

# Working With Special Abilities

*Advice for creating Special Abilities for Cartoon Action Hour*

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## Introduction

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The possibilities for devising your own Special Abilities are nearly endless. Pretty much anything you dream up can be replicated using the SA creation rules. Unfortunately, this can seem more than a little intimidating at times. So many choices lay right in front of you, yet there's little in the way of guidelines to push you off in the right direction and add an extra touch of structure.

Rejoice!

In this article, I'll attempt to fix the problem and give you a new perspective on SA creation to boot. Buckle up, gang, as we delve into the wild world of Special Abilities!

## Getting a Focus

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Before you even so much as look at the components and such, try jotting down the SA's name and a few notes on what you want it to do. No need for stats or anything, just plain English (or whatever). For example, if I was building a magical sword, I might write; does damage, shoots out a beam of magical energy, can create a force field that works against energy attacks.

This method is particularly useful for keeping your SA focused. It's far too easy to deviate from your original idea if it's not written down. I know it is for me, anyway.

## One Effect at a Time

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It's easy to feel overwhelmed when starting your SA, especially if the SA is one that has several elements or a particularly off-the-wall effect. Take a deep breath and choose one of the effects you jotted down. Ask yourself what components would be needed. I suggest writing down all the components before worrying about the CP cost of each one. This enables you to get a basic idea of how thin you need to spread your CPs when purchasing the component bits (rating, DR, Mode of Travel, etc.).

Once you do this for each effect, go ahead and spend your CPs on the various component bits. This is followed by selecting the modifiers.

## Format

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Developing a convenient format for recording your SAs could go a long way toward easing the difficulty of creating them. While the format used in CAH products works for me, it may look confusing and awkward to you. That's okay. Everyone is different. Tinker with different format ideas until you come up with one that you really like.

When I was developing the SA creation rules, this was a stumbling block for me. The first few formats I used didn't click with me. They actually hindered development, which certainly is an undesirable effect. On the fourth try, I developed a solid format that I was comfortable with. Then, Norbert Franz devised a format that basically improved on it, so we've adopted it as the official format.

To help you along, here are a few sample formats;

<b><u>Laser Rifle</u></b> Type: OSA Power Level: Medium (4 CP) DR: 5 (6 CP) Range: Long (4 CP) Bonuses: None Restrictions: " Item (-2 CP)	<b><u>Laser Rifle</u></b> : OSA, Medium, DR 5, Long Range, Rest: Item (Total Cost: 12 CP)
<b><u>Laser Rifle</u></b> (12 CP) T: OSA      PL: Med.      DR: 5 Rng: Long      Rest: Item	<b><u>Laser Rifle</u></b> <i>This is a sleek looking gun with a very slender barrel and smooth contours. It is made of silver and red metal.</i>  Type: OSA      Power Level: Medium      DR: 5 Range: Long      Restriction: Item Total CPs: 12

## Frameworks

This section of the article will give you a collection of frameworks for many common SAs. Each listing presents the core components and possible modifiers. The list is far from comprehensive, but it may clear up some of the complications and give you a solid foundation as a reference point when building your own SAs.

I want to once again stress that these examples aren't the *only* ways to build the SAs.

**Energy Blast:** Range, Damage Rating

**Regeneration:** Healing A

**Stone Skin:** Protection, *Bonus:* Hardened

**Teleportation:** Mode of Travel (Teleportation), Range

**Flight:** Rating, Mode of Travel

**Plant Control:** Rating, Duration, Range

**Telekinesis:** Range, Rating (to reflect the strength)

**Eye Beams:** Range, Damage Rating, *Restriction:* Useless if the character cannot see

**Growth:** Size Alteration, Trait Modification A (Body bonus)

**Wall Crawling:** Rating (for adhesion strength), Mode of Travel

**Rage:** Trait Modification A (Body bonus), Trait Modification A (Perception penalty), *Restriction:* Cannot Control, *Restriction:* Major Restriction (only works when angry)

**Illusion-Casting:** Rating (used in opposed checks against opponent's Perception to see if it fools him/her), Duration, Range, *Restriction:* Major Restriction (character must concentrate to use this SA)

**Invisibility:** Duration, Trait Modification B (opponents suffer -4 to Armed Combat, Unarmed Combat and Ranged Combat when trying to attack the character).

**Underwater Breathing:** Duration

**Mind Control:** Rating (used in opposed checks against opponent's Willpower to see if he/she can be controlled), Duration, Range, *Restriction:* Major Restriction (character must concentrate to use this SA) *Restriction:* only affects targets with minds).

**Telepathy:** Rating (only used when target is unwilling to hear messages), Range, *Restriction:* only affects targets with minds)

**Energy Drain Blast:** Rating (used to hit an opponent), Duration, Trait Modification B (Body penalty), Trait Modification B (Athletics penalty), Range

**Darkness:** Rating, Range, Duration, *Bonus:* Area of Effect

**Mind Blast:** Range, Damage Rating, *Bonus:* Mental Attack

**Super Vision:** Trait Modification A (Perception bonus, for visual purposes only)

**Battle Axe:** Damage Rating, *Restriction:* Can not parry if the attacker rolled 10, 11 or 12 due to the axe's bulk), *Restriction:* Item

**Pistol:** Range, Damage Rating, *Restriction:* Major Limited Use, *Restriction:* Item

**Power Armor:** Protection, Trait Modification A (Strength Specialty bonus), Mode of Travel (Flying), Rating (for flight speed), *Bonus:* Hardened, *Restriction:* Item

