal wishes. Resisting these commands also requires a successful *Difficult* Idea roll.

43-45 Creature seemingly invincible; appears to take no damage until it reaches 0 HP, then falls over dead.

46 Invisible until it attacks.

47-48 Appearance is extremely confusing; all attacks against it are at -30%.

49-50 Poison touch of 2D10 POT; natural attack must do 1 HP of damage for poison to work.

51-52 CON -2D6, but regenerates 3 HP per round until dead.

53-54 6-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +6 to current armor.

55-56 MOV 12

57-58 Absorbs 1 or 2 points of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding the amount to current power points.

59-60 Can launch a POW vs. POW attack each round; if successful, target loses 1D6 power points.

61-62 Explodes upon reaching 0 HP, causing 3D6 damage to all within 3 meters. Armor, shields, etc. will protect against this, though weapon parries cannot.

63-65 Appears far more dangerous than actually is.

66-67 Can turn invisible at will when not in combat.

68-70 Reflects 1- or 2-point magic or sorcery back at user.

71-72 8-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +8 to current armor.

73-74 10-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +10 to current armor.

75-76 12-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +12 to current armor.

77 Appears utterly harmless until it enters combat.

78-80 Regenerates 1D6 HP per combat round until dead.

81-82 Can leap vertically or horizontally 10 meters from a standstill.

83-84 Undetectable through magic or sorcery.

85 Appearance extremely disorienting; all attacks against it are at -40%.

86-87 Extremely valuable gem (or gems) inside creature, will be discovered if creature is cut open.

88-90 Makes agonizing screams continually.

91-92 Overpowering stench causes nausea in any who breathe near it. If target fails in a Stamina roll, all tasks are *Difficult* against this creature for 1D6+2 rounds.

93-94 Reflects 1D6+2-point magic or sorcery back at user. Roll randomly each turn a spell is cast against the creature to determine how much is reflected.

95-96 Hideous appearance of creature demoralizes those who it beats in a POW vs. POW resistance roll. If target fails, all tasks are *Difficult* against this creature for 1D6+2 rounds.

97-98 SIZ +2D6

99 Roll twice again on this table. If this is rolled again, add another two chaotic features and roll again, etc.

00 This creature has APP 5D6, and is particularly endearing. It attacks with a APP vs. INT resistance roll. Failure causes the victim to befriend the creature, perhaps even offering to serve it. The creature may have up to 1D6 current companions of this nature, at the GM's discretion. The charmed character may even fight friends to defend the creature.

Armor: 8-point tough hide (may wear armor)

Attacks: Greatsword 150%, 2D8+db (bleeding) + 2D6 flame (special)

Whip 90%, 1D3-1+½db (entangle) + 1D6 fire (special)

Flame Breath 100%, 6D6 fire (special)

Claws 150%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Grapple 150%, special

In combat, a greater demon usually begins with a blast of fire from its mouth before engaging in physical combat. It can make two (or more) attacks per round, preferring to use the whip first to immobilize a foe then strike with the greatsword 5 DEX ranks later. A

greater demon is able to use its greatsword one-handed, due to its SIZ and STR. Its flaming greatsword can ignite flammable materials and does extra damage to most foes. It fights two-handed with a long whip, also aflame. If either weapon is lost, it will resort to using its claws or grappling. Unlike the weapons of an angel, a greater demon's weapons have double HP but can be broken or otherwise destroyed (they are immune to fire, however).

Skills: Climb 90%, Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Jump 75%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Throw 75%.

Powers: Demons have a host of powers ascribed to them. The GM should determine which of these an individual demon may possess:

Aura of Terror: The greater demon has a radiance of malevolence and hatred that manifests in an aura of terror. Anyone coming within the demon's POW in meters is subject to making a POW vs. POW resistance roll with the greater demon to avoid being overcome with terror. If a character fails the resistance roll, he or she is stricken with fear and all attacks and other actions are considered *Difficult*. Affected characters can attempt a new resistance roll at the beginning of the next combat round, though this resistance roll will be *Difficult*, as well. The demon can activate this power at the cost of 1 power point and it will last for the demon's POW in combat rounds, or until the demon chooses to stop the power. Anyone on the demon's "side" or those of the same allegiance are exempt from this power unless the demon wishes to extend it to affect allies. If a character fails the resistance roll and the optional sanity system is being used, the character loses the full amount of possible SAN from seeing the greater demon.

Blight: The demon's overall presence can cause an area to become tainted, twisted with the dark evil in the demon's soul. This is not a power useful in combat, but instead will contaminate an area over time, until it has a foreboding presence of evil and malice that lingers. Living plants will wither or grow twisted and bitter, the soil will become dry and bleak, and the very atmosphere will take on an unholy resonance. The radius of this effect is equal to the greater demon's POW x 100 meters. It does not cost any power points to activate, is automatic and beyond the demon's control (the presence cannot be masked or hidden). It takes 30 days minus the demon's POW for this presence to become manifest, and the demon's POW in months for an area to recover once it has become blighted.

Flame Breath: A demon can breathe a blast of fire with a range equal to its CON in meters. This blast will be an area-of-effect attack of roughly three meters by three meters. If using the optional hit location system, this will affect every hit location at once. Any caught within this blast will take 6D6 fire damage (regardless of their allegiance). This fire lingers, and will continue to burn on subsequent rounds. Consult the rules for fire on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for more details. This fiery blast costs 6 power points per blast.

Flight: The greater demon has huge bat-like wings and can fly, tirelessly and effortlessly.

Regeneration: A demon has a hellish vitality and can heal from injuries with astonishing speed. It can regenerate 1D6 HP per combat round at no power point cost. If the optional hit location system is used, the demon heals 1D3 HP per hit location instead.

Sheath of Smoke and Fire: The demon itself is sheathed in a flaming radiance that will cause 1D6 points of fire per combat round to any creature that gets within two meters of it, such as in physical combat. This sheath can ignite any flammable substance around the demon. It serves as 1 point of additional armor against any wooden missile weapon directed at it, such as an arrow or crossbow bolt. This sheath may be activated around the demon at will and costs 1 power point per round it is active.

Demon, Lesser

A lesser demon is much smaller than a greater demon, and has been summoned by a sorcerer to either serve it continually, or for some short task. The sorcery section in **Chapter Four: Powers** contains guidelines for summoning demons. This lesser demon is a smallish, almost grotesque creature, similar to an emaciated gargoyle in appearance, with claws, wings, and horns. It is not cowardly, and prefers to serve through means other than combat. When it is destroyed, it will return to its home in the lower realms, where it is bullied and tormented, so it wishes to prolong its freedom in the world of the living for as long as is possible. At the GM's discretion, the lesser demon may have a number of chaotic features from the table on the previous page.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+3	10
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	1D6+6	9-10
INT	2D6+3	10
POW	2D6+6	13
DEX	3D6+3	13-14
APP	1D6+3	6-7

Move: 8 (12 flying)

Hit Points: 10

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 1-point scaled hide

Attacks: Short Sword 40%, 1D6+1+db (slashing)

Self Bow 35%, 1D6+1+½ db (impaling)

Half Shield 35%, 1D2+db (knockback)

Claw 50%, 1D3+db (bleeding)

Bite 35%, 1D3+½ db (bleeding)

Grapple 45%, special

Usually the demon's master will arm it for combat. If unarmed, a demon can make two claw attacks in a combat round. If successful with both, it will attempt to grapple and bite on the next combat round.

Skills: Bargain 55%, Climb 65%, Dodge 50%, Fast Talk 40%, Fly 75%, Hide 45%, Knowledge (Region: Hell) 35%, Listen 40%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Stealth 35%.

Powers: Lesser demons are not particularly powerful, though they may have a few sorcery spells if their POW values are high enough. These will likely be some of the following: Curse of Sorcery (4), Flames of the Sun (4), Midnight (1), and Pox (1). A sorcerer summoning a lesser demon may, at the GM's discretion, choose which spells the demon knows if adequate research is done beforehand.

Elementals

Elementals are essentially primal and simple elemental spirits that manifest themselves in bodies composed of the element of their type. They are usually summoned into existence by the magic spell Conjure

Elemental (page 94), the sorcery spell Summon Elemental (page 138), or other creative uses of powers (at the GM's discretion). See the relevant spells for information about how elementals can be summoned, though in most cases, there must be a relative abundance of the element of the specific type, such as a body of water is required to summon a water elemental. Generally, there must be at least the amount of SIZ of the raw element required for the elemental to be summoned.

Elementals figure their hit points differently from most beings: instead of averaging CON+SIZ, they are added together for the HP total. Elementals do not heal lost HP or regenerate power points. When an elemental is reduced to 0 HP or spends all of its power points, it disappears, reduced to the raw element it was composed of.

As magical beings, elementals are traditionally immune to normal attacks such as weapons or firearms. They are also vulnerable to one another's attacks. At the GM's discretion, energy or chemical weaponry may affect them. *For example, the GM may allow a flamethrower to have some effect on an earth elemental, or a laser to affect a water elemental.* Additionally, attacks by substances that might naturally oppose them may also have an effect, at the GM's discretion. *For example, a character with a fire hose or a fire extinguisher may be able to affect a fire elemental.* Finally, many powers will affect elementals. The GM should determine whether these work, based on common sense. This may require a case-by-case decision rather than just allowing an entire type of powers to be effective or ineffective. *For example, the psychic power Cryokinesis may be tremendously effective against a water elemental, but Mind Blast may have no effect.* The GM is advised to be fair and equitable in this; players rarely like having no ability to affect a potential assailant.

This section provides four traditional types of elementals—air, earth, fire, and water—and the GM is encouraged to create additional types of elementals as desired. These do not need to be tied to traditional elemental associations, either. Other types of elementals can be spirit; shadow; hybrids of existing elementals such as smoke (air and fire), magma (earth and fire), fog (air and water), or mud (earth and water). Concepts as potentially abstract as time and space can become weird elemental types. Additionally, these are average elementals, and the GM is encouraged to make them more or less powerful as desired.

Air Elemental

Air elementals usually appear as mostly-transparent female humans of surpassing beauty, either naked or in wispy garments, surrounded by a whirlwind, floating in

the air. They are barely tangible, feeling like they're formed out of thickened air. Their voices are soft and faint, and they are mischievous, with a short attention span. Air elementals are often called *sylphs*.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6	10-11
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6	7
INT	4D6	14
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	4D6	14
APP	3D6+3	13-14

Move: 10 (12 flying)

Hit Points: 17-18

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None, but invulnerable to normal attacks

Attacks: Scouring Wind 50%, 1D10 (knockback, range is POW in meters)

Skills: Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Language (Summoner's) 100%, Listen 75%, Science (Meteorology) 100%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%.

Powers: An air elemental has control over its element, represented in one, two, or all of the following three approaches:

Magic: An air elemental can cast the Lift and Lightning magic spells at its POW x 3% for the regular power point cost.

Sorcery: An air elemental can cast Wings of the Sky (4) at will, with no power point cost.

Super Powers: The air elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW in levels of the Energy Control (Wind) and Energy Projection (Wind) super powers as described on pages 153 and 156 of

Chapter Four: Powers.

An air elemental may, at the cost of its own life, utterly destroy a fire elemental of equivalent strength. It may also provide breathable air for one character, at the cost of 1 HP per round.

Fighting an air elemental may require familiarity with the aerial combat rules presented on page 212 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Air elementals can turn invisible at will at a cost of 1 power point, though they will reappear if commanded by their summoner, or if they attack someone.

Earth Elemental

Earth elementals usually appear as thick-bodied masculine humanoid forms, made of stone, earth, and minerals, with roots and vines like veins and sometimes hair or beards of moss and leaves. In other environments, they may appear as the type of earth available, such as sand and sandstone in the desert. They are often slow-witted and grumpy, and surly when summoned, though they will do the bidding of their controller. Their voices are low and gravelly. They are usually called *gnomes*.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	5D6+12	29-30
CON	3D6+6	16-17
SIZ	3D6	10-11
INT	2D6	7
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	2D6	7
APP	1D6+3	6-7

Move: 6

Hit Points: 26-28

Damage Bonus: +1D6 or +2D6

Armor: None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)

Attacks: Fist 50%, 1D6+db (crushing)

Skills: Appraise 50%, Craft (Blacksmithing) 75%, Language (Summoner's) 25%, Science (Metallurgy) 100%.

Powers: An earth elemental has control over its element, represented in one, two, or all of the following three approaches:

Magic: An earth elemental can cast the magic spells Dull and Wall at its POW x 3% for the regular power point cost.

Sorcery: An earth elemental can cast Gift of the Earth (4) at will, with no power point cost.

Super Powers: The earth elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW in levels of the Barrier super power as described on page 151 of **Chapter Four: Powers**.

An earth elemental may, at the cost of its own life, utterly destroy an air elemental of equivalent strength.

An earth elemental can also sink into the ground and move at normal speed, emerging when it wishes. It can extend this ability to a character of it's SIZ or smaller, engulfing it and moving the character through the earth unharmed at the elemental's normal MOV rate. It will only do this with a willing character, but does not supply oxygen for the voyage. See the rules for asphyxiation on page 218 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, an earth elemental has a chance of breaking any normal weapon made of metal. If a character successfully strikes an earth elemental with a metallic weapon, he or she must make a resistance roll of the weapon's HP vs. the earth elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll fails, it automatically breaks. If it succeeds, it does not break. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.

Earth elementals are also aware of any precious metals or anything underground within their INT x 100 meters, but will only begrudgingly admit this, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these things. Use of this power costs the earth elemental a number of power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

Fire Elemental

Fire elementals usually appear as four-legged reptiles made up of fiery plasma. They scorch the ground where they walk, and smoke emerges from their mouths when they speak in their hissing, crackling voices. They are

generally irritable and quick-tempered. Fire elementals are usually called *salamanders*.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+6	13
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	3D6+6	16-17
INT	2D6	7
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	4D6	14
APP	1D6+3	6-7

Move: 10

Hit Points: 26-28

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None, but invulnerable to normal attacks

Attacks: Flame Breath 50%, 1D10 per round (fire, range is POW in meters)
Grapple 50%, special + 1D6 per round (fire)

Skills: Demolition 75%, Dodge 50%, Language (Summoner's) 50%, Listen 50%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%.

Powers: A fire elemental has control over its element, represented in one, two, or all of the following three approaches:

Magic: A fire elemental can cast the magic spells Flame and Resistance at its POW x 3% for the regular power point cost.

Sorcery: A fire elemental can cast Flames of the Sun (4) at will, with no power point cost.

Super Powers: The fire elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW in levels of the Energy Control (Heat) and Energy Projection (Heat) super powers as described on pages 153 and 156 of **Chapter Four: Powers**.

A fire elemental may, at the cost of its own life, utterly destroy a water elemental of equivalent strength. They can ignite any flammable material by touch, but will never willingly extinguish or prevent a fire.

Water Elemental

Water elementals usually appear as beautiful aquatic, vaguely translucent human females the color of the sea, with greenish-blue hair and skin. They are alluring and usually are scantily clad or nude. If encountered on land, water elementals leave wet footprints and are constantly dripping with water. They are intelligent and thoughtful, and speak in gurgling voices. Water elementals are often called *undines*.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+6	16-17
CON	3D6+6	16-17
SIZ	2D6	7
INT	4D6	14
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	3D6+3	13-14

Move: 10 (12 swimming)

Hit Points: 23-24

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)

Attacks: Drowning 50%, special (see below)

Skills: Dodge 75%, Language (Summoner's) 75%, Navigate 100%, Science (Oceanography) 100%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%, Swim 100%.

Powers: A water elemental has control over its element, represented in one, two, or all of the following three approaches:

Magic: A water elemental can cast the magic spells Heal and Unseal at its POW x 3% for the regular power point cost.

Sorcery: A water elemental can cast Bounty of the Sea (4) at will, with no power point cost.

Super Powers: The water elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW in levels of the Drain and Super Movement (Water Walking) super powers as described on pages 152 and 163 of **Chapter Four: Powers**.

A water elemental may, at the cost of its own life, utterly destroy an earth elemental of equivalent strength.

To drown an opponent, a water elemental engulfs the target's mouth and nose in a bubble of water. If it has succeeded in a touch attack, all further drowning attacks against the target are *Easy* until the target has either broken free or is dead. See the rules for drowning on page 218 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**. This attack costs the water elemental an equivalent number of HP to the damage inflicted on the target. It may cease the drowning attempt at any time.

In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, a water elemental has a chance of rusting any normal metal weapon or warping any wooden weapon striking it. If a character successfully strikes a water elemental with a metallic weapon, he or she must make a resistance roll of the weapon's HP vs. the water elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll fails, it rusts (losing 2 HP and with a -1 to damage) or warps (-1 HP, -5% to hit). If it succeeds, it is unaffected. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.

While submerged, a water elemental can become invisible at will at the cost of 1 power point, though it will reappear if commanded by the summoner, or if it attacks someone. While underwater, a water elemental can speak clearly to any within normal hearing range.

Water elementals are also aware of any items within the body of water they were summoned from, within their INT x 100 meters, but will only admit this if asked, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these items. Each use of this ability costs the water elemental a number of power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

Science Fiction Creatures

These creatures are featured in science fiction or other futuristic settings. They may also show up in post-apocalyptic worlds, horror, or other cross-genre worlds.

Alien, Grey

The grey alien is the most commonly encountered type of alien in the modern world, based on the reports of alien abductees and popular media. Believed to come from *Zeta Reticuli*, the grey alien species visits earth for research and experimentation upon humans and animals, and has been doing so for millennia. Fairly weak physically, grey aliens rely on extremely sophisticated technology to immobilize their captive subjects. Their motives are unknown, and they do not exhibit any signs of human emotion, rarely even acknowledging the sentience of their subjects as they conduct bizarre and humiliating experiments upon them.

Grey aliens are sometimes encountered at UFO crash sites, wandering around dazed and trying to defend their ship until a rescue arrives. They are either naked or in formfitting mesh jumpsuits and are equipped with alien technology.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	1D6+3	6-7
CON	2D6	7
SIZ	1D6+3	6-7
INT	2D6+12	19
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6+3	13-14
APP	1D6+1	4-5

Move: 7

Hit Points: 7

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Stun Pistol 50%, 2D6 (stuns, see weapon description)
Disintegrator Rifle 35%, 3D6+2 (see weapon description)

Skills: Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 75%, Hide 60%, Knowledge (Human Culture) 55%, Knowledge (Region: Milky Way) 85%, Language (English) 20%, Language (Zeta Reticulan) 100%, Listen 55%, Medicine 100%, Navigate 70%, Pilot (UFO) 80%, Repair (Quantum) 50%, Science (Astronomy) 75%, Science (Planetology) 95%, Science (Zoology) 50%, Sense 60%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%, Technical Skill (UFO Sensors) 50%

Powers: Grey aliens are often capable of utilizing what humans believe to be psychic powers. Commonly utilized psychic powers are Emotion Control, Mind Control, Mind Shield, Telekinesis, and Telepathy. Each of these will be at the grey alien's POWx2%, or higher at the GM's discretion.

Alien, Xenomorph

Discovered on the edge of space, these xenomorphs (*alien forms*) are ravenous for human flesh, ferociously struggling to devour any humans unlucky enough to encounter them. Vaguely insectile, xenomorphs communicate with one another through an unknown fashion and are capable of surprisingly sophisticated tactics. They reproduce through a complex and extremely rapid process wherein eggs are implanted into their victims until gestation is complete, at which point the newborn alien emerges and (usually) devours the former host. Scientists theorize that each clutch of these aliens are led by an egg-laying brood queen of immense size and superior intelligence. Xenomorphs are cunning and coordinate their attacks, and will quickly overrun any area they are introduced into, building giant hives and capturing living hosts to serve in their vile reproductive process.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	3D6+3	13-14
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	3D6+3	13-14
INT	2D6	7
POW	2D6	7
DEX	3D6+6	16-17
APP	1D6	3-4

Move: 12

Hit Points: 12-13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 2-point carapace (spews acidic blood, see below)

Attacks: Claw 50%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Bite 35%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Tail Lash 35%, 1D4+db (impaling)

Grapple 35%, special

Each round, the xenomorph will attack twice with claws and once with a bite attack 5 DEX ranks later. If it is successful with both claw attacks, it will attempt to grapple and bite on the next round. If appropriate, it will substitute its bite for a tail lash attack.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Listen 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 35%, Stealth 50%, Track 75%.

Powers: Xenomorphs have a special defense: acidic blood. This biological acid is intensely powerful and will spray from any physical wound the xenomorph takes, actively corrosive for 1D6+2 combat rounds. Any target 1 meter from the xenomorph must make a Luck roll to avoid being splattered. Failure indicates that the character takes 1D3 points from the acid. Armor will initially protect against this acid, but not for long. It will continue to eat away at armor protection, doing damage each combat round until it is through the armor. The GM should keep track of the acid's damage each round until the armor's value is overcome. At this point, it will begin to burn the character. Removing the armor without being burned takes one full combat round and a *Difficult* Agility roll. If using the optional hit location system, only the armor on the affect-

ed hit location(s) need be removed. Failure indicates that the armor is still on. A fumble indicates that the acid got onto the character. Once a character is being burnt by the acid, it will continue until it is neutralized by some force, or the acid eventually stops being corrosive at the end of the 1D6+2 duration.

Blob

A grotesque blob of slimy protoplasmic matter. This creature is horrific, constantly extending multiple pseudopods, tendrils, and even approximations of human limbs and sensory organs. Blobs are semi-translucent, and the engulfed victims can be viewed inside, being eaten away by powerful digestive acids. Blobs are capable of compacting their bulk, squeezing through tight spaces, and changing their overall shape, but not their actual mass.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	18D6	63
CON	12D6	42
SIZ	24D6	84
INT	2D6	7
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	1D6	3-4

Move: 10

Hit Points: 63

Damage Bonus: +8D6

Armor: None, but fire and electrical attacks do only ½ damage and physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage

Attacks: 70%, engulfs + db (see below)

Skills: Climb 50%, Hide 25%, Sense 25%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%

Powers: A blob engulfs the target upon a successful attack. Its damage bonus is applied to an engulfed character, and in the subsequent round the character begins to be digested. If using the optional hit location system, the damage is applied to all hit locations simultaneously. This does 1D3-1 points of damage each combat round. Protective gear does not work unless it is utterly enclosed, and it will last for a number of combat rounds equal to its armor protection. Getting out of a blob is extremely difficult, requiring a successful *Difficult* Effort roll.

Blobs also regenerate 1 hit point per combat round until they reach 0 HP.

Robot, Giant

The giant robot was built by a top-secret Japanese government organization to defend it from a bewildering array of strange alien creatures and giant monsters. Armored and equipped with a variety of astonishing weaponry, the giant robot is idolized by children everywhere, despite doing immeasurable property damage whenever it fights.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	16D6+32	88
CON	16D6+32	88
SIZ	16D6+32	88
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	2D6	7
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move: 24 (176 flying)

Hit Points: 188 (+100 from Extra Hit Point power)

Damage Bonus: +10D6

Armor: 30-point armored hull

Attacks: Energy Cannon 100%, 10D6 (crushing)
Missile Pod 100%, 8D6+8 (impaling + knockback)
Energy Sword 75%, 4D10+db (bleeding)
Fist 75%, 1D6+db (crushing)
Kick 75%, 1D6+db (crushing, knockback)
Stomp 75%, 2D6+db (crushing)
Grapple 75%, special

Powers: The giant robot has a variety of components best represented with super powers, including: Absorption (Electric) 20; Adaptation (High Pressure, Vacuum, always on, no power point cost) 30; Armor (Heat, Kinetic, Radiation) 30 each; Energy Projection (Kinetic) 10; Extra Energy +200; Extra Hit Points +100; Flight 30; Resistance (Radiation, Sound) 10 each; Super Sense (Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, Night Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision) 10 each; Super Skill 15 (Artillery +60%, Brawl +40%, Fly +60%, Navigate +20%, Repair +20%, Spot +40%). In addition to these powers, the giant robot has a missile pod and a giant energy sword built into its structure.

Skills: Artillery 75%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 35%, Fly (Internal Rockets) 90%, Jump 55%, Knowledge (Kaiju) 50%, Language (English) 30%, Language (Japanese) 75%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 40%, Navigate 50%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Spot 65%, Throw 55%

Robot, Killer

Killer robots have many different origins. They may have been built for the military and gone amok. They may be a household robot turned murderous, or an assassin sent from some future time or distant reach of space. Regardless of the reason, the killer robot is pitiless and resourceful, usually bent on the destruction of a single person, an entire group of people, or perhaps anyone of a particular race (*for example, human*).

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	4D6+24	38
CON	4D6+12	26
SIZ	2D6+9	16
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	2D6	7
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	3D6	10-11

Move: 10

Hit Points: 21

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 20-point internal plating

Attacks: Plasma Rifle 80%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
Assault Rifle 80%, 2D6+2 (impaling)
Automatic Shotgun 80%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
Heavy Pistol 80%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
Fist 80%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Depending on where/when it is encountered, the killer robot will be equipped with advanced weaponry or armaments from the modern world.

Skills: Artillery 80%, Brawl 80%, Climb 50%, Demolition 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Motorcycle) 75%, Drive (Truck) 60%, Grapple 80%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Future History) 65%, Knowledge (Region: U.S.A.) 50%, Language (Binary) 100%, Language (English) 60%, Listen 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 50%, Repair (Electronics) 75%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Spot 75%, Strategy 40%, Throw 55%.

Powers: The killer robot usually has a few super powers such as Super Sense (Infrared Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing) 5 each. It can use these powers without any power point cost. Some killer robots have been known to shape change, stretch, or be armed with integral weaponry such as claws, blades, or internal firearms.

Robot, Utility

A trusted servant of humankind, the utility robot has been engineered to provide assistance in a technical capacity to humans. Utility robots are traditionally programmed to be humble and friendly, and above all to avoid performing any actions that could lead to the harm of a living being. Some utility robots have internal tools built inside them when they do mechanical or electrical maintenance and repair, or they may be simple approximations of humankind, destined for roles such as diplomacy, translation, and personal assistance.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+6	13
CON	2D6+12	19
SIZ	3D6	10-11
INT	2D6+6	13
POW	2D6	7
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move: 8

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 4-point plating

Attacks: Brawl 30%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Power Tools 50%, 1D6 (fire or electric, see below)
Most utility robots have strict programming injunctions about harming sentient species. However, some are less strict about it than others, and may act in self-defense. Technical robots have a few inter-

nal tools such as welders or electric dischargers that can be used for damage.

Skills (Diplomacy Package): Appraise 85%, Bargain 55%, Etiquette 95%, Fast Talk 75%, Heavy Machine (Binary Loadlifter) 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Alien Cultures) 75%, Knowledge (Linguistics) 100%, Language (all known) 95%, Listen 55%, Persuade 45%, Teach 60%.

Skills (Technical Package): Fine Manipulation 95%, Heavy Machine (Spaceport Systems) 95%, Hide 35%, Language (Galactic Common, cannot speak) 50%, Language (Machine) 100%, Listen 50%, Pilot (Starfighter) 50%, Repair (Electronic) 95%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Computer Use) 100%.

Non-Player Character Digest

This section varies from the standard bestiary format in that it presents a variety of sample NPCs that can instantly be used by the GM, or can be easily customized to meet the requirements of the setting. These also provide a look at the wide range of character types that can be created using the game system.

The normal character creation system has been utilized to create these NPCs, though some values for skills have not been shown due to their lack of relevance to most encounters. Additionally, though no optional rules have been utilized when creating these NPCs, the values stemming from those rules can be easily created.

These NPCs have been given Language and Knowledge skills that reflect a North American, English-speaking setting. The GM is encouraged to alter these as appropriate to the setting.

Criminal Mastermind

The criminal mastermind is a gang leader or highly placed member of an organized crime family, most likely having worked his or her way up through the ranks. He or she is skilled in running a large group of individual criminals in the day-to-day activities of organized crime in a manner that is effective and efficient. Unscrupulous, ruthless, determined, and cunning, the criminal mastermind is a resourceful and dangerous enemy. If he or she is not particularly physically imposing, this is more than made up for ambition, callous disregard for human life, and a number of skilled and vicious henchmen.

STR 11 **CON** 12 **SIZ** 12 **INT** 17 **POW** 16
DEX 14 **APP** 14 **EDU** 15

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None

Attacks: Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
Straight Razor 65%, 1D4+db (bleeding)
Machine Gun 55%, 2D6+4 (impaling)

Skills: Appraise 55%, Bargain 65%, Command 65%, Craft (Cooking) 55%, Craft (License Plates) 35%, Demolition 35%, Disguise 25%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Getaway Car) 45%, Etiquette 45%, Fast Talk 55%, Gaming 60%, Hide 35%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (Law) 55%, Language (English) 75%, Language (Ukrainian) 75%, Listen 55%, Medicine (Pharmacology) 35%, Perform (Singing) 50%, Persuade 75%, Sense 40%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 45%, Status 55%, Stealth 55%, Strategy 60%, Throw 45%.

Powers: Criminal masterminds rarely have powers of any sort. They're usually the enemies of those with super powers.

Cyborg

The cyborg is a human who has had sections of his or her body augmented with technological elements, either as a means of improvement or as replacement for body parts lost through accident. Half-flesh and half-machine, the cyborg has come to accept this newfound condition, and uses the immense powers provided for either lofty goals such as helping others, or for personal gain. The cyborg may be entirely human in appearance, or be an obvious amalgam of flesh-and-metal.

STR 33 **CON** 24 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 14 **POW** 11
DEX 22 **APP** 14 **EDU** 17

Move: 10

Hit Points: 19

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 90%, 1D3+10+db (crushing)

Skills: Climb 40%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Car) 55%, Hide 40%, Jump 75%, Language (English) 85%, Listen 75%, Pilot (Experimental Jets) 75%, Repair (Electronic) 55%, Science (Cybernetics) 40%, Spot 85%, Stealth 40%, Throw 65%.

Powers: The cyborg's augmentation is best represented with super powers, such as the following:

Defensive Systems: Armor 5 (vs. electrical energy)

Internal Battery: Extra Energy 5 (+50 power points)

Physical Improvements: Leap 5 (+10 meters), Super Characteristics 40 (+20 STR, +10 CON, +10 DEX), Super Speed 2 (1 extra movement, 1 extra action)

Sensory Enhancements: Super Sense (Super Hearing 10, Super Vision 10, Infrared Vision 5, Ultrasonic Hearing 5)

Tactical Modifications: Defense 20 (-10% to be hit), Super Skill 8 (Jump +40%, Listen +40%, Spot +60%, Throw +25%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 damage, -25% to one target's chance of hitting, +25% to Brawl skill)

Weaknesses: The cyborg has the following weaknesses to balance out this awesome power:

Cyborg identity makes normal life impossible



A demi-god is a formidable villain for even veteran adventurers. A group of player characters, each of whom approaches this status, could face and defeat an army of common soldiers. But beware—a raw recruit can critical, too!

Significant involvement with government agency responsible for cyborg modifications

Cyborg components take an extra 1D6 damage from magnetic-based attacks.

Demigod

The offspring of a god and a mortal, the demigod adventures across the world, battling supernatural threats and aiding normal humans in struggles against the tyranny of the gods. Caught between two worlds, the divine and the mortal, the demigod has a mighty destiny, but has not yet decided whether it's to aid humanity in overthrowing the gods, or to lead mortals to greater worship and fealty to the heavens. The demigod often attracts lesser heroes to his or her cause, and is a locus for trouble. Immortal, the demigod can be encountered at any point in history.

STR 35 **CON** 34 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 13 **POW** 18
DEX 15 **APP** 17

Move: 10

Hit Points: 25

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 20-point Armor (Kinetic)

Attacks: Brawl 110%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Grapple 110%, special

Short Sword 100%, 1D6+1+db (bleeding)

Round Shield 80%, 1D3+db (knockback)

Skills: Brawl 110%, Climb 80%, Command 45%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Chariot) 65%, Etiquette 25%, Grapple 110%, Insight 55%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (Mythology) 85%, Language (Ancient Greek) 100%, Language (English) 90%, Listen 65%, Navigate 60%, Perform (Harp) 50%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 70%, Spot 60%, Status 45%, Stealth 50%, Strategy 60%, Swim 75%, Throw 85%

Powers: The demigod has a variety of powers from the divine parentage, such as the following super powers: Adaptation (Radiation, Underwater, Vacuum) 5 each; Armor (Kinetic) 20; Extra Energy 20 (+200 power points); Extra Hit Points 30 (+30 HP); Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Regeneration 3 (heals 3 HP per combat round); Sidekick (see below); Super Characteristics 50 (STR +20, CON +20, POW +5, APP +5); Super Skills 20 (Brawl +40%, Grapple +40%, Knowledge [Mythology] +40%, Sense +40%, Shield +80%, Strategy +40%, Sword +80%, Throw +40%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 brawl damage, -25% to one attacker's skill, Brawl/Grapple skill +25%).

The demigod's character failings are: inability to live a normal life; hunted by enemies of the gods; hunted by rival gods themselves; always called on for help by mortals.

Demigods usually have a mortal sidekick they travel with, someone culturally familiar with the world. This sidekick usually provides a reminder of the humility of mortal existence. This sidekick varies depending on the genre and/or setting, and could be any one of the other NPCs in this chapter, as appropriate.

Depending on setting, a demigod could possibly use magic spells or sorcery — or may not even be a divine being and might just have mutations.

Detective

Whether a member of a police department, a forensics expert, a freelance private eye, or a consultant criminologist, a detective is trained in investigation, observation, surveillance, interrogation of suspects and witnesses, examination of physical evidence, and deduction. Some detectives live action-packed lives full of car chases, beautiful women, and brushes with both the law and criminals. Others work in high-tech laboratories, dusty libraries and sitting rooms, or even in front of a computer terminal searching public and private records.

STR 13 **CON** 12 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 17 **POW** 14
DEX 14 **APP** 15 **EDU** 17

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
Fist 65%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Grapple 50%, special

Skills: Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Climb 55%, Disguise 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Convertible) 55%, Etiquette 25%, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 40%, Insight 55%, Knowledge (Law) 65%, Knowledge (Region: Chicago) 55%, Knowledge (Streetwise) 50%, Language (English) 75%, Listen 45%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight Of Hand 25%, Spot 65%, Stealth 50%, Track 35%

Powers: Detectives rarely have powers of any sort, though sometimes characters with powers utilize them for detective work, finding fulfillment in the private detective vocation. Any perception- or knowledge-based powers are invaluable to a detective.

Galactic Knight

This spacefaring paladin is a member of a mystic tradition that provides great and mysterious powers. As a defender of peace and justice throughout the galaxy, the galactic knight has sworn an oath to uphold a code of honor and serves almost as an intergalactic policeman. Most of the galaxy does not understand the strange force the galactic knight serves, though they are respected or feared wherever he or she goes. The galactic knight shuns traditional weaponry, and instead uses an antiquated but powerful hand weapon to deadly efficiency.

STR 16 **CON** 15 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 15 **POW** 21
DEX 17 **APP** 15 **EDU** 21

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Energy Sword 150%, 2D10+db (bleeding)
Brawl 80%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Climb 75%, Command 50%, Dodge 75%, Hide 45%, Insight 75%, Jump 65%, Knowledge (Region: Galaxy) 35%, Language (Alien) 70%, Language (Basic) 105%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 80%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 35%, Pilot (Starfighter) 65%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Sense 70%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Throw 60%.

Powers: The galactic knight is skilled in a mystical tradition that essentially provides a number of psychic abilities. These are Danger Sense 60%, Empathy 55%, Mind Control 35%, Precognition 40%, Telekinesis 45%, and Telepathy 50%.

Gunslinger

An archetype from the Old West, the gunslinger makes his or her living killing people, specializing in fast and deadly combat with a handgun. In most cases, the gunslinger began life as something else, something legitimate. Rather than living in anonymity, the gunslinger was driven to a life of violence through some personal tragedy, or in the worst cases, because he or she discovered a taste for killing. The gunslinger's reputation is by far his or her most potent weapon—many will lay down their weapons rather than face certain death. This gives the gunslinger steady work, helping to make things simple for those who need help, whether they're on the side of law or criminality. Sometimes reputation is a two-edged sword—it attracts those who would make themselves famous.

STR 14 **CON** 15 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 14 **POW** 15
DEX 18 **APP** 13 **EDU** 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 1-point heavy clothing

Attacks: Medium Revolver 95%, 1D8 (impaling)
Sporting Rifle 85%, 2D6 (impaling)
Double-barreled Shotgun 75%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
Knife 75%, 1D4+2+db (impaling)
Fist 75%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Brawl 75%, Climb 60%, Demolition 30%, Dodge 60%, First Aid 40%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 50%, Insight 65%, Knowledge (Region: Texas) 65%, Language (English) 70%, Language (Spanish) 40%, Listen 65%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight Of Hand 35%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%, Throw 55%, Track 40%.

Powers: Gunslingers generally don't have powers.

Knight

Traditionally, a knight is a mounted and armored warrior, skilled in swordsmanship, jousting, and the etiquette of chivalry. Drawn from the noble class, a knight has sworn his or her allegiance to a high-ranked noble,

and the knight draws a stipend from lands under his or her domain to support the expense of weapons, armor, horses, and a knightly lifestyle. Knights practice their skills regularly, compete in tournaments, and journey to war whenever their king orders. Ideally, a knight is chivalrous and pious, adhering to a code of honor and decency. In practice, this was only rarely the case.

STR 15 **CON** 15 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 11 **POW** 12
DEX 15 **APP** 14

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 10-point plate and heavy helm

Attacks: Long Sword 75%, 1D8+db (bleeding)

Kite Shield 65%, 1D4+db (knockback)

Lance 75%, 1D8+1+ mount's db (usually +2D6, impaling†)

Light Mace 65%, 1D6+2+db (crushing)

Long Bow 60%, 1D8+1+½db (impaling)

Dagger 50%, 1D4+2+db (impaling)

Armored Gauntlet 50%, 1D3+1+db (crushing)

† tournament lances do crushing damage.

Skills: Command 45%, Dodge 50%, Etiquette 65%, Knowledge (Heraldry) 50%, Language (French) 35%, Language (Middle English) 60%, Listen 45%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 20%, Spot 45%, Status 60%, Strategy 30%.

Powers: Knights generally do not have any powers, though if they did these would be magic spells. However, knights may potentially have access to magic items as described in **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. These will commonly be blessed weapons, holy artifacts such as a sliver of the True Cross or a saint's finger-bone, or armor with some virtue laid upon it. Elves are rumored to have their own orders of knighthood, and these knights would naturally use magic spells freely. Evil knights who have sworn allegiance to dark powers may use sorcery.

Maniac

A seemingly normal person who has gone violently, homicidally insane, the maniac is a figure of modern horror. The maniac either stalks young victims in isolated locales, such as summer camp or some campground, or takes to the road as a serial killer, seeking out victims to murder for some unfathomable reason. In appearance, the maniac comes in two flavors: utterly ordinary, or in a distinctive costume or mask.

STR 15 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 14 **POW** 15
DEX 17 **APP** 12 **EDU** 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Butcher Knife 75%, 1D6+db (impaling)

Wood Axe 75%, 1D8+2+db (bleeding)

Chainsaw 65%, 2D8 (bleeding)

Pitchfork 55%, 1D6+db (impaling)

Machete 65%, 1D6+db (bleeding)

Grapple 75%, special

Skills: Brawl 75%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Van) 65%, Hide 60%, Language (English) 60%, Listen 45%, Sense 40%, Spot 65%, Stealth 80%, Throw 50%, Track 40%

Powers: Most maniacs do not have any powers, though some few possess exceptional toughness and resilience. These are usually caused by a mutation of some sort, and appropriate mutations include Hardy, Increased Characteristic, Regeneration, or even Natural Weapon (teeth).

Mutant

This misbegotten soul was mutated through exposure to some radioactive or biological agent, or mutated this way through a hard luck roll of the genetic dice. Feared and unable to live a normal life, the mutant lurks on the outside of society. In a post-apocalyptic setting, the mutant is likely the victim of radiation and is one of many such creatures, threatening the "pure" humans left.

STR 19 **CON** 9 **SIZ** 13 **INT** 14 **POW** 12
DEX 15 **APP** 13

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 7-point bony knobs on skin

Attacks: Brawl 55%, 1D3+1D6+db (crushing)

Skills: Disguise 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Dune Buggy) 40%, Fast Talk 25%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Language (English) 55%, Listen 35%, Sense 25%, Spot 30%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%.

Powers: This mutant has developed the following mutations: Congenital Disease (hemophilia, CON -5), Increased Characteristic (STR +6), Natural Weaponry (bony knobs on hands, +1D6 damage), Sensitivity (blood), Structural Improvement (bony knobs across skin, +7-point natural armor).

Ninja

The ninja is a feared shadowy killer from medieval Japan, trained in secret martial arts and techniques of stealth, infiltration, and assassination. Ninja are often born into ninja clans, though some rare few seek out the life and are accepted into the ancient orders. They are killers-for-hire, working alone or in groups. Oddly enough, in popular media one ninja is a deadly force to be reckoned with while a vast number of ninja is more a nuisance than a threat.

STR 14 **CON** 13 **SIZ** 10 **INT** 14 **POW** 15
DEX 17 **APP** 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None, or 2-point light chain mail

Attacks: Katana 65%, 1D10+1+db (bleeding)
 Dagger 65%, 1D4+2+db (impaling)
 Composite Bow 50%, 1D8+1+½db (impaling)
 Blowgun 50%, 1D3 (impaling) + poison (see below)
 Fist 55%, 1D3+db (crushing)
 Kick 55%, 1D3+db (crushing)

A ninja's blowdarts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 15 poison. See the sections on poisons in Chapter Seven: Spot Rules and Chapter Eight: Equipment.

Skills: Climb 80%, Disguise 55%, Dodge 65%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Hide 70%, Jump 65%, Language (Japanese) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 35%, Sense 50%, Sleight Of Hand 55%, Spot 55%, Stealth 75%, Swim 55%, Throw 50%, Track 35%

Powers: In most settings ninja do not have powers, though in settings where they do, they would have either sorcery or some super powers.

Pirate

A colorful predator of the high seas, the pirate is essentially an oceangoing bandit. Often romanticized in popular fiction, the reality of the pirate ranges from urbane rogue to despicable savage. This pirate is a sample crewmember of an average pirate ship, and is skilled in seamanship and hand-to-hand combat.

STR 14 **CON** 15 **SIZ** 13 **INT** 11 **POW** 10
DEX 14 **APP** 13 **EDU** 7

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Cutlass (Saber) 55%, 1D8+1+db (bleeding)
 Knife 45%, 1D4+2+db (impaling)
 Flintlock Pistol 50%, 1D6+1 (impaling)
 Musket 40%, 1D10+4 (impaling)
 Fist 50%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Artillery 30%, Brawl 50%, Climb 80%, Craft (Carpentry) 55%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Gaming 35%, Grapple 50%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Region: Caribbean) 40%, Language (Spanish) 40%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 45%, Navigate 50%, Perform (Sing Sea Chantey) 45%, Pilot (Ship) 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight Of Hand 35%, Spot 50%, Swim 45%, Throw 50%.

Powers: In most settings, pirates don't have any powers. Some pirate chiefs, however, make pacts with darkness and are given powers of sorcery, if their POW is high enough to qualify. Appropriate sorcery for a spell casting pirate captain would be Bird's Vision (1), Breath of Life (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (2), Sorcerer's Sureness (2), and Wings of the Sky (4).

Police Officer

This is a police officer from any civilized country from the 20th century. Trained in a wide variety of law enforcement techniques, the police officer is usually on patrol, or is called to the scene of an incident. In the event of a major incident in an urban area, police will likely be the first on the scene. More heavily armed

police officers are a part of a Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team, and are usually called on to deal with excessively violent situations.

STR 14 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 14 **POW** 14
DEX 14 **APP** 14 **EDU** 16

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 8-point bulletproof vest (4-point vs. melee weapons) or 12-point riot gear

Attacks: Medium Pistol 70%, 1D8 (impaling)
 Shotgun 50%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
 Baton (Light Club) 50%, 1D6+db (crushing)
 Pepper Spray 65%, special (POT 16, blinds 1D4+2 combat rounds)
 Taser 65%, special (see stunning rules on page 232)
 Grapple 65%, special

Skills: Brawl 65%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Police Car) 55%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Law) 50%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Language (English) 80%, Listen 50%, Persuade 50%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 30%, Throw 45%

Powers: Police officers rarely, if ever, have powers.

Priest

From an early age, the priest was devout in worship of the patron deity that governed over his or her country. When of age, the church beckoned, and this young follower became an acolyte, and later was ordained into the priesthood. Now the priest has left the safety of the monastery and ventures forth into the outside world, armored in piety and armed with the blessings of the deity. The priest will venture to strange and exotic lands to bring the message of truth to the unbelievers, and will strike with vengeance any who oppose the divine truth.

STR 14 **CON** 13 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 15 **POW** 20
DEX 13 **APP** 15

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 8-point chain and light helmet

Attacks: Morningstar Flail 50%, 1D10+1+db (crushing)
 Full Shield 45%, 1D4+db (knockback)
 Sling 40%, 1D8+½db (crushing)
 Kick 40%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Art (Illuminated Manuscripts) 35%, Command 25%, Craft (Bookmaking) 35%, Dodge 40%, First Aid 45%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Religion) 70%, Language (Common) 70%, Listen 45%, Literacy (Common) 70%, Perform (Hymns) 35%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Teach 30%

Powers: The priest has psychic abilities that he or she believes have been granted by his or her deity. These powers are Divination, Mind Shield, Precognition, and Sensitivity, all at

the priest's POWx1%. Additionally, the priest has an allegiance of at least 50 to his or her patron deity, with whatever benefits that may entail. See the optional system for allegiance on page 315 of **Chapter Ten: Settings**.

Primitive

A primitive human from a long-vanished epoch of history, the primitive is a simple and brutal savage for the most part, his or her existence entirely focused around survival for self, family, and tribe. Barely able to use tools, the primitive has not yet progressed past the hunter-gatherer stage of civilization, and is on the move as the seasons change, warring with other tribes for resources or even survival. Primitive humans often venerate the spirits of weather and their prey.

STR 15 **CON** 16 **SIZ** 10 **INT** 8 **POW** 12
DEX 15 **APP** 9

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 1-point hide

Attacks: Short Spear 50%, 1D6+1+db (impaling)
Short Spear (thrown) 50%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)
Light Club 50%, 1D6+db (crushing)
Rock (thrown) 50%, 1D2+½db (crushing)
Grapple 50%, special

Skills: Brawl 50%, Climb 60%, Craft (Wood Carving) 25%, Dodge 35%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Language (Tribal) 40%, Listen 55%, Sense 50%, Spot 65%, Stealth 30%, Throw 50%, Track 40%

Powers: Primitive humans rarely have any powers, though some primitive shamens may have a few magic spells or psychic powers if their POW characteristic is high enough.

Psychic

Born with a particular gift, the psychic's powers developed during young adulthood. The psychic learned self-discipline and meditation techniques to quiet the voices echoing through his or her head, and now these strange gifts have been put to the purpose of aiding others, using them to seek knowledge and hidden truth.

STR 12 **CON** 13 **SIZ** 14
INT 15 **POW** 19 **DEX** 14
APP 14 **EDU** 19

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Fist 35%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Art (Painting) 35%, Bargain 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Automobile) 30%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 50%, Knowledge (Art History) 45%, Language (English) 90%, Listen 35%, Research 65%, Sense 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Stealth 30%

Powers: The psychic has the following psychic abilities: Aura Detection 35%, Precognition 25%, and Psychometry 50%.

Soldier

The soldier is utilized in military conflicts using modern principles of warfare, backed with reliable weaponry and tactics. Common training, regardless of nationality, includes obedience to the chain of command, support of teammates, and remaining calm under fire. Under ideal conditions, the soldier is well-equipped, well-supported, and well-informed. War zones are rarely ideal conditions. Some countries insist on mandatory military service for all citizens. In most cases, a soldier is recruited or drafted while fairly young, though some make military service a career. This soldier is an especially fit and experienced representative—perhaps an elite commando.

STR 15 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 13 **POW** 11
DEX 13 **APP** 13 **EDU** 14

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 8-point bulletproof vest (4-point vs. melee weapons) + 3-point light helmet

Attacks: Assault Rifle 65%,
2D6+2 (impaling)
Combat Knife (Dagger) 50%,
1D4+2+db (impaling)
Grenade (Explosive) 40%, 4D6
(knockback)

Skills: Artillery 30%, Brawl 45%, Climb 50%, Command 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Humvee) 45%, First Aid 40%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 35%, Language (English) 65%, Listen 45%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Strategy 20%, Throw 40%

Powers: Soldiers rarely, if ever, have powers.

Sorcerer

Chosen from youth and apprenticed in the mystic arts, the sorcerer is a powerful figure in most settings, able to deal with demons and command the very elemental forces themselves. The sorcerer is arrogant among lesser, non-magical mortals. At the same time, he or she is exceedingly careful of getting into



personal combat, an arena the sorcerer is woefully unprepared to compete in.

STR 9 **CON** 11 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 19 **POW** 21
DEX 14 **APP** 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None, or 4-point Sorcerer's Armor

Attacks: Dagger 35%, 1D4+2+db (impaling)

Skills: Appraise 35%, Dodge 40%, Etiquette 35%, Fast Talk 45%, Hide 30%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Academic Lore) 50%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 20%, Knowledge (Occult) 70%, Language (Common) 85%, Language (Demonic) 50%, Listen 35%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Sense 35%, Sleight Of Hand 35%, Spot 55%

Powers: The sorcerer uses the following spells on a regular basis, and has them in memory: Curse of Sorcery (4), Sorcerer's Armor (4), Sorcerer's Sharp Flame (3), Summon Demon (1), Undo Sorcery (2), Heal (2), Witch Sight (3).

Spy

A secret operative working clandestinely for a government agency, the spy is extensively trained in infiltration, stealth, disguise, combat, and other espionage-related skills. The spy, male or female, has assignments ranging from armed intrusion to long-term infiltration of an organization with sabotage or assassination as the end goal. Depending on the profile and resources of the organization and the nature of the assignment, the spy may be equipped with a remarkable array of gadgets and weapons, some of which may be disguised as commonplace items. Consult **Chapter Eight: Equipment** for guidelines on constructing high-tech spy gear.

STR 14 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 13 **INT** 15 **POW** 14
DEX 15 **APP** 14 **EDU** 18

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 5-point ballistic cloth tuxedo (3-point vs. melee weapons)

Attacks: Light Pistol 75%, 1D6 (impaling)
Sniper Rifle 75%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
Throwing Knife 75%, 1D4+½db (impaling)
Fist 80%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Kick 65%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Appraise 45%, Brawl 65%, Climb 60%, Demolition 40%, Disguise 60%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Sports Car) 85%, Etiquette 65%, Fast Talk 75%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 55%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 65%, Hide 75%, Insight 65%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Espionage) 75%, Language (English) 90%, Language (Russian) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 45%, Persuade 55%, Pilot (Boat) 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 45%, Research 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 60%, Sleight Of



Long-lived adventurers keep a reserve of power points and escape options handy—you never know what that wiley gamemaster has in store.

Hand 55%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Swim 65%, Throw 65%, Track 35%.

Powers: Spies rarely, if ever, have any powers.

Super Hero

Given powers by some freak accident or genetic abnormality, the super hero has vowed to do right, seeking justice and using his or her abilities to help normal people and protect them from threats both natural and unnatural, as well as those posed by super villains. Few super heroes have partners, and most make the super heroic identity a secret, living and acting among normal people most of the time. A few super heroes will have partners or join teams. The super hero is often wracked with self-doubt, wondering if the cost of heroism is too high.

This sample superhero is Stormcloud, a brash (and inexperienced) lightning-based hero, and enemy of Doctor Dread. Stormcloud's civilian identity is that of a television meteorologist.

STR 25 **CON** 20 **SIZ** 12 **INT** 14 **POW** 16
DEX 20 **APP** 15 **EDU** 17

Move: 10 (62 flying)

Hit Points: 16

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 12-point Armor (Kinetic, Radiation)

Attacks: Lightning Bolt 45%, 6D6 (electric)
Brawl 50%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Art (Photography) 70%, Brawl 50%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Car) 35%, Fly 80%, Grapple 35%, Knowledge (Region: New

York City) 35%, Language (other) 00%, Language (English) 85%, Perform (News) 50%, Research 45%, Science (Meteorology) 25%, Status 25%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 35%.

Powers: Stormcloud has the following super powers: Absorption (Electric) 18; Armor (Kinetic, Radiation) 12 each; Energy Projection (Electric) 6; Extra Energy 15 (+150 power points); Flight 10; and Super Characteristics 30 (STR +14, CON +8, DEX +8).

Stormcloud's character failing is a weakness to water, losing -2D6 power points each round wet or submerged.

Super Villain

Unlike the altruistic super hero, the super villain has turned to a life of crime, utilizing his or her exceptional abilities in pursuit of fortune, power, revenge, or some other means of villainy. The super villain can be a master criminal, or a glorified thug, depending on his or her role in the setting. Some super villains choose to work alone, while others have a cadre of minions. Even fewer super villains work together in teams, as the unstable personalities tend to make equitable partnerships impossible.

This sample super villain is Doctor Dread, a former defense industries research scientist whose funding was cut before a major breakthrough. After using prior discoveries to build a suit of protective armor, Doctor Dread is currently seeking a means of financing further (and potentially illegal) weapons research. These statistics represent Doctor Dread in the armor.

STR 15 **CON** 18 **SIZ** 9 **INT** 17 **POW** 17
DEX 18 **APP** 10 **EDU** 23

Move: 10 (62 flying)

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: 4-point Armor (Kinetic) + 20-point Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation)

Attacks: Heat Projector 70%, 6D6 (fire)
Brawl 50%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Command 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Van) 55%, Fine Manipulation 65%, Jump 65%, Language (English) 125%, Listen 45%, Repair (Electronic) 85%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Research 85%, Science (Physics) 95%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 95%.

Powers: Doctor Dread's armor provides the following super powers: Armor (Kinetic) 4; Energy Projection (Heat) 6; Extra Energy 15 (+150 power points); Flight 3; Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation) 20 each; Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Super Sense (Infravision, Ultrasonic Hearing) 1 each.

Doctor Dread's character failings are full-time super villainy; physically distinctive (ugly); psychological failings (blood-thirsty, arrogant); super villain identity tied to armor and not on full-time; armor can be shut down or removed.

Thug

The thug is a goon for hire, usually in service to a criminal organization or sometimes just a petty crook looking for trouble. A thug can be encountered as backup muscle for someone needing some protection, or indulging in criminal activity such as breaking-and-entering, robbery, banditry, or mugging. A thug is usually too dumb to thrive in a criminal organization, or is just an outsider who has trouble with the law.

STR 16 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 10 **POW** 10
DEX 12 **APP** 11 **EDU** 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 1-point leather jacket

Attacks: Heavy Pistol 50%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
Switchblade 50%, 1D4+db (impaling)
Baseball Bat 50%, 1D6+db (crushing)
Fist 50%, 1D3+db (crushing)
Head Butt 35%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Demolition 20%, Dodge 35%, Drive (Truck) 50%, Gaming 30%, Grapple 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 25%, Knowledge (Region: Chicago) 35%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 35%, Persuade 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight Of Hand 25%, Spot 35%, Stealth 25%, Throw 35%.

Powers: Thugs never have powers. If they did, they'd be doing better for themselves.

Tribal Warrior

The tribal warrior is encountered in any distant area where civilization has not reached. He or she uses weapons that are considered primitive by the standard of the day, and participates in tribal existence, hunting and fighting to defend the tribe against trespassers and attackers. The tribal warrior is highly superstitious, placing great faith in the wisdom from the elders of the tribe who interpret the words of the gods.

STR 16 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 11 **POW** 13
DEX 16 **APP** 13

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 1-point hide armor

Attacks: Short Spear 65%, 1D6+1+db (impaling)
Short Spear (thrown) 75%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)
Light Club 55%, 1D6+db (crushing)
Light Club (thrown) 65%, 1D6+½db (crushing)
Primitive Shield 65%, 1D2+db (knockback)



OPTION

Creature Hit Location Table

The optional hit location system presented on page 190 of **Chapter Six: Combat** allows for a more specific level of accuracy in determining where an attack landed. Though the standard hit location chart provided in that section is suitable for any bipedal humanoid, other creatures have differently-shaped bodies and thus need a different hit location chart.

This section presents a variety of hit location charts and quick formulas for determining the hit points per location for any creature desired. To determine which table to use, pick the one most appropriate to the desired creature.

Humanoid: Human, Alien (Grey), Angel (wings hidden), Cyborg, Dwarf, Elf, Ghost, Ghoul, Giant, Halfling, Minotaur, Mummy, Mutant, Orc, Robots (Giant, Killer, Utility), Skeleton, Troll, Vampire (in human form), Elementals (Earth, Water), Werewolf (in hybrid form), Zombie

Formless: Blob

Four-Legged Humanoid: Centaur

Four-Legged: Bear, Dog, Gorilla, Horse, Lion, Tiger, Unicorn, Wolf

Four-Legged with Tail: Alien (Xenomorph), Alligator or Crocodile, Elemental (Fire)

Giant Four-Legged With Tail: Brontosaurus

Multi-Limbed: Squid (Giant)

Snake: Snakes (Constrictor, Venomous)

Two-Legged with Tail:

Tyrannosaurus Rex

Winged: Hawk

Winged Four-Legged: Griffin

Winged, Four-Legged with Tail: Dragon

Winged Humanoid: Elemental (Air), Angel (displaying wings), Demon (Greater, Lesser)

To determine hit points per location, either use the HP formula, or use the results provided on the Hit Points Per Location table given in the box to the far right, on the opposite page.

Humanoid

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-4	Right leg	1/3 total HP
5-8	Left leg	1/3 total HP
9-11	Abdomen	1/3 total HP
12	Chest	2/5 total HP
13-15	Right arm	1/4 total HP
16-18	Left arm	1/4 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Formless

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-20	Body	Total HP

Four-Legged

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Right hind-leg	1/4 total HP
3-4	Left hind-leg	1/4 total HP
5-7	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
8-10	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
11-13	Right fore-leg	1/4 total HP
14-16	Left fore-leg	1/4 total HP
17-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Four-Legged Humanoid

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Right hind-leg	1/4 total HP
3-4	Left hind-leg	1/4 total HP
5-6	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
7-8	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
9-10	Right fore-leg	1/4 total HP
11-12	Left fore-leg	1/4 total HP
13-14	Chest	2/5 total HP
15-16	Right arm	1/4 total HP
17-18	Left arm	1/4 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Four-Legged with Tail

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-3	Tail	1/3 total HP
4	Right hind-leg	1/4 total HP
5	Left hind-leg	1/4 total HP
6-9	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
10-14	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
15	Right fore-leg	1/4 total HP
16	Left fore-leg	1/4 total HP
17-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Giant Four-Legged with Tail

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Tail	1/3 total HP
3-4	Right hind-leg	1/3 total HP
5-6	Left hind-leg	1/3 total HP
7-10	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
11-14	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
15-16	Right fore-leg	1/3 total HP
17-18	Left fore-leg	1/3 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Blowgun 75%, 1D3 (impaling) + venom (see below)*

Grapple 65%, special

* A tribal warrior's blowdarts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 10 poison. See the sections on poisons in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** and **Chapter Eight: Equipment**. Some tribal warriors adopt the use of captured weapons from civilized men, while others shun them.

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 40%, Hide 45%, Jump 45%, Language (Tribal) 60%, Listen 55%, Sense 60%, Spot 65%, Stealth 60%, Swim 55%, Throw 65%, Track 70%

Powers: Tribesmen rarely have powers. However, tribes are usually allied with a shaman who may have powers (depending on the setting). These powers are usually psychic or magic spells, sometimes sorcery.

Viking

Vikings are Norse warriors who sign on for sea-voyages, either for exploration, trade (against strong opponents or allies), and raiding (against enemies or those weaker). They are usually fierce and proud, excellent sailors, and surprisingly civilized given their savage reputation. Vikings have their own code of honor and laws, and adhere to them stringently. They make animal sacrifices to the Norse gods, though some have become Christianized.

STR 15 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 11 **POW** 11
DEX 13 **APP** 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15

OPTION

Multi-Limbed

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1	Arm 1	1/4 total HP
2	Arm 2	1/4 total HP
3	Arm 3	1/4 total HP
4	Arm 4	1/4 total HP
5	Arm 5	1/4 total HP
6	Arm 6	1/4 total HP
7	Arm 7	1/4 total HP
8	Arm 8	1/4 total HP
9	Arm 9	1/4 total HP
10	Arm 10	1/4 total HP
11-15	Body	2/5 total HP
16-20	Head	2/5 total HP

Snake

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-6	Tail	1/3 total HP
7-14	Body	2/5 total HP
15-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Two-Legged with Tail

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Tail	1/3 total HP
3-5	Right leg	1/3 total HP
6-8	Left leg	1/3 total HP
9-11	Abdomen	2/5 total HP
12-15	Chest	2/5 total HP
16	Right arm	1/4 total HP
17	Left arm	1/4 total HP
18-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Winged

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-3	Right leg	1/5 total HP
4-6	Left leg	1/5 total HP
7-12	Body	2/5 total HP
13-15	Right wing	1/5 total HP
16-18	Left wing	1/5 total HP
19-20	Head	1/4 total HP

Winged Four-Legged

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Right hind-leg	1/4 total HP
3-4	Left hind-leg	1/4 total HP
5-7	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
8-10	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
11-12	Right wing	1/4 total HP
13-14	Left wing	1/4 total HP
15-16	Right fore-leg	1/4 total HP
17-18	Left fore-leg	1/4 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Winged, Four-Legged with Tail

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-2	Tail	1/4 total HP
3-4	Right hind-leg	1/3 total HP
5-6	Left hind-leg	1/3 total HP
7-8	Hindquarters	2/5 total HP
9-10	Forequarters	2/5 total HP
11-12	Right wing	1/4 total HP
13-14	Left wing	1/4 total HP
15-16	Right fore-leg	1/3 total HP
17-18	Left fore-leg	1/3 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

Winged Humanoid

D20 Roll	Result	HP Formula
1-3	Right leg	1/3 total HP
4-6	Left leg	1/3 total HP
7-9	Abdomen	1/3 total HP
10	Chest	2/5 total HP
11-12	Right wing	1/5 total HP
13-14	Left wing	1/5 total HP
15-16	Right arm	1/4 total HP
17-18	Left arm	1/4 total HP
19-20	Head	1/3 total HP

To determine the HP per location, compare the creature's total HP with the fraction. Each total HP value is provided a range and fractions are rounded up based on that range. For a more precise calculation, use the formulas provided above.

Total HP	2/5 HP	1/3 HP	1/4 HP	1/5 HP
1-3	2	1	1	1
4-6	3	2	2	1
7-9	4	3	3	2
10-12	5	4	3	2
13-15	6	5	4	3
16-18	8	6	5	3
19-21	9	7	6	4
22-24	10	8	6	4
25-27	11	9	7	5
28-30	12	10	8	5
31-33	14	11	9	6
34-36	15	12	9	6
37-39	16	13	10	7
40-42	17	14	11	7
43-45	18	15	12	8
46-48	20	16	12	8
49-51	21	17	13	9
52-54	22	18	14	9
55-57	23	19	15	10
58-60	24	20	15	10
61-63	26	21	16	11
64-66	27	22	17	11
67-69	28	23	18	12
70-72	29	24	18	12
73-75	30	25	19	13
76-78	32	26	20	13
79-81	33	27	21	14
82-84	34	28	22	14
85-87	35	29	22	15
88-90	36	30	23	15
91-93	38	31	24	16
94-96	39	32	24	16
97-99	40	33	25	17
100, etc.	41	34	26	16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 7-point scale and light helmet

Attacks: Broad Sword 65%, 1D8+1+db (bleeding)

Hand Axe 55%, 1D6+1+db (bleeding)

Hand Axe (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½db (bleeding)

Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½db (impaling)

Large Round Shield 50%, 1D4+db (knockback)

Brawl 55%, 1D3+db (crushing)

Skills: Appraise 45%, Bargain 35%, Brawl 25%, Craft (type) 05%, Dodge 40%, Gaming 40%, Grapple 35%, Insight 15%, Jump 25%, Language (Norse) 55%, Listen 40%, Navigate 35%, Pilot (ship) 25%, Ride (type) 05%, Spot 35%, Status 25%.

Powers: Vikings rarely have any powers, though they could conceivably use magic spells. They are unlikely to use sorcery or another power type. Depending on the setting, the Viking may

have weaponry, armor, or some other magic artifacts. Priests and holy men in Scandinavian countries used rune magic, which could be a variant of magic or sorcery.

Customizing Creatures & NPCs

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, it's easy for the GM to make changes to creatures based on their particular power level, to more accurately match a setting or the competency of the player characters. The GM may wish to increase the overall power levels of creatures to

better suit a particular setting or campaign. Following are guidelines for doing so, based on the character power levels described in **Chapter Two: Characters**. For reference, these are normal, heroic, epic, and superhuman. These suggestions are just guidelines and should be applied (or ignored) by the GM as required, rather than just applied as a blanket set of modifiers.

In some cases, it makes more sense for opponents to be of a higher caliber in one power level, such as a fantasy or super hero setting, while in others (or for other creatures), it might seem inappropriate and jarring. In cases like these, the GM may choose to increase the threat an opponent faces in another fashion.

For example, in a normal-level fantasy setting, a single wolf might be a considerable threat to a single player character. In a heroic or epic setting, it is almost negligible. While the GM could beef up the wolf's statistics to make it more deadly, a more rational approach might be to increase the number of wolves, or make one of them a werewolf.

Normal Campaigns

As noted above, the creatures and NPCs in this chapter are geared for a normal campaign. They shouldn't need to be adjusted, unless the GM sees fit to alter them for a particular setting.

The following creatures or NPCs from this chapter are relatively equal in power to a normal character: Alien (Grey, Xenomorph), Alligator (or Crocodile), Bear, Detective, Dog, Ghost, Ghou, Gunslinger, Halfling, Hawk, Horse, Insect Swarm, Maniac, Pirate, Police Officer, Primitive, Psychic, Rat Pack, Robot (Utility), Snake (Venomous), Soldier, Thug, Wolf, and Zombie.

Heroic Campaigns

For a heroic campaign, the GM may choose to adjust the following aspects of a creature or NPC:

- ❖ A quick and simple means of increasing the challenge of any encounter is to increase the number of the creatures or NPCs encountered by another 25% or more.
- ❖ These creatures or NPCs may also use better tactics, be more cautious,

aggressive, and take better advantage of their terrain to gain a tactical advantage and keep the player characters off-balance.

- ❖ The GM may choose to increase key characteristics by another D6, or a +3 or +6 modifier, keeping the racial maximums intact.
- ❖ Combat-oriented skills can be given a flat +50% modifier, or increased by a proportional amount (multiply by 1.5). Other skills can be modified in the same manner, or
- ❖ Creatures with powers may have more options, or slightly more competent powers. These should be determined carefully. Giving powers to a creature or NPC described as having no powers could change the nature of the creature entirely, and should be considered carefully.
- ❖ Creatures or NPCs may also have access to better equipment, armor, weaponry, etc. They might also have the threat of more of their number if they are not dealt with quickly, such as a distress cry back to their lair, or a walkie-talkie message to base.

The following creatures or NPCs from this chapter are relatively equal in power to a heroic character: Blob, Brontosaur, Centaur, Criminal Mastermind, Cyborg, Demon (Lesser), Dwarf, Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire, Water), Elf, Galactic Knight, Gorilla, Griffin, Knight, Lion, Minotaur, Mummy, Mutant, Ninja, Orc, Priest, Robot (Killer), Shark, Skeleton, Snake (Constrictor), Sorcerer, Spy, Tiger, Tribal Warrior, Troll, Unicorn, Vampire, Viking, and Werewolf.

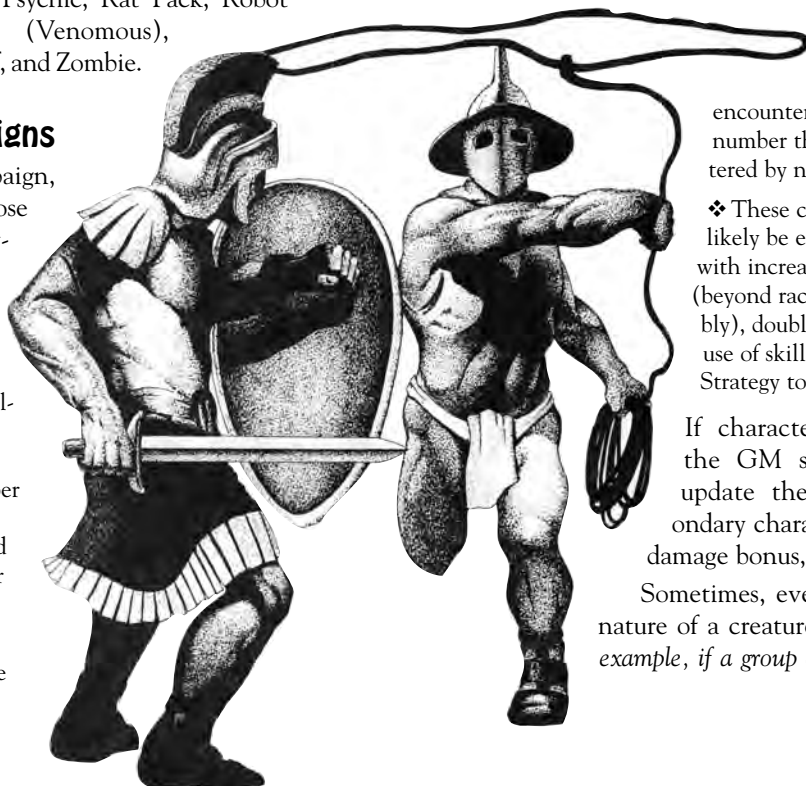
Epic Campaigns

For an epic campaign, the GM may choose to adjust the following aspects of a creature or NPC:

- ❖ The number of creatures or NPCs encountered might be double the number that would be encountered by normal characters.
- ❖ These creatures or NPCs will likely be extremely competent, with increased characteristics (beyond racial maximums, possibly), double their skill levels, and use of skill such as Command and Strategy to even the playing field.

If characteristics are adjusted, the GM should remember to update the corresponding secondary characteristics such as HP, damage bonus, and power points.

Sometimes, even changing the very nature of a creature can be enough. *For example, if a group of Nazis isn't threaten-*



ing enough to the player characters, make them Nazi zombies, or Nazi cyborg super-soldiers!

If the creatures have powers, these may be increased to almost double their existing number, within the limits of the system. Super powers like Extra Hit Points are useful means of beefing up a creature in an unobvious fashion.

Creatures or NPCs encountered in an epic-level campaign will, unless there is a good reason for it, have the best equipment, armor, and weaponry they have available to them. *For example, generic thugs might suddenly become power-armored thugs.* This might include exceptional gear such as magical artifacts, or even tactically significant assets like explosives or artillery-style weapons. Intelligent and resourceful enemies will use equipment like medical supplies capable of instant healing.

The following creatures or NPCs from this chapter are relatively equal in power to an epic character: Angel, Demigod, Demon (Greater), Dragon, Squid (Giant), Super Hero, Super Villain, and Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Superhuman Campaigns

For a superhuman campaign, the GM may choose to adjust the following aspects of a creature or NPC:

- ❖ Encounters may be increased in numbers to almost ridiculous numbers, to the limit of what the GM is capable of handling. *For example, a normal encounter might consist of four 'mook' style enemies; heroic encounters have five or six; epic might be ten or more; and superhuman might be more than 20.* The only limit here is how much dice-rolling the GM feels like doing, as combats with vast numbers of opponents can get tiresome, even if they are relatively one-sided. Because relatively unskilled or incredibly out-classed attackers can get lucky with a critical or special success, even the most powerful characters might be brought down a notch by a single shot.
- ❖ The GM may choose to increase characteristics of a creature or NPC past the racial maximum. Significant foes should be almost godlike in stature, equivalent to the player characters.
- ❖ Skill ratings for essential skills might be tripled, or even quadrupled to better challenge the player characters.
- ❖ If a significant (non cannon-fodder) enemy doesn't have obvious powers, they should have some less obvious ones like Extra Hit Points, Super Characteristics, Super Skill, etc.
- ❖ Opponents at this level should be equipped with exceptional arms, armor, and other equipment, including magical or other special gear with powers invested. They will also use this equipment tactically and to the best of their abilities.
- ❖ Though it might be less satisfying to players, opponents at this level usually have a lot to lose, and might flee or surrender rather than be killed or defeated outright.

The following creatures or NPCs from this chapter are relatively equal in power to a superhuman character: Giant, Robot (Giant).

General Notes

As noted in the introduction to this section, these are just suggestions, and the GM should apply them intelligently. Take a look at the player character's abilities and use those as a basis for how tough to make opponents and allies. The GM shouldn't be afraid to scale back an encounter by having enemies flee, or increase the difficulty by having new enemies arrive, or some environmental factor make things more difficult for everyone.

For example, a group of galactic heroes might be doing fine battling in a space-station landing bay as they're trying to escape. Having a stray NPC shot breach the magnetic atmosphere field and turning the whole bay into a windstorm with rapidly diminishing oxygen is an entirely different story.

Gauging an enemy's relative strength against a player character's is a difficult art to master, and the relative wildness of dice rolling results and unexpected tactics (or overlooking simple tactics) can make a potentially easy encounter a life-or-death struggle, or end a climactic battle with a single first (and lucky) shot. It's important to remember the main rule: have fun.



CHAPTER TWELVE

APPENDICES



This chapter contains a number of play aids, including conversion notes to use Chaosium's Basic Roleplaying System with other *Basic Roleplaying* games, an afterword, a bibliography of sources consulted, character sheets, play references, and tables presented for convenience.

Conversion Notes

Here are conversion notes to help you use *Basic Roleplaying* with published materials for other Chaosium, Inc. games such as *Call of Cthulhu* or older games such as *RuneQuest*, *Stormbringer*, *Ringworld*, *Elfquest*, *Elric!*, *Nephilim*, and others.

- ❖ Magic points have been renamed to power points in this version to accommodate psychic abilities and super powers.
- ❖ In older *Basic Roleplaying* systems, the Appearance characteristic was known as Charisma.
- ❖ Characteristic rolls have been introduced for all characteristics.
- ❖ Many rules that were integrated into early iterations of the *Basic Roleplaying* system have been made optional, to streamline the play experience and make *Basic Roleplaying* suitable for all genres, with the level of complexity set by the gamemaster.
- ❖ Skills have seen the most change. The following table shows the skill titles that have been changed. Informational and science-based skills have changed the most dramatically, and many have been subsumed into the Knowledge or Science skills. If the skill is not on this table, the skill title has remained the same (or essentially unchanged) throughout all iterations of this system. This list deals only with the core *Basic Roleplaying* game lines—assembling a list of all skills presented in all supplements for all *Basic Roleplaying*-derived games would be *Difficult*. Skills specific to a particular setting have not been included.

BRP System Skill Name Conversion

<i>Skill Name</i>	<i>Equivalent Skills from other Basic Roleplaying games</i>	<i>Skill Name</i>	<i>Equivalent Skills from other Basic Roleplaying games</i>
Appraise	Evaluate, Evaluate Treasure	Navigate	Cartography, Make Map, Map Making
Art (various)	Fine Arts, Photography	Perform	Musicianship, Play Instrument, Orate, Oratory, Sing
Artillery (various)	Weapons System	Persuade	Communication, Debate
Brawl	Fist, Fist/Punch, Head Butt, Kick, Unarmed Combat	Pilot (various)	Aquatic Vehicle, Atmospheric Craft, Boat, Drive Horses, Hyperdrive, Reaction Drive, Reactionless Drive, Sailing, Shiphandling
Craft (various)	Build	Psychotherapy	Psychoanalyze
Drive (various)	Ground Vehicle	Repair (various)	Electrical Repair, Mechanical Repair, Repair/Devise, Trap
Energy Weapon (various)	Handgun: Energy	Research	Computer Use, Library Use
Fine Manipulation	Devise, Lock Picking, Locksmith, Pick Lock, Set Trap, Tie Knot, Trap Set/Disarm	Ride (various)	Ride Horses, Riding
Firearm (various)	Archaic Ranged Weapon, Handgun, Handgun: Projectile, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine Gun	Science (various)	Astronomy, Biological Lore, Biology, Chemical Lore, Chemistry, Geology, Mineral Lore, Physics, Planetology, Zoology
First Aid	Emergency Treatment, Healing Lore, Physik	Sense	Perception, Scent, Scent/Taste, Smell, Taste
Fly	Personal Flyer	Sleight of Hand	Conceal Object, Cut Purse, Hide Item, Juggle, Pick Pocket, Sleight
Heavy Machine (various)	Operate Heavy Machine	Spot	Observation, Perception, Scan, Scrutinize, Search, See, Spot Hidden Item, Spot Hidden Object, Spot Trap
Heavy Weapon (various)	Heavy Weapon: Energy, Heavy Weapon: Projectile, Machine Gun	Status	Credit, Credit Rating
Hide	Camouflage, Conceal, Hide in Cover	Stealth	Ambush, Move Quietly, Move Silently, Sneak
Insight	Psychology	Swim	Swimming
Jump	Jumping	Technical Skill (various)	Computer Use, Computers, Electrical Lore, Electronics, Locksmith, Mechanical Lore, Mechanics
Knowledge (various)	Accounting, Animal Lore, Anthropology, Archaeology, Astrological Lore, Botany, Business, Computer Use, Criminology, Farming, Hermetic Lore, History, Hunt, Law, Linguist, Music Lore, Natural World, Occult, Plant Lore, Poison Lore, Religion, Streetwise, Survival, Theology	Track	Hunt, Tracking
Language (specific)	Second Languages, Speak _____	<i>Additionally, certain skills have been subsumed into the characteristic rolls.</i>	
Literacy (optional)	Read Own Language, Read/Write _____, Scribe	<i>Characteristic Roll</i>	<i>Old Skill</i>
Medicine	Diagnose Disease, Pharmacy, Potions, Treat Disease, Treat Poison	Idea (INT x 5)	Memorize
Melee Weapon (various)	Archaic Melee Weapon, Melee	Agility (DEX x 5)	Athletics, Balance, Tumble
		Knowledge (EDU x 5)	Human Lore, World Lore

Afterword

If anything, this book is the spiritual descendent of the visionary *Worlds of Wonder* boxed set published in 1982, which took the *Basic Roleplaying* system into three different directions—fantasy, science-fiction, and super heroics. It has been called the first universal system based on that product, a flexibility demonstrated with Chaosium's wide variety of other games, ranging from Lovecraftian horror in several eras, sword-and-sorcery,

post-apocalyptic science fantasy, hard science fiction, modern occult thriller, tribal adventure in a world of elves, super heroics, Arthurian adventure, and others.

This work has been a labor of love for the authors, as both of us were exposed early to the range of Chaosium, Inc. games using the *Basic Roleplaying* system. With Sam, it was 1st edition *Call of Cthulhu*, and Jason, it was 1st edition *Stormbringer*. We'd played other games, but these systems and their settings seemed perfectly fused, despite their immensely different tones and

source material. The simplicity and elegance of the rules were revelatory. Throughout the years, each of us, in different parts of the country, bought and devoured all new *Basic Roleplaying* games, from *RuneQuest*, *Hawkmoon*, *Thieves' World*, *Pendragon*, *Elfquest*, *Ringworld*, *Elric!*, *Nephilim*, and subsequent editions of these games. Each of us ended up doing minor freelance work with Chaosium, Inc., and became friends with the people there.

Sam and Jason then ended up living in the middle of Texas, working at the same company, making computer games. One day, while outlining a different project for Chaosium, Jason told them "What you guys should really do is a generic core book, and just get the *Basic Roleplaying* rules out there for everyone to use." A short while later, we got a call from the guys at Chaosium, Inc. saying "Cancel the first thing and send us a proposal for the core *Basic Roleplaying* book."

So, after far too long in development, here it is. Go play!

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This game owes much to the painstaking, dedicated, passionate, and brilliant work done over the years by a number of authors in many Chaosium Inc. books across many game lines. Following are the sources consulted in the development of Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* system. All of these authors and editors are owed an immense debt of gratitude.

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*Big problems must be approached carefully—there may be more than one way to rid the world of Mighty Cthulhu.
A straight-up battle may not be the wisest course.*

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING



NAME _____
Race _____ Gender _____
Handedness _____ Height _____ Weight _____
Description _____
Age _____
Distinctive Features _____
MOV _____
Gods/Religion _____
Profession _____ Wealth _____

Characteristics & Rolls

STR _____ Effort roll _____ %
CON _____ Stamina roll _____ %
SIZ _____ Damage Bonus _____
INT _____ Idea roll _____ %
POW _____ Luck roll _____ %
DEX _____ Agility roll _____ %
APP _____ Charisma roll _____ %
EDU _____ Know roll _____ %

Hit Points

Major Wound _____
DEAD(- _____)
00 01 02 03 04 05
06 07 08 09 10 11
12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29
30 31 32 33 34 35

Skills

COMMUNICATION

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Bargain (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Command (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Disguise (01%) _____ %
- ☐ Etiquette (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Fast Talk (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Language, Own (INT/EDUx5%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Language, Other (00%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Perform (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Persuade (15%) _____ %
- ☐ Status (15% or var.) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Teach (10%) _____ %

MANIPULATION

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Art (05%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Craft (05%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Demolition (01%) _____ %
- ☐ Fine Manipulation (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Heavy Machine (01%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Repair (15%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Sleight of Hand (05%) _____ %

MENTAL

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Appraise (15%) _____ %
- ☐ First Aid (30%) _____ %
- ☐ Gaming (INT+POW) _____ %
- ☐ Knowledge (____%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Literacy (____%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Medicine (____%) _____ %
- ☐ Psychotherapy (____%) _____ %
- ☐ Science (01%): _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Strategy (01%) _____ %
- ☐ Technical Skill (____%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %

PERCEPTION

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Insight (05%) _____ %
- ☐ Listen (25%) _____ %
- ☐ Navigate (10%) _____ %
- ☐ Research (25%) _____ %
- ☐ Sense (10%) _____ %
- ☐ Spot (25%) _____ %
- ☐ Track (10%) _____ %

PHYSICAL

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Climb (40%) _____ %
- ☐ Dodge (DEX x02%) _____ %
- ☐ Drive (____%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Fly (____%) _____ %
- ☐ Hide (10%) _____ %
- ☐ Jump (25%) _____ %
- ☐ Pilot (01%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Projection (DEX x02%) _____ %
- ☐ Ride (05%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ Stealth (10%) _____ %
- ☐ Swim (25%) _____ %
- ☐ Throw (25%) _____ %

COMBAT

bonus (____) _____

- ☐ Martial Arts (01%) _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %
- ☐ _____ %

see WEAPONS below for more combat skills

Weapons

weapon type	attack/parry	damage	range	attacks	length	hand	HP
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ %	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Brawl (25%)	_____ %	1D3+db	touch	1	close	1h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Grapple (25%)	_____ %	special	touch	1	close	2h	n/a

Armor

armor type	armor value
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
shield type	parry/attack damage HP
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ % _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____ % _____

Player

Name _____



Power Points

Power Points (____) Battery (____)

points

UNCONSCIOUS **0** 01 02 03 04 05 06

UNCONSCIOUS 0 01 02 03 04 05 06

07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45

46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58

59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71

72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84

85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97

Powers

character
point cost

[illegible]

Attack Powers

energy
cost

[illegible]

☐ Projection (DEX x02%) _____% ☐ Throw _____% ☐ Brawl _____% ☐ Fly _____% Defense _____% ☐ Dodge _____%

Fatigue

Sanity

INSANE 0 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34

35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53

54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72

73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91

92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

OPTION

Optional Rule Checklist

Following is a list of all of the optional rules from this rulebook with a note about their effect in game play:

Characters & Character Creation

These optional rules concern characters and the character creation process.

- ☐ **Choosing Characteristic Values (page 16):** Players will be able to assign their characteristics where they want, resulting in PCs more suited to the players' tastes.
- ☐ **Higher Starting Characteristics (page 16):** This yields more robust and generally more competent characters.
- ☐ **Education/Knowledge Roll (pages 24, 27, 28):** Especially useful for games involving the modern world such as investigation or other sciences.
- ☐ **Cultural Modifiers (page 38):** Most applicable in fantasy or historical settings or any setting where cultural homogeneity is not prevalent. Also useful for science fiction settings.
- ☐ **Non-Human Characters (page 335):** Almost a requirement for high fantasy and science fiction settings.
- ☐ **Point-based Character Creation (page 19):** PCs are designed by the players down to the smallest degree, allowing for exactly the character desired.
- ☐ **Step Six (page 21):** Good for competent and well-rounded PCs who are focused in a particular direction. A good character/skill shortcut.
- ☐ **Increased Personal Skill Points (page 24):** Useful for settings where PCs are competent professionals with a wealth of personal experience.
- ☐ **Hit Points per Location (pages 20, 29):** Mostly useful for very combat-intensive settings. Usually used in tandem with "Armor by Hit Locations".
- ☐ **Total Hit Points (page 30):** Characters with these HP totals will be much more competent in combat and able to survive considerable damage. Using the option where only PCs and important non-player characters have the higher HP totals makes for a very powerful game, where PCs are able to take considerably more damage than cannon-fodder style non-player characters.
- ☐ **Fatigue Points (pages 20, 32):** Like "Hit Points per Location", best used with extremely gritty combat-focused games.
- ☐ **Sanity (pages 21, 32, 318):** Useful for any game involving horror elements, whether fantasy or modern occult thriller.

- ☐ **Distinctive Features (pages 34-35):** Primarily a role-playing element with no numerical game effects, so useful in any setting.
- ☐ **Freeform Professions (page 41):** A good way for looser settings or PCs who can't be pigeonholed into a normal profession.
- ☐ **Aging and Inaction (page 183):** These rules are primarily of use for long-term campaigns where PCs actually age significantly.

Skills

These optional rules concern skills and their use.

- ☐ **Skill Category Bonuses (pages 20, 31, 48):** Any game where skills are important will benefit from having skill bonuses used. Not compatible with "Simpler Skill Bonuses" (below).
- ☐ **Simpler Skill Bonuses (page 31):** A simpler halfway measure to regular skill bonuses. Not compatible with "Skill Category Bonuses" (above).
- ☐ **Complimentary Skills (page 50):** Useful in any game or setting.
- ☐ **Acting Without Skill (page 49):** Allowing the minor chance of success in any skill, regardless of training, will tend to create unusual outcomes and may not be suitable for all settings.
- ☐ **Literacy (page 67):** Most useful in settings where reading and writing is not assumed to be a common skill.
- ☐ **Research Specialties (page 74):** This level of detail is unnecessary in any but investigative or academic-themed settings, or those involving those aspects of play.
- ☐ **Skill Ratings Over 100% (page 175):** Almost essential for high-powered settings and vastly competent PCs and non-player characters.

Powers

This optional rule concerns powers and their use.

- ☐ **Projection (page 145):** Necessary in any setting involving super powers.

System

These optional rules concern the system in general.

- ☐ **Opposed Skill Roll Systems (page 174):** Using one of these over another is largely a matter of personal preference.
- ☐ **Encumbrance (page 180):** Perhaps one of the least used systems in roleplaying games; this is most useful for grittier, combat-oriented games.

Combat

These optional rules concern combat.

- ☐ **Eliminating or Reversing Statement of Intent (page 188):** To speed up combat somewhat, eliminate statements of intent. To slow them down a bit more but better model the effects of higher perceptual speed from high DEX characteristics, reverse them.
- ☐ **Initiative Rolls (page 188):** This allows for a wider range of results and might be best for combat-oriented games where the situation can vary dramatically round to round.
- ☐ **Power Use in the Action Phase (page 189):** This is good for any game where characters should be on a somewhat even foot against villains, or vice versa.
- ☐ **Attacks and Parries over 100% (page 198):** Most suitable for high-powered fantasy and superheroics, or some other genre with similar extraordinary skill levels.
- ☐ **Dodging Missile Weapons (page 198):** This is suitable for more cinematic style games, or ones where combat is exaggerated and unrealistic.
- ☐ **Dying Blows (page 199):** This is of use in a campaign where dramatic license is taken, and perhaps as a nice end to a beloved player character.
- ☐ **Splitting Attack and Parry Skills (page 199):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Strike Ranks (page 199):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Miniatures and Maps (page 202):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- ☐ **Armor By Hit Locations (page 262):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-based games.
- ☐ **Damage and Hit Locations (pages 204-205):** Best used in more detailed and simulation-oriented games.

Miscellaneous

These optional rules concern any other aspect of the game.

- ☐ **Allegiance (page 315):** Almost a necessity in any game positing supernatural powers, especially those that intervene in human activity.
- ☐ **Personality Traits (page 294):** Useful primarily as a gamemaster tool, and used as a matter of preference only.

The Resistance Table

		Active Characteristic																															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24								
Passive Characteristic	1	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	2	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	3	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	4	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	Range of Automatic Success				—	—							
	5	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—					—	—							
	6	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—					—	—	—						
	7	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	8	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	9	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—	—								
	10	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—	—								
	11	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—	—								
	12	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—	—								
	13	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—	—								
	14	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	—								
	15	—	Range of Automatic Failure				—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95							
	16	—					—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90						
	17	—					—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85						
	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80								
	19	Skill Results Table										05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75							
	20											—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70							
	21											Base Chance	Critical		Special		Fumble		—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65
	22											01-05	01		01-02		96-00		—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
	23											06-10	01		01-03		96-00		—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
	24											11-15	01		01-04		96-00		—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
	16-20											01		01-05		97-00		—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	
	21-25											01-02		01-06		97-00		—	—	—	—	05	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	
	26-30											01-02		01-07		97-00		For success, roll D100 equal to or less than the indicated number.															
	31-35	01-02		01-08		97-00																											
	36-40	01-02		01-08		97-00																											
	41-45	01-02		01-08		97-00																											

Skill Results Table

Base Chance	Critical	Special	Fumble
01-05	01	01	96-00
06-10	01	01-02	96-00
11-15	01	01-03	96-00
16-20	01	01-04	96-00
21-25	01-02	01-05	97-00
26-30	01-02	01-06	97-00
31-35	01-02	01-07	97-00
36-40	01-02	01-08	97-00
41-45	01-03	01-09	98-00
46-50	01-03	01-10	98-00
51-55	01-03	01-11	98-00
56-60	01-03	01-12	98-00
61-65	01-04	01-13	99-00
66-70	01-04	01-14	99-00
71-75	01-04	01-15	99-00
76-80	01-04	01-16	99-00
81-85	01-05	01-17	00
86-90	01-05	01-18	00
91-95	01-05	01-19	00
96-00	01-05	01-20	00
101-105	01-06	01-21	00
106-110	01-06	01-22	00
111-115	01-06	01-23	00
116-120	01-06	01-24	00
Each +5	Etc.	Etc.	00

For success, roll D100 equal to or less than the indicated number.

Combat Summary

Attack Roll	Parry or Dodge Roll	Result
Success	Success	Attacker's blow is deflected or dodged.
Success	Fails	Defender is hit and may lose hit points.
Fails	No roll required	Defender maintains guard, does not need to roll.
Fumbles	No roll required	As per attacker's miss above, plus attacker rolls on fumble table.

Attack and Defense Matrix

Attack Roll	Parry Roll	Dodge Roll	Result
Critical	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges damage, no other result.
Critical	Special	Special	Attack partially deflected or dodged and achieves a success. Attacker strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Critical	Success	Success	Attack marginally deflected and achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 4 points of damage.*
Critical	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value is bypassed.
Critical	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value does not apply. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Special	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges attack; no other result. If attack is parried, attacking weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Special	Special	Special	Defender parries or dodges attack, no other result.
Special	Success	Success	Attack partially parried or dodged and achieves a normal success. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Special	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Special	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage plus normal damage bonus and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Success	Critical	Critical	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 2 points of damage.*
Success	Special	Special	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Success	Success	Success	Defender blocks or dodges damage, no other result.
Success	Failure	Failure	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Success	Fumble	Fumble	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Failure	—	—	No damage; no effect.
Fumble	—	—	Attack misses completely and attacker rolls on the appropriate fumble table. Defender unharmed.

* If the parrying weapon or shield is destroyed, the defender takes the remainder of the damage rolled (to a random hit location if that optional system is utilized). If the attacking weapon is destroyed during a successful attack, damage is still inflicted on the defender but the weapon is broken at that moment.

Damage Bonus

STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier
2 to 12	-1D6
13 to 16	-1D4
17 to 24	None
25 to 32	+1D4
33 to 40	+1D6
41 to 56	+2D6
57 to 72	+3D6
73 to 88	+4D6
89 to 104	+5D6
105 to 120	+6D6
121 to 136	+7D6
137 to 152	+8D6
152 to 168	+9D6
Ea. add'l +16	+1d6

Skill List by Category

A complete list of skills divided by category follows. Each entry also lists the page of that skill's full description.

CombatPage	MentalPage
Artillery (various) 52	Appraise 50
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Craft (various) 54	Hide 62
Demolition 54	Jump 63
Fine Manipulation 57	Pilot (various) 72
Heavy Machine (various) . . 62	Projection 72
Repair (various) 73	Ride (various) 75
Sleight of Hand 78	Stealth 80
	Swim 81
	Throw 83

Melee Weapon Attack Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-15	Lose the next combat round and are effectively helpless.
16-25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds and are effectively helpless.
26-40	Fall down.
41-50	Drop the weapon being used.
51-60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61-65	Lose 1D10 points of weapon's hit points.
66-75	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 41-50 if no ally nearby.
86-90	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 51-60 if no ally nearby.
91-98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage, or use result 61-65 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Melee Weapon Parry Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-20	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken), and are effectively helpless.
21-40	Fall down.
41-50	Drop weapon being used.
51-60	Throw weapon 1D10 meters away.
61-75	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Wide open; foe automatically hits with normal hit.
86-90	Wide open; foe automatically hits with special hit.
91-93	Wide open; foe automatically hits with critical hit.
94-98	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
99-00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Missile Weapon Attack Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-15	Lose the next attack or other activity.
16-25	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds or other activity.
26-40	Fall down.
41-55	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
56-65	Drop weapon; which slides or bounces 1D6-1 meters away.
66-80	Do 1D6 damage to weapon's hit points (or use result 81-85 if the weapon has no hit points).
81-85	Break weapon; regardless of weapon's current hit points.
86-90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 56-65 if no ally nearby.
91-95	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 66-80 if no ally nearby.
96-98	Hit nearest ally for critical damage, or use result 81-85 if no ally nearby.
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumble Table

D100	Result
01-25	Lose the next combat round (or this one if no action has yet been taken).
26-30	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds (this includes this one if no action has yet been taken).
31-50	Fall down.
51-60	Fall down and twist ankle; lose 1 meter/DEX rank of movement for 1D10 full turns (and all combat turns within them).
61-75	Vision obscured; lose 30% on all appropriate skills for 1D3 combat rounds.
76-85	Miss and strain something; lose 1 hit point (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
86-90	Hit nearest ally for normal damage, or use result 76-85 if no ally nearby.
91-94	Hit nearest ally for special damage, or use result 76-85 if no ally nearby.
95-98	Hit hard surface; do normal damage to self (in the attacking limb if hit locations are being used).
99	Blow it; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).
00	Blow it badly; roll three times more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Major Wound Table

1D100 Result

- 01–10** Severed leg tendons cause limping; fused ankle bones cause limping; back muscles or spinal nerve damage bend the torso to the left or right; a shattered knee cannot bend; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 DEX. The maximum MOV is now reduced by the same 1D3 result. Your character is still able to fight.
- 11–20** Much of the nose has been sliced away; multiple scars deface both hands; an ear has been cut off; a livid scar lends an evil cast to your character's appearance; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 APP. The visible and unappealing deformity cannot be disguised. Your character is still able to fight.
- 21–30** Wrist or hand damage; a slab of arm or shoulder muscle has been cut away; a chunk was hewn from thigh or calf muscles; spinal nerves are damaged; several fingers or toes are severed; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 STR; this loss may change what weapons can be used. Your character is still able to fight with a weapon, but not a shield.
- 31–40** A punctured lung leads to a weakened respiratory system; deep stomach wounds become chronically reinfected or belly wounds weaken digestion and general health; kidneys and liver are damaged; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 CON; maximum MOV is now reduced by the same 1D3, and hit points may be lowered. Your character is still able to fight.
- 41–50** Concussion damages hearing and limits Listen and Insight to maximums of 65 percent; injury to the head thereafter require Luck rolls each time to use any Mental skills; blows or cuts which affect depth perception leave missile weapon skill ratings at a maximum of 65%; multiple wounds to the face and neck limit the skills of any Communication skills to 65% maximum; or make up a new wound effect. Lose 1D3 INT; this loss may affect your character's ability to use any powers. Your character is still able to fight.
- 51–60** Refer to 01–10 for what happened, which now expands to the loss of one or both arms or legs. Lose 1D6 DEX and reduce maximum MOV by that same amount. Your character is unable to fight.
- 61–70** Refer to 11–20 for what happened, though the major wound now includes worse mutilations. Lose 1D6 APP; it creates one or more visible deformities that cannot be disguised. Your character is still able to fight.
- 71–80** Refer to 21–30 for examples of mutilating cuts and losses. Lose 1D6 STR; change hit points and damage bonus. Your character is still able to fight.

- 81–90** Refer to 31–40 for various wounds to the vitals. Lose 1D6 CON; may affect hit points, damage bonus, and reduces MOV by that number of units equal to the 1D6 result rolled. Your character is unable to fight.
- 91–92** Bad facial and vocal-cord injuries. Lose 1D6 APP; lower the Charisma roll respectively. Your character is still able to fight.
- 93–94** Broken bones and severed ganglia. Lose 1D6 DEX; from now on your character can only use one-handed melee weapons. Your character is still able to fight using his or her remaining arm.
- 95–96** Nerve damage to left or right arm (roll 1D6; a result of 1–3 is the left arm, 4–6 is the right arm). Lose 1D6 DEX; hereafter your character can only wield weapons or equipment in his or her undamaged arm. Your character is still able to fight using his or her remaining arm.
- 97–98** Nerve damage to both arms. Lose 1D6 DEX; though the legs are fine, neither arms nor hands can wield anything. Your character is unable to fight, unless using his or her legs or head butts.
- 99** Your character is mutilated with vicious wounds. Lose 1D3 points each from APP, DEX, and CON, and describe the results. Your character is unable to fight.
- 00** Your character was deliberately mutilated after collapsing. Remove 1D4 points each from any of four characteristics (gamemaster's discretion as to which) and describe the results. Your character is unable to fight.

Conditions of Medical Care

Medical Conditions

Poorly equipped, unsanitary, and/or full of stress-inducing elements; wounded character is mobile and exerting self heavily (combat, rugged travel, etc.); or no medical care whatsoever.

Decent and sanitary conditions, restful environment, adequate care provided, moderate physical exertion.

Excellent conditions and equipment utilized, environment specifically conducive to healing and restoration, full bed rest and therapy, top-notch medical care provided full-time.

Effect on Healing Rate

Caregiver (doctor, nurse, healer, self, etc.) must succeed in a *Difficult* First Aid or Medicine roll for any healing to occur. If successful your character heals normally (1D3 hit points/week), if unsuccessful your character heals no hit points.

Your character heals 1D3 hit points naturally.

Your character heals 1D3 hit points naturally; a further successful First Aid or Medicine skill use allows possible additional healing (as described on pages 208 and 210).

Magic Spell Summary

Following are the magic spells presented in this section. Each spell's cost per level is given in parentheses, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell.

BLAST (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of magical damage per level.

CHANGE (1): Transforms 3 SIZ points of an item or being per level.

CONJURE ELEMENTAL (1): Summons or dismisses an elemental of a specific type.

CONTROL (1): Allows control over a target's mind, requires a resistance roll.

COUNTERMAGIC (1): Reflects incoming spells back at the caster.

DARK (1): Fills an area with darkness.

DIMINISH (1): Reduces one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.

DISPEL (1): Eliminates existing spell effects, may banish supernatural beings.

DULL (1): Reduces a weapon's attack chance and damage.

ENHANCE (1): Increases one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.

FLAME (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of fire damage per level.

FROST (3): Ranged, does 1D6 points of frost damage per level.

HEAL (3): Heals 1D6 points of damage per level.

ILLUSION (1): Creates 3 SIZ points of an illusion per level.

INVISIBILITY (1): Each level makes 3 SIZ points of an object or person invisible.

LIFT (1): Lifts 3 SIZ points of an object or person per level.

LIGHT (1): Fills an area with light.

LIGHTNING: Ranged, does 1D6 points of lightning damage per level.

PERCEPTION (1): Allows your character to detect one thing within range.

PROTECTION (1): Adds 1 point of armor value per level against physical attacks.

RESISTANCE (1): Reduces damage from heat and/or cold by 1 point per level.

SEAL (1): Joins two inanimate objects together.

SHARPEN (1): Increases a weapon's attack chance and damage.

SPEAK TO MIND (1): Allows mental communication between your character and a target.

TELEPORT (1): Teleports 3 SIZ points per level anywhere within range.

UNSEAL (1): Separates two connected objects.

VISION (1): Allows your character to see what is happening elsewhere, or in the past.

WALL (1): Creates a barrier to protect your character.

WARD (1): Defines an area protected by Blast and Countermagic.

WOUND (3): Causes 1D6 points of damage per level.

Psychic Abilities Summary

Each psychic ability costs a minimum of 1 power point to use, with additional power points spent for longer duration. Range is usually a multiple of POW.

ASTRAL PROJECTION: Leave physical body and travel in psychic form.

AURA DETECTION: Perceive the aura emanated by a living being.

CLAIRVOYANCE: Project awareness into another place.

CRYOKENESIS: Create an area of intense cold on an area, object, or target.

DANGER SENSE: Detect danger from other characters or situations.

DEAD CALM: Resist mental shock or delay the effects of sanity loss.

DIVINATION: Ask a higher power for guidance and insight.

EIDETIC MEMORY: Perfect and total recall of previous experiences.

EMOTION CONTROL: Affect the emotional state of a target or targets.

EMPATHY: Detect the inner feelings of a target or targets.

INTUITION: Detect a certain person or class of item.

LEVITATION: Floating movement above the ground.

MIND BLAST: A psychic attack against a target.

MIND CONTROL: Controlling the physical body and will of a target.

MIND SHIELD: A protection against psychic interference and attacks.

PRECOGNITION: A brief glimpse into the future.

PSYCHOMETRY: 'Read' past emotions associated with an object or place.

PYROKINESIS: Heat an area, object, or target to extreme temperatures.

SENSITIVITY: Detect psychic emanations or supernatural beings in an area.

TELEKINESIS: Manipulate and move objects mentally.

TELEPATHY: Read minds or speak mind-to-mind with a target.

Sorcery Spell Summary

Categorized, with the range of spell levels in parentheses. Each spell costs 1 power point per level, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell (usually your character's POW in combat rounds).

Augmentation Spells

CLOAK OF NIGHT (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Hide.

SORCERER'S LEAP (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Jump.

SORCERER'S SURENESS (1-4): Adds +20% per level to Stealth.

Characteristic Spells

SORCERER'S BEAUTY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to APP.

SORCERER'S PLASTICITY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to SIZ.

SORCERER'S SOUL (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to POW.

SORCERER'S SPEED (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to MOV.

SORCERER'S STRENGTH (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to STR.

SORCERER'S SUPPLENESS (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to DEX.

SORCERER'S VITALITY (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to CON.

SORCERER'S WISDOM (1-3): Adds 3 points per level to INT.

Combat Spells

SORCERER'S ARMOR (1-4): Adds 1 point of armor per level.

SORCERER'S BULWARK (1-4): Adds 1 point of armor per level to shields.

SORCERER'S HAMMER (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to blunt weapons.

SORCERER'S RAZOR (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to cutting weapons.

SORCERER'S SHARP FLAME (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to impaling weapons.

SORCERER'S TALONS (1-4): Adds 1 point damage per level to unarmed or brawling weapons.

Enhancement Spells

MAKE FAST (1): Glues together two inanimate objects.

MAKE WHOLE (1): Repairs a broken item.

MIDNIGHT (1): Creates an area of darkness.

MOONRISE (1): Creates a floating globe of light.

Elemental Spells

BOUNTY OF THE SEA (4): Fills an area with water.

FLAMES OF THE SUN (4): Fills an area with flame.

GIFT OF THE EARTH (4): Fills an area with dirt.

WINGS OF THE SKY (4): Fills an area with wind.

Manipulative Spells

CURSE OF SORCERY (4): Causes a target to suffer a disfiguring feature.

FURY (1): Enrages a target, speeding their attacks.

LIKEN SHAPE (4): Assume the image of another person.

MUDDLE (1): Disorients target.

POX (1): Reduces a target's power points, requires a resistance roll.

UNBREAKABLE BONDS (3): Immobilizes the target, requires a resistance roll.

Occult Spells

BRAZIER OF POWER (4): Creates a reservoir of power points.

CHAIN OF BEING (4): Pools character's power points.

UNDO SORCERY (1-4): Cancels various sorcery spells.

WARD (3): Creates a magical alarm.

Summoning Spells

SUMMON DEMON (1): Summons a demon.

SUMMON ELEMENTAL (1): Summons an elemental.

Utility Spells

BIRD'S VISION (1): Allows your character to control a bird and see through its eyes.

BREATH OF LIFE (1): Provides breathable air underwater or elsewhere.

HEAL (2): Restores lost hit points.

RAT'S VISION (1): Allows your character to control a rodent and see through its eyes.

REFUTATION (1-4): Protects against Undo Sorcery

SORCERER'S EAR (1): Carries spoken words across great distances.

SORCERER'S EYE (1): Doubles the range at which something can be seen.

WITCH SIGHT (3): Allows the sorcerer to determine a target's POW.

Super Power Summary

Following is an alphabetical listing and summary of the super powers in this section.

ABSORPTION: Absorbs energy from an attack and turns it into power points.

ADAPTATION: Each level allows survival in one hostile environment.

ALTERNATE FORM: Each level is an alternate body your character can switch into.

ARMOR: Each level provides 1 point of protection against a specific energy type.

BARRIER: Each level creates a 1 meter square section of protective wall.

DEFENSE: Lowers your chance to be hit by 1% per level.

DENSITY CONTROL: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of density (SIZ).

DIMINISH/ENHANCE CHARACTERISTIC: Lowers a characteristic by 1D6 per level.

DRAIN: Each level drains 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point from a target.

ENERGY CONTROL: Allows creation of and control over a specific energy type.

ENERGY PROJECTION: Allows projection of a focused beam of damaging energy.

EXTRA ENERGY: Each level provides 10 additional power points.

EXTRA HIT POINTS: Each level provides 1 additional hit point.

FLIGHT: Each level allows self-powered flight for 1 SIZ point.

FORCE FIELD: Each level offers 1 point of protection against a specific type of energy.

INTANGIBILITY: Allows movement through solid objects.

INVISIBILITY: Each level turns 1 SIZ point invisible.

LEAP: Adds to the normal jumping distance, horizontally and vertically.

PROTECTION: Each level reduces the level of an attacking energy type.

REGENERATION: Each level returns 1 lost hit point per combat round.

SIDEKICK: A loyal sidekick to aid and assist your character.

SIZE CHANGE: Each level adds or subtracts 1 point of SIZ.

SNARE PROJECTION: Each level is 1 STR and/or SIZ of a net, web, rope, or other confining snare.

STRETCHING: Stretch body into different sizes and shapes.

SUPER CHARACTERISTIC: Extra points in STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, APP, or EDU.

SUPER MOVEMENT: Each type involves a unique method of movement.

SUPER SENSE: Each type improves an existing sense, or adds an extraordinary aspect to the sense.

SUPER SKILL: Each level adds +20% to a specific skill.

SUPER SPEED: Each level adds an additional action or movement each combat round.

TELEPORT: Each level allows instantaneous teleportation of 1 SIZ point of an object or target.

TRANSFER: Each level allows transfer of 1 hit point, power point, fatigue point, or sanity point from your character to a target.

UNARMED COMBAT: Increases your character's ability in unarmed combat.

WEATHER CONTROL: Alters or creates weather in an area.

BRP For New Players

Basic Roleplaying has only a few principles to keep in mind, and once you know these, you should be fine:

- ❖ Characteristics are usually 3-18 (the higher the better), human average is 10-11. Make a characteristic roll when there is no opposition and a resistance roll when there is an opposed force that can be rated.
- ❖ The resistance table is based on equal forces having a 50/50 chance against one another. The more unequal the forces are, the greater the difference. Both scores' chances add up to 100%.
- ❖ Skills have percentile ratings (the higher the better), and you want to roll low to succeed. A roll of 99 and/or 00 is a fumble. A roll over your skill is a failure. A roll equal to or under your skill rating is a success. A roll of 1/5 your skill is a special success. A roll of 1/20 your skill is a critical success.

- ❖ Usually, roll your full skill rating on percentile dice. If the task can be accomplished automatically, don't roll. If it's very *Easy*, double your skill rating. If it's normal, do not modify it. If it's *Difficult*, cut your skill in half.
- ❖ Occasionally, skill ratings will be modified by a value (usually within the range of $\pm 20\%$) if some contributing factor makes things more difficult, or if something makes the skill attempt easier.
- ❖ When you run out of hit points, you die.
- ❖ Most powers use power points for fuel. When these run out, you fall unconscious.

Everything else can be determined during the course of play, or explained as required. If knowledge of the rules is getting in the way of actually playing, better to play.

Mutation Summary

This table provides a random means of determining initial mutations for your character using a D100. Adverse conditions are in *italics*, though if a mutation has an adverse and beneficial variety, they are identified as such.

Result	Mutation	Description
01-03	Adaptability	Survival in unusual environments.
04-05	Allergy	Skills reduced by contact to an allergen.
06-09	Biped (<i>Quadruped</i>)	If two-legged, forced to walk four-legged.
10-12	Camouflage	Skin has a concealing texture or color.
13-15	Coloration	Unusual coloration (minor only).
16-19	Congenital Disease	Suffers from a debilitating disease.
20-22	Decreased Characteristic	Characteristic decreased.
23-25	Disease Carrier	Carries (but is immune to) an infectious disease.
26-29	Group Intelligence	Part of a hive mind.
30	Hands	Has extra hands or prehensile limb.
31-33	Hardy	Resistant to damage.
34-36	Hybrid	Has an animalistic trait.
37-44	Increased Characteristic	Characteristic increased.
45-48	Keen Sense	Has one or more sharp senses.
49-50	Luminescence	Emits a light from body.
51-53	Metabolic Improvement	Has a beneficial but unusual metabolism.
54-57	Metabolic Weakness	Has a disadvantageous and unusual metabolism.
58-60	Natural Armor	Has natural armor (scales, horn, hide, etc.).
61-65	Natural Weapon	Has natural weapon (spine, claw, teeth, etc.).
66-67	Pain Sensitivity	Low resistance to pain.
68	Pheromone	Emits chemicals that can affect others.
69-70	Reduced Sense	Impaired or missing primary sense.
71-72	Regeneration	Able to heal rapidly.
73-74	Sensitivity	Has an unusual affinity for a substance.
75-76	Speech (Mimicry)	Can imitate animal noises, or speak clearly.
77-81	Structural Improvement	Has an unusual and beneficial body form.
82-86	Structural Weakness	Has an unusual and disadvantageous body form.
87-89	Venom	Emits a natural poison.
90	Wings	Has wings and can glide or fly.
91-00	gamemaster or player's choice	Pick or roll again.

At the gamemaster's discretion, you can pick your mutations instead of rolling randomly.

Sample Poisons

Poison	Speed of Effect	POT	Symptoms
Arsenic	1/2 to 24 hours	16	Burning pain, vomiting, violent diarrhea.
Belladonna	2 hrs to 2 days	16	Rapid heartbeat, impaired vision, convulsions.
Black Widow venom	2-8 days	7	Chills, sweating, nausea.
Chloroform	1 combat round	15	Unconsciousness, depressed respiration.
Cobra venom	15-60 minutes	16	Convulsions, respiratory failure.
Curare	1 combat round	25	Muscular paralysis, respiratory failure.
Cyanide	1-15 minutes	20	Dizziness, convulsions, fainting.
Rattlesnake venom	15-60 min.	10	Vomiting, violent spasms, yellowish vision.
Scorpion venom	24-48 hours	9	Intense pain, weakness, hemorrhaging.
Sleeping pills	10-30 minutes	6	Normal sleep; each additional dose increases chance of respiratory failure by 5%.
Strychnine	10-20 minutes	20	Violent muscle contractions, asphyxiation

OPTION

Chaotic Features

Many creatures of chaos such as demons are, from one creature to another, inconsistent in appearance and power. This is the influence of chaos at work. Just as living beings have mutations (see **Chapter Four: Powers**), unnatural creatures may have chaotic features. If the GM desires, each individual chaotic creature may have one feature from this list, either chosen or, more appropriately, rolled randomly. This is an entirely optional table and should be ignored if the GM would prefer to handcraft any chaotic opponents.

D100% Chaotic Feature

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>01-03 POW +1D6</p> <p>04-05 POW +2D6</p> <p>06 POW +3D6</p> <p>07-09 DEX +1D6</p> <p>10-11 DEX +2D6</p> <p>12 DEX +3D6</p> <p>13-14 STR +1D6</p> <p>15 STR +2D6</p> <p>16-17 CON +1D6</p> <p>18 CON +2D6</p> <p>19-20 Never surprised.</p> <p>21-22 Absorbs 1 point of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding +1 power point.</p> <p>23-24 Spits acid of 2D10 POT 1D6 times per day, 6-meter range.</p> <p>25-26 Breathes 3D6 fire 1D6 times per day; single target, 3-meter range.</p> <p>27-28 Reflects 1-point magic or sorcery back at user.</p> <p>29-30 Highly flammable; if ignited burns all within 3-meter radius for 2D6 points damage until extinguished.</p> <p>31-32 Hypnotic pattern on skin; viewers must succeed in an Idea roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds.</p> <p>33-35 Appearance is confusing; all attacks against it are at -20%.</p> <p>36-37 Large and valuable gem clearly visible on body.</p> <p>38-40 Regenerates 1 HP per combat round until dead.</p> | <p>41-42 Can attempt to befuddle a target each round in addition to any combat, with a POW vs. POW resistance roll. Failure puts the target into a confused and highly suggestive state. To perform any actions, the target must make a <i>Difficult</i> Idea roll, and may be ordered by the creature to act contrary to his or her normal wishes. Resisting these commands also requires a successful <i>Difficult</i> Idea roll.</p> <p>43-45 Creature seemingly invincible; appears to take no damage until it reaches 0 HP, then falls over dead.</p> <p>46 Invisible until it attacks.</p> <p>47-48 Appearance is extremely confusing; all attacks against it are at -30%.</p> <p>49-50 Poison touch of 2D10 POT; natural attack must do 1 HP of damage for poison to work.</p> <p>51-52 CON -2D6, but regenerates 3 HP per round until dead.</p> <p>53-54 6-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +6 to current armor.</p> <p>55-56 MOV 12</p> <p>57-58 Absorbs 1 or 2 points of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding the amount to current power points.</p> <p>59-60 Can launch a POW vs. POW attack each round; if successful, target loses 1D6 power points.</p> <p>61-62 Explodes upon reaching 0 HP, causing 3D6 damage to all within 3 meters. Armor, shields, etc. will protect against this, though weapon parries cannot.</p> <p>63-65 Appears far more dangerous than actually is.</p> <p>66-67 Can turn invisible at will when not in combat.</p> <p>68-70 Reflects 1- or 2-point magic or sorcery back at user.</p> <p>71-72 8-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +8 to current armor.</p> <p>73-74 10-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +10 to current armor.</p> <p>75-76 12-point armored skin. If already has armored skin, +12 to current armor.</p> | <p>77 Appears utterly harmless until it enters combat.</p> <p>78-80 Regenerates 1D6 HP per combat round until dead.</p> <p>81-82 Can leap vertically or horizontally 10 meters from a standstill.</p> <p>83-84 Undetectable through magic or sorcery.</p> <p>85 Appearance extremely disorienting; all attacks against it are at -40%.</p> <p>86-87 Extremely valuable gem (or gems) inside creature, will be discovered if creature is cut open.</p> <p>88-90 Makes agonizing screams continually.</p> <p>91-92 Overpowering stench causes nausea in any who breathe near it. If target fails in a Stamina roll, all tasks are <i>Difficult</i> against this creature for 1D6+2 rounds.</p> <p>93-94 Reflects 1D6+2-point magic or sorcery back at user. Roll randomly each turn a spell is cast against the creature to determine how much is reflected.</p> <p>95-96 Hideous appearance of creature demoralizes those who it beats in a POW vs. POW resistance roll. If target fails, all tasks are <i>Difficult</i> against this creature for 1D6+2 rounds.</p> <p>97-98 SIZ +2D6</p> <p>99 Roll twice again on this table. If this is rolled again, add another two chaotic features and roll again, etc.</p> <p>00 This creature has APP 5D6, and is particularly endearing. It attacks with a APP vs. INT resistance roll. Failure causes the victim to befriend the creature, perhaps even offering to serve it. The creature may have up to 1D6 current companions of this nature, at the GM's discretion. The charmed character may even fight friends to defend the creature.</p> |
|---|---|--|



Non-Player Character

Name _____

Desc _____

STR _____ INT _____ APP _____

CON _____ POW _____

SIZ _____ DEX _____ MOV _____

HIT POINTS dead = 0 1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44
 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57
 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70
 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83
 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96
 97 98 99 100

Skills _____

_____Powers _____

_____POWER PTS uncn = 0 1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44
 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57
 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70
 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83
 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96
 97 98 99 100

Damage Bonus _____

weapon	skill	damage
Brawl/Claw	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____

Armor _____

Possessions _____

Henchman One

Name _____

Desc _____

STR _____ INT _____ APP _____

CON _____ POW _____

SIZ _____ DEX _____ MOV _____

HIT POINTS DEAD =0 1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42
 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55
 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81
 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Damage Bonus _____

weapon	skill	damage
Brawl/Claw	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____

Armor _____

Skills _____

Power Points _____

Powers _____

_____Possessions _____

Henchman Two

Name _____

Desc _____

STR _____ INT _____ APP _____

CON _____ POW _____

SIZ _____ DEX _____ MOV _____

HIT POINTS DEAD =0 1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42
 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55
 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81
 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Damage Bonus _____

weapon	skill	damage
Brawl/Claw	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____

Armor _____

Skills _____

Power Points _____

Powers _____

_____Possessions _____

Henchman Three

Name _____

Desc _____

STR _____ INT _____ APP _____

CON _____ POW _____

SIZ _____ DEX _____ MOV _____

HIT POINTS DEAD =0 1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42
 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55
 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68
 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81
 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Damage Bonus _____

weapon	skill	damage
Brawl/Claw	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____
_____	_____ %	_____

Armor _____

Skills _____

Power Points _____

Powers _____

_____Possessions _____

Primitive Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Range	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Hand	Axe	15	1D6+1+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	12	Yes	7/9	—	Cheap	0.5	2
Club, Heavy	Club	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	22	Yes	9/7	—	Cheap	2.0	2
Club, Light	Club	25	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/7	—	Cheap	1.0	2
Fist	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	—	No ¹	—	—	—	—	3
Grapple	Brawl	25	Special ²	1	Entangle	Short	2H	—	No ³	—	—	—	—	3
Head Butt	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	—	—	No	—	—	—	—	3
Kick	Brawl	25	1D3+db	1	Crushing	Short	—	—	No	—	—	—	—	3
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	—	0.2	3
Net	Other	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	Medium	1H or 2H	6	Yes	12/10	96-00 ⁵	Cheap	3.0	1
Spear, Long	Spear	15	1D10+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/9	—	Cheap	2.0	1
Spear, Short	Spear	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	15	Yes	7/8	—	Cheap	2.0	2
Torch	Club	25	1D6+flame ⁶	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	6/9	96-00 ⁷	—	1.0	2

Primitive Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	RF
Axe, Hand (thrown)	Axe	10	1D6+½db	1	Bleeding	20	1H	12	No	9/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Blowgun	Blowgun	10	1D3 ⁸	1	Impaling	30	2H	4 ⁹	No	/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/CR
Bola (thrown to damage)	Bola	05	1D4+½db	1	Crushing	15	1H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Bola (thrown to snare)	Bola	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	15	1H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	3.0	1/CR
Boomerang	Boomerang	05	1D4+½db	½ ¹⁰	Crushing	50	1H	3	No	9/11	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Bow, Self	Bow	10	1D6+1+½db	1	Impaling	80	2H	6	No	9/9	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Club, Light (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D6+½db	1	Crushing	20	1H	15	No	9/7	—	Cheap	1.0	1/SR
Dart	Dart	10	1d6+½db ¹¹	1	Impaling	20	1H	4	No	/9	—	Cheap	0.5	1/SR
Javelin	Javelin	15	1D6+½db	1	Impaling	25	1H	10	No	9/9	—	Cheap	1.5	1/SR
Knife (thrown)	Throw Knife	15	1D3+½db	1	Impaling	10	1H	15	No	7/11	—	Cheap	0.2	1/SR
Lasso	Other	05	Special ⁴	½	Entangling	10	2H	1	No	9/13	—	Cheap	1.0	1/5CR
Net (thrown)	Other	05	Special ⁴	1	Entangling	5	1H	6	No	9/12	96-00 ¹²	Cheap	3.0	1/3CR
Rock (thrown)	Throw	Throw	1D2+½db	2	Crushing	20	1H	20	No	5/5	—	—	.05	1/SR
Sling	Sling	05	1D8+½db	1	Crushing	80	1H	2/12 ¹³	No	7/11	—	Cheap	0.1 (.1) ¹⁴	1/CR
Spear, Short (thrown)	Spear	05	1D6+1+½db	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	—	Cheap	2.0	1/SR
Spear, Long (thrown)	Spear	05	1D10+1+½db	1	Impaling	15	1H	15	No	12/10	—	Cheap	2.0	1/SR

NOTES:

1. Brawl can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks. See the Brawl skill on page 52 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
2. See the Grapple skill on page 60 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
3. Grapple can parry Brawl or Grapple attacks. See the Grapple skill on page 60 of **Chapter Three: Skills** for details.
4. See the rules for Entangling on page 196 of **Chapter Six: Combat** for details.
5. A net malfunction means it is tangled and will take a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
6. See rules for Fire on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
7. If a malfunction is rolled, the torch goes out.
8. Usually blowgun darts are supplemented with poison. See Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
9. A blowgun has 4 HP and blowgun darts each have 1 HP.
10. If the user must wait for the boomerang to return, he or she must make an Agility roll to catch it on the second round. If throwing multiple boomerangs, the attack rate is 1 per round.
11. Darts are often supplemented with poison. See Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
12. A net malfunction means it is tangled and will take a full round and a successful *Difficult* Agility roll to untangle.
13. A sling has 2 HP and a sling stone has 12 HP.
14. First number is weight of the sling; parenthetical weight is each sling stone.

Historic Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Battle	Axe	15	1D8+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/9	—	Average	1.0	2
Axe, Great	Axe	15	2D6+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/9	—	Average	2.0	1
Axe, Wood	Axe	15	1D8+2+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	8/7	—	Inexpensive	1.5	2
Blackjack	Hand	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	No	7/7	—	Inexpensive	0.2	3
Cestus	Hand	25	1D3+2+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	10	Yes	11/7	—	Average	0.1	3
Claw	Hand	25	1D4+1+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	10	Yes	9/9	—	Average	0.1	3
Dagger	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	Average	0.5	3
Flail	Flail	10	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	7	Yes	7/6	—	Average	2.0	2
Flail, Morningstar	Flail	10	1D10+1+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	12	Yes	11/7	—	Average	2.0	2
Garrote	Hand	15	Special ¹	1	—	Short	2H	1	No	8/12	—	Inexpensive	0.1	3
Gauntlet, Armored	Hand	25	1D3+1+db	1	Crushing	Short	1H	7	Yes	7/5	—	Average	As armor	3
Halberd	Polearm	15	3D6+db	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	25	Yes	13/9	—	Average	3.0	1
Hammer	Hammer	25	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	9/7	—	Inexpensive	1.5	2
Hammer, Great	Hammer	25	1D10+3+db	1	Crushing	Long	2H	15	Yes	9/9	—	Average	2.5	1
Hammer, Sledge	Hammer	20	2D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	15	Yes	11/7	—	Inexpensive	2.0	2
Hammer, War	Hammer	25	1D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	11/9	—	Average	2.0	2
Katana	Sword	15	1D10+1+db ²	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	15	Yes	11/11	—	Expensive	1.5	2
Knife	Dagger	25	1D3+1+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	15	Yes	4/4	—	Inexpensive	0.5	3
Lance	Spear	15	1D8+1+db	1	Impaling ³	Long	1H	15	Yes	9/8	—	Inexpensive	3.5	0
Mace, Heavy	Mace	25	1D8+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	14/9	—	Average	2.5	2
Mace, Light	Mace	25	1D6+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/7	—	Average	1.0	2
Maul, War	Hammer	25	1D10+2+db	1	Crushing	Medium	2H	20	Yes	13/7	—	Average	2.5	1
Naginata	Polearm	05	2d6+2+db	1	Bleeding	Long	2H	15	Yes	7/11	—	Expensive	2.0	1
Pike	Polearm	15	1d10+2+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	15	Yes	11/7	—	Inexpensive	3.5	0
Rapier	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/13	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Saber	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	7/11	—	Average	1.5	2
Sai	Dagger	10	1D6+db	1	Crushing ⁴	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/11	—	Inexpensive	1.0	2
Scimitar	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	19	Yes	8/8	—	Average	1.5	2
Scythe	Improvised	05	2D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	2H	20	Yes	12/10	—	Inexpensive	2.5	1
Sickle	Improvised	10	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/9	—	Inexpensive	0.5	3
Staff, Quarter-	Staff	25	1D8+db	1	Crushing	All	2H	20	Yes	9/9	—	Cheap	1.5	1
Staff, Short	Staff	15	1D6+db	1	Crushing	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	—	Cheap	0.5	3
Sword Cane	Sword	15	1D6+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	12	Yes	7/11	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Sword, Bastard	Sword	10	1D10+1+db ⁵	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H or 2H	20	Yes	13 or 9/9 ⁶	—	Average	2.0	2
Sword, Broad	Sword	15	1D8+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	20	Yes	9/7	—	Average	1.5	2
Sword, Great	Sword	05	2D8+db	1	Bleeding	Medium/Long	2H	18	Yes	14/13	—	Expensive	3.5	1
Sword, Long	Sword	15	1D8+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	15	Yes	7/9	—	Average	1.5	2
Sword, Short	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	20	Yes	5/5	—	Cheap	1.0	2
Trident	Polearm	15	1D6+1+db	1	Impaling	Long	1H or 2H	18	Yes	9/7	—	Average	2.0	2
Wakizashi	Sword	15	1D6+1+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	13	Yes	7/9	—	Expensive	1.0	2
Whip	Other	05	1D3-1	1	Entangle	Long	1H	4	No	9/10	—	Cheap	0.5	0

NOTES:

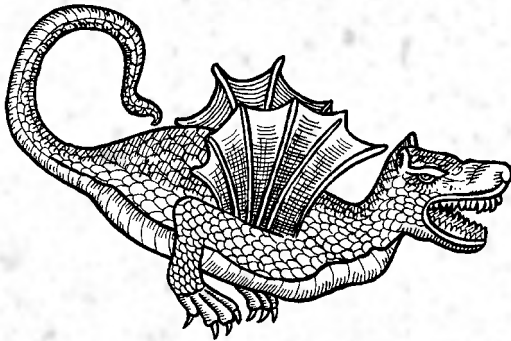
1. See the rules for Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation in **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
2. When using a katana one-handed, damage bonus is ½ normal.
3. Tournament lances are commonly blunt, and therefore do Crushing specials.
4. Sai are traditionally blunt weapons used primarily for parrying and striking, though pop media presents them as stabbing weapons.
5. When using a bastard sword one-handed, damage bonus is ½ normal.
6. STR requirement is 13 when used one-handed; 9 when used two-handed.

Historic Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Arbalest	Crossbow	15	2D6+4	1/3	Impaling	90	2H	14	No	11/9 ¹	93-00	Average	10.0(0.5)	1/4MR
Bow, Composite	Bow	05	1D8+1+½db	1	Impaling	120	2H	12	No	13/9	—	Average	0.5(0.5)	1/SR
Bow, Long	Bow	05	1D8+1+½db	1	Impaling	90	2H	10	No	11/9	—	Cheap	0.5(0.5)	1/SR
Crossbow, Heavy	Crossbow	25	2D6+2	1/3	Impaling	55	2H	18	No	13/7	97-00	Average	8.0(0.5)	1/3MR
Crossbow, Light	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	½	Impaling	40	2H	10	No	9/7	96-00	Average	3.5(0.5)	1/2MR
Crossbow, Medium	Crossbow	25	2D4+2	½	Impaling	50	2H	14	No	11/7	95-00	Average	5.0(0.5)	1/2MR
Crossbow, Repeating	Crossbow	25	1D6+2	1 ²	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/7	91-00	Expensive	7.5(0.5)	1/SR ³
Knife, Throwing	Missile	15	1d4+½db	1	Impaling	20	1H	10	No	/11	—	Cheap	0.2	1/SR
Shuriken	Missile	10	1D3+½db	2	Impaling	20	1H	5	No	/13	—	Cheap	0.1	1/SR

NOTES:

1. STR requirement with a cranequin (hand-crank) is 11; STR 15 when used without one.
2. Has Ammo of 12 and takes 5 rounds to reload entirely.
3. A repeating crossbow has an ammo capacity of 6, 8, 10, or 12 bolts. It takes 1 combat round per bolt to reload a repeating crossbow.



Shields



Primitive Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Primitive	10%	Shield	10	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	2.0	Cheap	3

Ancient and Medieval Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Buckler	05%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm	5/7	1.0	Average	3
Full Shield	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest, Head	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Half Shield	15%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Average	3
Heater	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	3.0	Average	3
Hoplite	15%	Shield	26	1D4+db	Knockback	Cumbersome	Abdomen, Arm, Chest, Head	12/8	7.0	Average	3
Kite	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Large Round	15%	Shield	22	1D4+db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest	11/9	5.0	Average	3
Round	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Knockback	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	4.0	Average	2
Spiked	15%	Shield	20	1D3+db	Impale	Moderate	Arm, Chest	9/9	5.0	Average	3
Target	15%	Shield	15	1D2+db	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	5/7	3.0	Cheap	3

Modern Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Riot Shield	15%	Shield	16	1D3 + db	Knockback	Moderate	Abdomen, Arm, Chest, Head	9/9	3.0	Expensive	3

Advanced Shields

Name	Base Chance	Skill	AP/HP	Damage	Special	Burden	Locations	STR / DEX	ENC	Value	SR
Energy Shield	20%	Shield	25	1D2 + db	Knockback	Light	Arm, Chest	3/3	1.0	Expensive	2

Modern Melee Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Brass Knuckles	Brawl	Brawl	+2	1	Crushing	Short	1H	18	No	5/-	—	Cheap	0.1	3
Chainsaw	Improvised	20	2D8	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	No	11/11	97-00	Average	8.0	2
Knife, Butcher	Dagger	25	1D6+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	12	No	5/7	—	Cheap	0.3	3
Knife, Pocket	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	9	No	-/5	—	Cheap	0.1	3
Knife, Switchblade	Dagger	25	1D4+db	1	Impaling	Short	1H	7	No	-/5	99-00	Cheap	0.1	3
Taser, Contact	Other	Brawl	Special ¹	1	—	Short	1H	7	No	5/7	97-00	Expensive	0.3	3

Modern Missile Weapons

Name	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk ²	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Flamethrower	Other	05	2D6+fire ³	1	—	25	2H	6	No	10/8	93-00	6	Expensive	8.0	½ CR
Gun, Machine	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	1, 3, or burst	Impaling	90	2H	11	No	9/5	00	40	Expensive	3.0	1 or 3/S or 1/CR
Gun, Mini	Machine Gun	15	2D6+4	33	Impaling	400	2H	14	No	16/12	98-00	4000	Expensive	6.0	1/CR
Gun, Submachine	Submachine Gun	15	1D8	2 or burst	Impaling	40	1H or 2H	8	No	9/6	98-00	32	Expensive	2.0	2/SR or 1/CR
Pistol, Derringer	Pistol	20	1D6	1	Impaling	3	1H	5	No	5/5	00	1 or 2	Average	0.3	1/SR
Pistol, Flintlock	Pistol	20	1D6+1	¼	Impaling	10	1H	8	No	7/5	95-00	1	Average	1.0	1/2CR
Pistol, Heavy	Pistol	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	15	1H	8	No	11/7	00	8	Average	1.5	1/SR
Pistol, Light	Pistol	20	1D6	3	Impaling	10	1H	6	No	5/5	00	8	Average	0.7	1/SR
Pistol, Medium	Pistol	20	1D8	2	Impaling	20	1H	8	No	7/5	98-00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Revolver, Heavy	Revolver	20	1D10+2	1	Impaling	20	1H	14	No	11/5	00	6	Average	1.5	1/SR
Revolver, Light	Revolver	20	1D6	2	Impaling	15	1H	10	No	5/5	00	6	Average	0.7	1/SR
Revolver, Medium	Revolver	20	1D8	1	Impaling	25	1H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Assault	Rifle	25	2D6+2	2 or burst	Impaling	90	2H	12	No	10/5	00	30	Expensive	3.5	1/SR or 1/CR
Rifle, Bolt-Action	Rifle	25	2D6+4	½	Impaling	110	2H	12	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/SR
Rifle, Elephant	Rifle	15	3D6+4	1 or 2	Impaling	100	2H	12	No	13/5	00	2	Average	4.5	1 or 2/SR
Rifle, Musket	Rifle	25	1D10+4	¼	Impaling	60	2H	12	No	9/5	95-00	1	Average	3.5	1/2CR
Rifle, Sniper	Rifle	20 ⁴	2D10+4	1	Impaling	250 ⁵	2H	10	No	12/7	98-00	11	Expensive	4.0	1/SR
Rifle, Sporting	Rifle	25	2D6	1	Impaling	80	2H	12	No	7/5	00	6	Average	3.0	1/SR
Shotgun, Automatic	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	14	No	11/5	00	8	Expensive	4.0	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Double-Barreled	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1 or 2	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	12	No	9/5	00	2	Average	3.5	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Sawn-Off	Shotgun	30	4D6/1D6 ⁷	1 or 2	Impaling	5/20/-	1H	14	No	9/5	00	1 or 2	Average	2.0	1 or 2/SR
Shotgun, Sporting	Shotgun	30	4D6/2D6/1D6 ⁶	1	Impaling	10/20/50	2H	10	No	7/5	00	5	Average	3.0	1/SR
Spray, Chemical	Other	25	Special ⁸	1	—	2	1H	2	No	3/7	91-00	6	Average	0.2	1/SR
Taser, Dart	Other	20	Special ¹	½	—	DEX	1H	8	No	3/7	95-00	1	Expensive	0.5	1/2CR

NOTES:

1. Stuns target; see the rules for Stunning or Subduing on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
2. Many modern firearms have burst fire capabilities; see the rules for Autofire on page 214 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
3. If a target is hit by a flamethrower, it is on fire and will take 1D6+2 points per round in additional damage until the fire is extinguished. See the rules for Fire and Heat on page 223 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
4. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with a bipod, doubling the base chance; without a bipod (or similar stabilizer), reduce the base chance to 10.
5. Sniper rifles are usually equipped with telescopic scopes that double their effective range; if without a scope, the range is 125 meters.
6. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc.
7. Shotguns do damage by range; the first increment is the first damage dice, the second is the second, etc. Sawed-off shotguns are not effective beyond 20 yards.
8. Chemical spray is a type of low-POT contact poison. See the rules for Poison on page 229 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details. A sample type of chemical spray might have 2D6+12 POT, an instant effect, and cause blindness if the target fails a resistance roll vs. CON. It would be *Difficult* to shoot into a target's eyes, though the chance is Easy at point blank range, making the chance unaffected.

Advanced Melee Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Axe, Vibro-	Polearm	10%	2D8+4+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	2H	20	Yes	11/5	98-00	Average	3.0	1
Knife, Vibro-	Dagger	25%	2D4+2+db	1	Bleeding	Short	1H	16	Yes	7/7	99-00	Average	0.5	3
Lance, Stun	Staff	15%	1D6+db+stun ¹	1	Knockback	Long	2H	18	Yes	9/5	98-00	Average	2.5	1
Sword, Energy	Sword	10%	2D10+db ²	1	Impaling	Medium	1H	30	Yes	11/15	99-00	Priceless	1.0	2
Sword, Monofilament	Sword	05%	3D12 ²	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	12	No	5/15	91-00 ³	Expensive	0.5	2
Sword, Vibro-	Sword	20%	2D6+3+db	1	Bleeding	Medium	1H	18	Yes	9/7	97-00	Expensive	1.5	2
Whip, Shock	Other	05%	1+½db+stun ¹	1	Entangle	Long	1H	10	No	7/9	97-00	Average	1.0	1

Advanced Missile Weapons

Weapon	Skill	Base	Dmg	Attk ⁴	Special	Rng	Hands	HP	Parry	STR/DEX	Mal	Ammo	Value	SIZ/Enc	SR
Pistol, Blaster	Pistol, Energy	15%	1D8+2	2	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	7/5	99-00	30	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Disintegrator	Pistol, Energy	05%	3D4+1	1	—	10	1H	12	No	7/5	96-00	10	Expensive	1.0	2/SR
Pistol, Electromagnetic Pulse															
	Pistol, Energy	20%	2D6 vs. tech ⁵	1	—	15	1H	12	No	7/5	98-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Flechette	Pistol, Energy	05%	2D4 ⁶	1 or burst ⁷	Impaling	15	1H	14	No	5/7	99-00	6	Average	0.8	1/SR or 1/CR
Pistol, Laser	Pistol, Energy	20%	1D8	3	Impaling	20	1H	14	No	5/5	99-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Plasma	Pistol, Energy	15%	2D10+2	1	Impaling	30	1H	18	No	7/5	98-00	12	Expensive	1.2	2/SR
Pistol, Shock	Pistol, Energy	15%	2D4	1	Knockback	15	1H	12	No	5/5	98-00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Pistol, Stun	Pistol, Energy	25%	2D6 stun ²	1	Knockback	15	1H	16	No	5/5	00	12	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Blaster	Rifle, Energy	10%	2D8+3	2	Impaling	60	2H	20	No	9/5	99-00	20	Average	1.0	1/SR
Rifle, Disintegrator	Rifle, Energy	05%	3D6+2	1	—	30	2H	18	No	9/7	96-00	10	Expensive	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Electromagnetic Pulse															
	Rifle, Energy	25%	3D8 vs. tech ⁸	1	—	75	2H	18	No	7/5	98-00	12	Average	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Laser	Rifle, Energy	15%	2D8	2	Impaling	100	2H	20	No	7/7	99-00	20	Average	1.5	1/SR
Rifle, Plasma	Rifle, Energy	10%	2D10+4	1	Impaling	70	2H	18	No	9/7	98-00	16	Expensive	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Shock	Rifle, Energy	10%	3D8	1	Knockback	50	2H	18	No	9/7	98-00	12	Average	1.5	1/SR
Rifle, Sonic	Rifle, Energy	10%	1D3+2 ⁹	1	Knockback	50	2H	16	No	7/7	97-00	36	Average	2.0	1/SR
Rifle, Stun	Rifle, Energy	20%	2D8 stun ¹⁰	1	Knockback	50	2H	22	No	7/5	00	24	Average	1.5	1/SR

NOTES:

1. Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.
2. Reduce the target's armor value by ½ (round up) versus this weapon.
3. If you fumble an attack with a monofilament sword, you must roll a *Difficult* Agility check to avoid hitting yourself. If you fail this roll, your attack hits yourself in addition to the normal roll on the melee weapon fumble table. This attack ignores ½ your armor value (round down) and cannot be dodged.
4. Many high-tech missile weapons have burst fire capabilities; see the rules for Autofire on page 214 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules** for details.
5. If the target is a robot, machine, or device using some form of electromagnetic energy, roll damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target's CON. If the roll is successful, the device is Stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (as per the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**). If the rolled damage is higher than the target's HP, it is overcome and knocked "unconscious". Damage from EMP weapons is temporary, and lost HPs will be restored with a Repair roll and an adequate power source.
6. Against a foe with "hardened" armor (anything with metal, plastic, or other plates), a flechette pistol does only half damage (roll normally and round down before subtracting armor protection).
7. A flechette pistol fires clusters of flechettes, either one "shot" or a long burst that empties the magazine. Each "shot" is treated as a single attack, and does 2D4 damage.
8. If the target is a robot, machine, or device using some form of electromagnetic energy, roll damage and make a resistance roll vs. the target's CON. If the roll is successful, the device is Stunned for 1D3+1 rounds (as per the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**). If the rolled damage is higher than the target's HP, the target is overcome and knocked unconscious. Damage from EMP weapons is temporary, and lost HPs will be restored with a Repair roll and an adequate power source.
9. A sonic rifle does initial rolled damage against living targets for each combat round it successfully strikes them. Against a nonliving target, the damage per round is rolled on the resistance table against the target's base CON, AP, or HP. If the target fails this roll, it shatters or is considered damaged beyond the point of functionality.
10. Roll damage as normal and use the damage vs. the target's CON in a resistance roll. If the target succeeds, he or she takes minimum damage (2) instead of the rolled damage. If target loses, he or she is stunned for 1D3+1 rounds. See the rules for Stunning on page 232 of **Chapter Seven: Spot Rules**.

Armor

Primitive Armors

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Helmet	+1	+1 point	Light	0.5	-5% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Cheap
Hide	1	1D3-1	Light	3.5	None	±3	1	All	Cheap

Ancient and Medieval Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Chain	7	1D8-1	Moderate	20.0	-20% to Physical skills	-2	3	All	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1d2-1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Helmet, Heavy	+2	+2 points	Light	2.5	-50% to Perception skills	±0	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+1	+1 point	None	1.5	-15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Inexpensive
Lamellar	6	1D8-1	Moderate	18.0	-15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Expensive
Leather, Soft	1	1D6-1	Light	3.5	None	±2	2	All	Inexpensive
Leather, Hard	2	1D6	Moderate	5.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Average
Leather, Cuirbouilli	3	2D3	Light	5.0	-10% to Physical skills	±0	2	All	Expensive
Padded/Quilted	1	1D2-1	None	3.0	None	±2	1	All	Inexpensive
Padded/Quilted, Heavy	2	1D3-1	Light	4.0	-5% to Physical skills	±1	2	All	Inexpensive
Plate, Full	8	1D10	Cumbersome	25.0	-25% to Physical skills	-1	5	All but head	Expensive
Plate, Half	7	1D8	Moderate	18.0	-20% to Physical skills	-1	4	All but head	Expensive
Ring	5	1D6	Light	10.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average
Scale	6	2D4-1	Moderate	20.0	-15% to Physical skills	±1	2	All but head	Average

Modern Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Ballistic Cloth	3/5 ¹	1D3/1D6-1	Light	4.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Early	4	1D4	Moderate	11.0	-25% to Physical skills	±1	2	Chest	Expensive
Bulletproof Vest, Modern	4/8 ¹	1D4/1D8	Light	8.0	-5% to Physical skills	±3	2	Chest	Expensive
Clothing, Heavy	1	1D2-1	None	2.5	None	±2	1	All	Cheap
Flak Jacket	4	1D4	Moderate	8.0	-10% to Physical skills	±2	1	Arms, Chest	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+6	+3 points	Light	3.5	-25% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2 points	None	2.5	-10% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Inexpensive
Riot Gear	12/6	1D10+2	Moderate	12.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	5	All ²	Expensive

Advanced Armor

Name	AP	Random AP	Burden	ENC	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Time	Locations	Value
Adaptive Mesh	6	1D4+2	Light	2.0	-5% to Physical skills	±1	1	All	Expensive
Assault Armor, light	8	2D6	Moderate	12.0	-10% to Physical skills	±1	2	All ²	Expensive
Assault Armor	10	2D4+2	Moderate	16.0	-25% to Physical skills	±1	3	All ²	Expensive
Energy Armor	1-20 ³	none ³	Light	4.0	-5% to Hide, Stealth, and Perception skills per AP	Any	2	All ⁴	Expensive
Helmet, Heavy	+4	+4	Light	5.0	-15% to Perception skills	±1	1	Head	Average
Helmet, Light	+3	+2	None	2.0	-5% to Perception skills	±2	1	Head	Average
Powered Assault Armor, light ⁵	14	2D6+2	Cumbersome	36.0	-20% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	4	All	Priceless
Powered Assault Armor, heavy ⁶	16	4D4	Cumbersome	48.0	-50% to Physical and Manipulation skills	±1	5	All	Priceless

NOTES:

1. First value is vs. melee or low-velocity missile weapons; second value is vs. firearms.
2. Includes helmet.
3. Energy armor can be set for any value between 1 and 20 points of AP, determined by the user. Each combat round the armor expends a number of charges equal to its AP setting. Standard armor power supplies hold 200 charges; each damage point absorbed costs 1 additional charge. Energy armor offers no random armor protection value. It takes 5 DEX ranks to adjust the AP value.
4. Can not be worn with other armor.
5. Light Powered Assault Armor grants a +3 bonus to STR at a cost of -3 to DEX. Armor includes helmet.
6. Heavy Powered Assault Armor grants a +6 bonus to STR at a cost of -6 to DEX. Armor includes helmet.



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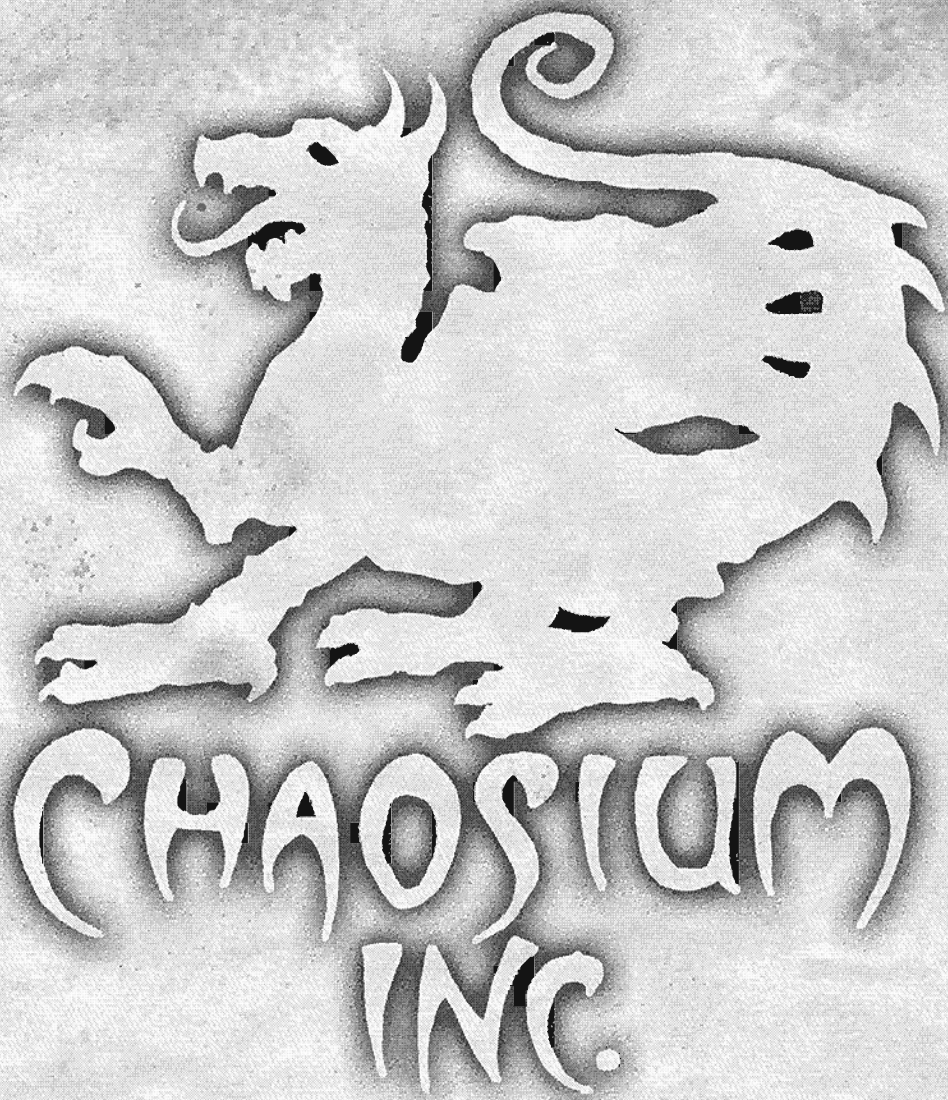
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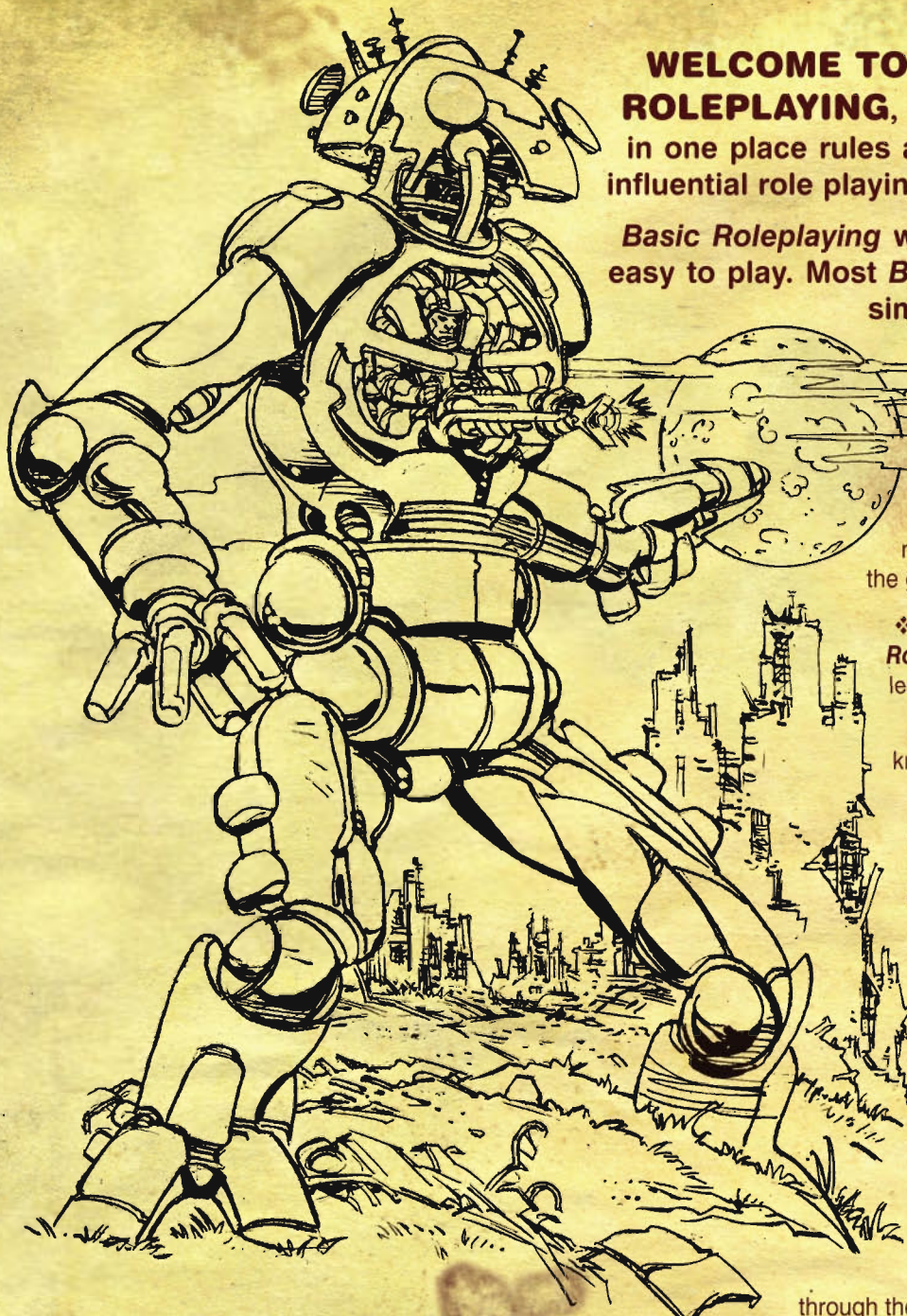
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