

TRUE 20™

ADVENTURE
ROLEPLAYING



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWARD.....	3	Concealed Items.....	76	Heat.....	112
The Origins of True20.....	3	General Equipment	76	Catching on Fire	112
INTRODUCTION	5	Adventuring Gear	76	Smoke.....	112
The Basics	6	Electronics	78	Starvation and Dehydration	112
Game Play	7	Criminal Gear.....	78	Suffocation.....	112
Important Terms	11	Surveillance Gear.....	78	Water.....	112
CHAPTER ONE:		Survival Gear	79		
HERO CREATION	13	Clothing	79	CHAPTER SEVEN:	
Abilities	14	Mounts and Related Gear	80	NARRATING THE GAME.....	113
Choosing Ability Scores.....	14	Weapons	80	Running the Game.....	114
The Abilities	14	Melee Weapons.....	80	Assigning Difficulties	114
Altering Ability Scores.....	15	Ranged Weapons	82	Secret Checks.....	115
Debilitated Abilities.....	15	Grenades and Explosives.....	84	Altering the Outcome of Die Rolls.....	115
Nonexistent Abilities.....	15	Armor	85	Faking It.....	116
Backgrounds	16	Archaic Armor.....	85	Saying Yes to Your Players.....	116
Background Features.....	16	Modern Armor.....	85	Heroic Advancement	116
Sample Backgrounds	16	Shields.....	86		
Roles.....	17	Vehicles	86	CHAPTER EIGHT:	
Level-Dependent Benefits.....	18	Ground Vehicles.....	86	ADVERSARIES.....	117
Role Descriptions	18	Water Vehicles	86	Narrator Characters.....	118
Adept.....	19	Air Vehicles	88	Ordinaries.....	118
Expert	20	Space Vehicles.....	88	Minions.....	119
Warrior.....	21	Supernatural Items	88	Creatures.....	119
Characteristics.....	23			Size	119
Details	23			Combat Modifier	119
Nature	24			Grapple Modifier	119
Conviction.....	24			Stealth Modifier.....	119
Reputation	26			Toughness Modifier.....	119
CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS.....	27			Reach.....	120
Skill Basics.....	28			Space.....	120
Acquiring Skills.....	28			Carrying Capacity	120
How Skills Work	28			Level	120
Skill Descriptions.....	29			Role.....	120
CHAPTER THREE: FEATS.....	41			Type & Subtype.....	120
Acquiring Feats	42			Movement.....	126
Types of Feats	42			Abilities	126
Prerequisites.....	42			Skills	126
Feat Descriptions	42			Feats	126
CHAPTER FOUR: POWERS	53			Traits	127
Acquiring Powers	54			Combat.....	131
Power Rank.....	54			Saving Throws.....	131
Save Difficulty.....	54			Conviction.....	131
Key Ability.....	54			Reputation	131
Using Powers	54			A True20 Bestiary	132
Action.....	54			WORLDS OF ADVENTURE.....	141
Power Checks.....	54			Worlds of True20.....	142
Attack Rolls.....	54			Wider Vistas.....	142
Saving Throws.....	55			Caliphate Nights	143
Range.....	55			Lux Aeternum	163
Fatigue.....	56			Mecha vs. Kaiju	183
Power Descriptions	57			Borrowed Time	201
CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT	73			APPENDIX: D20 SYSTEM	
Wealth	74			CONVERSION	215
Wealth Score	74			Abilities	215
Losing Wealth	74			Damage and Injury	215
Gaining Wealth	75			Feat Changes.....	216
Equipping Your Hero	75			Spell Changes.....	216
Selling Things.....	75			Converting Creatures	216
Restricted Items	76			CHARACTER SHEET.....	217
Masterwork Items	76			INDEX	218
				LICENSE.....	223



CHAPTER SIX:	
PLAYING THE GAME	89
Physical Actions	90
Moving.....	90
Carrying	91
Throwing	91
Extra Effort	91
Social Actions	92
Influencing Attitudes	92
Social Interaction.....	92
Fighting.....	94
Combat Sequence	94
Combat Statistics.....	94
Initiative.....	96
Actions	96
Combat Modifiers.....	102
Damage and Recovery	106
Condition Summary	108
Hazards and the Environment	110
Acid.....	110
Cold	110
Ice	110
Darkness	110
Falling	111
Falling Objects	111

FOREWARD

"I always try to keep my mind open but I never quite keep my mouth shut."

New Bomb Turks, Runnin' on Go

Welcome to *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. We think you'll find these rules give you a rule set that is both strong and flexible. While it has its roots in fantasy games, we feel it also adapts well to other genres, such as horror and sci-fi. As a product of the Open Game License, its rules fundamentals will be familiar to most gamers, but *True20's* stripped-down approach simplifies much that is bloated and overly complex in other rules. We hope you enjoy what we've done with *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. It's the result of many years of work, playtesting, and honing. In fact, *True20* has one of the most unusual birth stories in modern gaming.

THE ORIGINS OF TRUE20

True20 started with *Blue Rose*, a RPG that Green Ronin published in 2005. Several years previous to that, a freelance writer named John Snead approach me to pitch a game that would appeal to readers of Romantic Fantasy fiction. John argued that such novels were quite popular, but they operated under a different set of assumptions than Tolkien/Howard/Moorcock-inspired fantasy and no roleplaying game had ever tried to emulate this genre. I gave the project the green light and it proceeded in fits and starts over the next couple of years. The first designers to approach the rules tied them too closely to the d20 standard. I felt strongly that *Blue Rose* needed a stripped down rule set that would be easy for newbies to get into. I did not want to say to Romantic Fantasy fans, "Hey, go spend \$90 on those three big hardbacks that have what you don't want and then you can give us \$30 for what you do want."

Eventually, I got two key people onto the project. First, Jeremy Crawford came onboard to edit and help develop *Blue Rose*. Then Steve Kenson, the author of Green Ronin's wildly popular *Mutants & Masterminds* superhero RPG, agreed to rebuild the rules from the ground up. The two of them working together finally gave *Blue Rose* the game system I had envisioned.

We released *Blue Rose* in early 2005. It went on to become our second best selling line of that year, behind only *Mutants & Masterminds*, and won a silver ENnie Award for Best Rules. Many fans of Romantic Fantasy were thrilled to have a game pitched right at them. They appreciated that the rules were easy to learn but flexible enough to handle all sorts of characters. Almost immediately, we began to hear from other gamers who really liked the system but weren't so keen on Romantic Fantasy. We had previously discussed releasing other stand-alone games that used the same rules as *Blue Rose*, but at the time we had no plans for a core *True20* rulebook.

After a few months of feedback, we decided to change our strategy. People were using *True20* to run all sorts of campaigns, from Lord of the Rings to Star Wars. We opted for a two-part strategy. First, we released a no-frills PDF that was just the rules from *Blue Rose*. That simple PDF, which didn't even include any art, became our best selling e-product of all time. Second, we began developing a proper *True20* core rulebook for release in 2006 and we sponsored a setting search so we could include a variety of sample settings in that book (for details on the setting search see page 142).

The final result of all this is *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. This is the first book in a proper *True20* line but it will not be the last.

Happy gaming!

Chris Pramas

President, Green Ronin Publishing

February 1, 2006



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to worlds of adventure! *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* is everything you need to create fun and fantastic storytelling adventures. It is a game of heroes, villains, action and excitement, where you choose the course the story takes! This **Introduction** provides you with an overview of what *True20* is and how it works. The later chapters show you how to create heroes and your own exciting adventures and then offer you several worlds in which to create them. Whether you are new to the world of adventure roleplaying games or this is your first, welcome! You have opened the door to whole new worlds of your imagination.

WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

A roleplaying game like *True20* uses imagination and a set of simple rules to allow a group of people to work together to create and tell stories through the medium of fictional characters. Let's look at these major factors of the game:

IMAGINATION

A roleplaying game takes place entirely in the imagination of the players and in their descriptions of the story. It's like an extended session of "let's pretend" that we played as kids. There is no board and no playing pieces to move about, although some players may choose to use maps, miniature figures, or other visual aids to help tell the story more clearly. Everything in the story—from the main characters to the plot to the events—exists in the players' imaginations, with guidance from the Narrator.

RULES

A roleplaying game has rules to serve both as a common vocabulary for describing things in the story and as guidelines for determining the outcome of different events in the story as it progresses. If the game is like a childhood session of "let's pretend," then the rules are there to help provide more of a framework and to avoid some of the inevitable disputes over what "really" happened when two or more players disagree.

COOPERATION

Roleplaying games are cooperative experiences: the players are not pitted against each other and the goal of the game isn't for one player to "win," it's for everyone to tell and share in a fun story. Even though the Narrator often portrays the villains of the story and puts obstacles in the heroes' path, it's not even about the players vs. the Narrator, but how the whole group works together to create an exciting adventure. How exciting would an adventure be without villains or obstacles to overcome?

STORIES

Telling a fun and exciting story is the point of a roleplaying adventure game. The Narrator comes up with a plot and supporting characters, the players come up with characters and play out their interaction with the plot, spinning off new events and outcomes, and the story develops with help and guidance from the rules and the Narrator. When the story is done, you have a complete tale to look back on, but the fun is making and *experiencing* the story as it happens.

CHARACTERS

The players create fictional characters as their vehicles for interacting with and experiencing the adventure. Part of the fun of roleplaying games is you can pretend to be someone else for a little while: a larger-than-life hero, a rough-and-tumble outsider, a tortured anti-hero, or whatever else you can imagine that fits the sort of story your group wants to tell.

AN EXAMPLE OF ROLEPLAYING

Let's take a look at a roleplaying adventure game session in progress. Andy is the Narrator, guiding the players through a story about a band of brave heroes exploring an ancient—and supposedly haunted—ruin in a fantasy world. The players are Kelly, Liz, Mike, and Sean.

Andy (Narrator): The antechamber is dark, lit only by thin shafts of moonlight slanting in through the broken windows and the light of your lantern. Broken glass and crumbled stone crunch loosely underfoot, and the dark doorways off this chamber loom pitch black, two off to either side of you.

Kelly: Let's go through the first doorway to our right and see what's there.

Sean: Maybe we should split up and look around.

Mike: No, it's better if we all stay together, just in case.

Andy: So, are you going through the first doorway?

(The players nod agreement.)

Andy: Who's going first?

Mike (playing the armored warrior Valin): I will.

Andy: Valin steps through the doorway and there's a sudden flurry of movement, a flapping of leathery wings! A dark cloud swirls out around you...

Liz: What is it?

Andy: ...then the swarm of bats rush past into the antechamber.

Sean: Bats!

Mike: Whew! Okay, I go in and see what's in there.

Andy: Mike, what's Valin's Notice bonus?

Mike (checking his character's sheet): It's a +5.

(Andy makes a die roll to determine what Mike's character can notice immediately upon entering the room. He doesn't tell Mike the result, since Valin would have no way of knowing that he failed to notice something.)

Liz: I'm going to keep an eye out for anything behind us.

Andy: Okay, Liz, Elspeth glances back into the room as Valin moves through the door. Mike, the room beyond looks like it might have been a library or something similar once. There are tall shelves lining most of the walls, or at least there were before they rotted and collapsed. Any books, scrolls, or other reading materials have long since decayed, but the heavy flagstone fireplace remains largely intact. Just then, a strange moaning comes from the cold, dark hearth.

Sean: The wind?

Kelly: A ghost?

Which is it? Our brave heroes will have to investigate and see! If it is a ghost, how will they deal with it and rid the house of its curse? What if it's not a ghost at all, but someone who wants others to think the ruin is haunted? Or, for that matter, what if it's just the wind, but there is actually a supernatural force at work? It's entirely up to you, with your imagination as the only limit.

THE BASICS

True20 provides a framework for your imagination. It has rules to describe your character's traits, help you decide what happens in your stories and resolve conflicts between the heroes and the challenges they face. With it, any adventure you can imagine is possible.

To play, you need a copy of the *True20* rules; a twenty-sided die, available at game and hobby stores; and a pencil and some paper. You might want copies of the *True20* character record sheet found in the **Appendix** as well.

THE CORE SYSTEM

True20 uses a core or central game system to resolve actions. Whenever your character attempts any action with a chance of failure, do the following:

1. Roll a twenty-sided die (abbreviated d20).
2. Add any relevant modifiers (for things like abilities, skills, and circumstances).
3. Compare the total to a number called the action's *Difficulty* (set by the Narrator based on the circumstances).

If the result equals or exceeds the *Difficulty*, the action succeeds. If the result is lower than the *Difficulty*, the action fails. This simple system is used for nearly everything in *True20*, with variations based on the modifiers added to a roll, the *Difficulty*, and the effects of success and failure.

THE NARRATOR

One of the players in a *True20* game takes the role of Narrator. The Narrator is responsible for running the game and is a combination of writer, director, and referee. The Narrator creates adventures for the heroes, portrays the villains and supporting characters, describes the world, and decides the outcome of the heroes' actions based on the guidelines given in the rules.

It's a big job, but also a rewarding one, since the Narrator gets to create the setting and the various characters in it, as well as inventing fun and exciting plots. If you're going to be a Narrator, you should read through this whole book carefully. You should have a firm grasp of the setting and rules, since you're expected to interpret them for the players.

HEROES

The other players in a *True20* game create heroes—the main characters of their own adventure series, like an ongoing series of short stories or novels. As a player, you create your hero following the guidelines in this book, with the assistance and guidance of your Narrator, building the sort of hero you want to play. There are several components to creating a hero, outlined here and described in detail in the following chapters.

ABILITIES

All heroes have certain basic *abilities* that define what they are capable of doing. These abilities are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. They each have a numeric *ability score*, averaging 0 for a normally capable human. Higher ability scores are bonuses (+1 to +5 or more), while lower ability scores are penalties (as low as -5). As part of creating your hero, you decide how strong, smart, and tough your hero is by choosing the appropriate ability scores. See **Chapter 1: Hero Creation** for more information.

ROLE

Heroes fall into one of three *roles* that define the part they play in the story. *Adepts* are intellectual and knowledgeable heroes focused on supernatural powers. *Experts* are heroes specializing in various skills. *Warriors* are heroes specializing in fighting and combat. Your hero's role determines things like fighting ability, saving throw bonuses, and available feats.

SKILLS

Skills represent training in a particular sort of task or knowledge, everything from acrobatic maneuvers to negotiation, riding a horse, and ancient lore. Someone trained in climbing is able to climb faster and with more confidence than someone who isn't, for example. Skills are measured in *ranks*, reflecting how much training a character has in the skill. Skill ranks act as a bonus when a hero attempts an action related to a skill. You choose the skills your hero knows from a list of available skills. See **Chapter 2: Skills** for more information.

FEATS

Feats are special abilities, representing talents or special training. They allow your hero to do things others can't or give your hero some other advantage. You select your hero's feats based on what you want your hero to be able to do. Heroes acquire new feats as they improve. See **Chapter 3: Feats** for more information.

IF YOU'RE A GAMER...

Then odds are you've seen a lot of the stuff in this **Introduction** before, in one form or another, possibly many times.

If *True20* is not your first roleplaying game, and you're already familiar with the whys and wherefores of the hobby, you might want to skip ahead to **The Basics** to see how the game is played. On the other hand, you might find it useful to read over the whole **Introduction** just to get a feel for some of the ideas behind *True20* and how it works.

For those experienced with other RPGs, *True20* is a "rules-lighter" game system aimed at creating fun stories. No doubt this will be a basis for some sort of critique, but the "purpose" of the game is neither to be "rules-light" nor to focus on "storytelling" as such, but to have fun with a group of friends. Wouldn't be much of a game otherwise, would it?

...OR IF YOU'VE PLAYED BEFORE

If you're familiar with earlier versions of the *True20* system, found in *Blue Rose* and the first electronic edition of *True20* published by Green Ronin, you'll still want to read this **Introduction** and the following chapters carefully, since there have been a number of minor corrections, updates, and changes in the rules to make them consistent, compatible, and playable overall.

Experienced *True20* players are going to want to start re-reading **The Basics**, then go on to the hero creation chapters, followed by **Chapter 6: Playing the Game** to get a good feel for how things work.

GAME PLAY

A session of *True20* resembles one or more chapters from a novel. The Narrator and the players get together and tell a story by playing the game. The length of the game session can vary, from an hour or two to four hours or more. Some adventures are completed in a single session, while others take many sessions. You can choose when to stop playing, and you can start up again anytime later.

Just like a story, a *True20* adventure consists of a series of *scenes*. Some scenes are fairly straightforward, with the heroes interacting with each other and the supporting cast. In these cases the Narrator generally just asks the players to describe what their heroes are doing and in turn describes how the other characters react and what they say and do.

When the action starts happening, such as when the heroes are staving off a disaster or fighting villains, time becomes more crucial and is broken down into *rounds*, each six seconds long, and the players generally have to make die rolls to see how well their heroes do.

DIE ROLLS

There are a number of different die rolls in *True20*, although they all follow the core system of a d20 roll plus modifiers versus a Difficulty. The three main die rolls in *True20* are checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

CHECKS

To make a check, roll a d20 and add your modifier for the appropriate trait (ability, skill, and so forth). You always want to roll high. Rolling 20 before adding modifiers (called a natural 20) is not an automatic success, and rolling 1 before adding modifiers (a natural 1) is not an automatic failure, unlike attack rolls, which differ from checks (see Attack Rolls later in this Introduction and Chapter 6 for more information).

Check = d20 + modifier versus Difficulty

DIFFICULTY

A check's Difficulty is a number set by the Narrator that you must equal or exceed with your check result to succeed. So, for a task with a Difficulty of 15, you must have a check result of 15 or better to succeed. In some cases, the consequences of a check vary based on how much higher or lower the result is than the Difficulty.

SAMPLE DIFFICULTIES

Difficulty	Example (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Notice something large in plain sight (Notice)
Easy (5)	Climb a knotted rope with a wall to brace against (Climb)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching guard (Notice)
Tough (15)	Rig a wagon wheel to fall off (Disable Device)
Challenging (20)	Swim in stormy water (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Pick an average quality lock (Disable Device)
Heroic (30)	Leap across a 25-foot chasm (Jump)
Superheroic (35)	Convince the guards that even though they've never seen you before, they should let you into the fortress (Bluff)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track an expert hunter through the woods on a moonless night after days of rainfall (Survival)

OPPOSED CHECKS

Some checks are opposed checks. They are made against the result of someone else's check. Whoever gets the higher result wins. An example is trying to bluff someone. You make a Bluff check, while the Narrator makes a Sense Motive check for your target. If you beat the target's Sense Motive check result, you succeed.

For ties on opposed checks, the character with the higher modifier wins. If the modifiers are the same, re-roll.

OPPOSED CHECK EXAMPLES

Task	Skill	Opposing Skill
Sneak up on someone	Stealth	Notice
Con someone	Bluff	Sense Motive
Hide from someone	Stealth	Notice
Win a horse race	Ride	Ride
Pretend to be someone else	Disguise	Notice
Steal a key chain	Sleight of Hand	Notice

TRYING AGAIN

In general, you can try a check again if you fail, and keep trying indefinitely. Some tasks, however, have consequences for failure. For example, failing a Climb check might mean you fall, which might make it difficult to try again. Some tasks can't be attempted again once a check has failed. For most tasks, once you've succeeded, additional successes are meaningless. (Once you've discovered a room's only secret door using the Search skill, for instance, there's no further benefit from additional Search checks.)



CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

Some circumstances make a check easier or harder, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the modifier for the check or a change to the check's Difficulty.

The Narrator can alter the odds of success in four ways:

- Grant a +2 bonus to represent circumstances improving performance.
- Grant a -2 penalty to represent circumstances hampering performance.
- Reduce the Difficulty by 2 to represent circumstances making the task easier.
- Increase the Difficulty by 2 to represent circumstances making the task harder.

Bonuses to your check modifier and reduction to the check's Difficulty have the same result: they create a better chance of success. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

TIME AND CHECKS

Performing a particular task may take a round, several rounds, or even no real time at all. Most checks are move actions, standard actions, or full-round actions. Some checks are instant and represent reactions to an event, or are included as part of another action. Other checks represent part of movement. The distance the character jumps when making a Jump check, for example, is part of the character's move action. Some checks take more than a round to use, and the rules specify how long these tasks require. See The Combat Round later in this chapter for more information.

TOOLS

Some tasks require tools. If tools are needed, the specific items are mentioned in the description of the task or skill. If you don't have the appropriate tools, you can still attempt the task but at a -4 penalty on your check.

A character may be able to put together impromptu tools to make the check. If the Narrator allows this, reduce the penalty to -2 (instead of -4). It usually takes some time (several minutes to an hour or more) to collect or create a set of impromptu tools, and it may require an additional check as well.

CHECKS WITHOUT ROLLS

A check represents performing a task under a certain amount of pressure, with uncertain results. When the situation is less demanding, you can perform with more reliable results. Applying these rules can speed up checks under routine circumstances, cutting down the number of die rolls players need to make during play.

WHEN TO ROLL DICE

True20 provides systems to handle most situations likely to come up during a game, but these systems are just guidelines. Ultimately, it's up to the Narrator to decide exactly what happens in any given situation. The Narrator also decides when various checks and other die rolls are necessary to resolve a situation.

Generally speaking, it's possible to handle a lot of challenges and routine issues in the game using the guidelines given in this section, particularly the rules for taking 1, 5, 10 and 20, and comparison checks. For example, if you know a hero can simply take 10 and succeed at a task under routine circumstances, there's no reason to bother rolling dice; just assume the hero succeeds and move on. This helps to maintain the narrative flow of the game and makes the times when you *do* start rolling dice more dramatic, since all the focus is on the action.

TAKING 1

If your total bonus on a check is equal to or greater than the Difficulty, you will succeed regardless of what you roll on the die. In this case, the Narrator might not require you to roll at all and just assume you succeed, since it's a trivial effort for someone of your capability. If the check has varying levels of success, you're assumed to achieve the minimum possible (as if you'd rolled a 1). You can choose to make a roll to achieve a greater level of success, or the Narrator may assume a greater level of success, depending on the circumstances.

TAKING 5

Rather than rolling a check, you can choose to take 5. Calculate your result as if you had rolled a 5 on the die. Taking 5 is sufficient to automatically succeed on an easy (Difficulty 5) task, assuming a base modifier of +0. For more difficult tasks, you need a greater bonus (from higher abilities or skill ranks) to take 5 and succeed. Otherwise, you need to use one of the following options, or roll the die and take your chances.

TAKING 10

When you are not in a rush and not threatened or distracted, you can choose to take 10. Instead of rolling for the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10. For average (Difficulty 10) tasks, taking 10 allows you to succeed automatically, assuming a base modifier of +0. Unlike taking 1 or 5, you cannot take 10 if distracted or under pressure (such as in a combat or action situation). The Narrator decides when this is the case.

TAKING 20

When you have plenty of time, and when the task carries no penalty for failure, you can take 20. Instead of rolling the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20. Taking 20 means you keep trying until you get it right. Taking 20 takes about twenty times as long as making a single check, or about 2 minutes for a task requiring a round or less. If there are potential consequences for failing the check, such as setting off an alarm or slipping and falling, you cannot take 20 on it.

COMPARISON CHECKS

In cases where a "check" is actually a simple test of one character's capabilities against another, with no luck involved, the one with the higher modifier or score wins. Just as you wouldn't make a "height check" to see who's taller, you don't need to make a Strength check to see who's stronger. The ability scores tell you that. When two characters arm wrestle, for example, the stronger character wins. In the case of identical bonuses or scores, just flip a coin to see who wins.

CHALLENGES

Challenges reflect a capable character's ability to perform some tasks with superior panache and efficiency. They allow heroes to achieve greater results by making already difficult checks harder.

To take a challenge, increase a check's Difficulty by 5 or suffer a -5 penalty to the check result. In return, you gain an extra benefit in



addition to the normal effects of a successful check. If you fail due to the penalty or increased Difficulty, however, you suffer the normal results of failure. Note that, if failing by more than a certain margin imposes a particular outcome, you suffer that outcome as normal if you fail to meet your newly increased Difficulty. For example, a character who misses a Disable Device check by 10 or more accidentally sets off the device. If the standard Difficulty is 20 and your challenge increases it to 25, then you accidentally set off the device with a skill check result of 15 or less, instead of the usual 10 or less.

You can accept more than one challenge to a check. In some cases, you can take a challenge more than once to gain its benefits multiple times. These are noted in the challenge descriptions.

Generally, challenges allow you to gain added benefits when you face a relatively low Difficulty and have a high modifier. You can also use challenges to attempt heroic actions, even when faced with a high Difficulty. In these cases, spending a Conviction point can help ensure success with all the added benefits of the successful challenge.

STANDARD CHALLENGES

The challenges in this section apply to any ability or skill check. The Narrator has final say as to whether a challenge applies to a specific situation. Each challenge imposes either a +5 modifier to a check's Difficulty or a -5 penalty to the check result.

FAST TASK

You reduce the time needed to complete the check. If the check is normally a full-round action, it becomes a standard action. A standard action becomes a move action, while a move action becomes a free action. For checks requiring time in rounds, minutes, or longer, reduce the time needed by 25 percent per challenge. You cannot make a check as a free action via challenges if it normally requires a standard action or longer.

CALCULATED RISK

You can take a calculated risk on one check to make a follow-up check easier. For example, you could use Disable Device to overcome an initial

safeguard to make disarming the whole trap easier. If you succeed at this challenge, you gain a bonus on the second check equal to the total penalty you accepted on the first. The two checks must be related and the first, penalized, check must carry some consequence for failure (that is, it cannot be a check where you can take 20).

SIMULTANEOUS TASKS

You can accept a challenge in order to perform two checks simultaneously. To attempt simultaneous checks, make the challenge check, followed by a second check using the same or a different trait. Your secondary check suffers a -10 penalty or a +10 increase in Difficulty. The combined task requires the same time as the longest normal task, so if both tasks require a standard action, you accomplish the simultaneous use in a single standard action rather than two.

In addition to these standard challenges, various skills have specific challenges associated with them. These are given in the skill's description in **Chapter 2**.

AID

Sometimes characters work together and help each other out. In this case, one character (usually the one with the highest bonus) is considered the leader of the effort and makes the check normally, while each helper makes the same check against Difficulty 10 (and can't take 10 on this check). Success grants the leader a +2 bonus for favorable conditions. For every 10 full points the helper's check exceeds the Difficulty, increase the bonus by +1, so a result of 20–29 grants a +3 bonus, 30–39 a +4, and so forth. In many cases, outside help isn't beneficial, or only a limited number of helpers can aid someone at once. The Narrator limits aid as appropriate for the task and conditions.

TYPES OF CHECKS

There are three main types of checks: skill checks, ability checks, and power checks.



SKILL CHECKS

A skill check determines what you can accomplish with a particular skill (sometimes whether you're trained in that skill or not). It is a roll of $d20 + \text{your rank in the skill}$ and the skill's key ability score against a Difficulty. Skill checks sometimes have gradations of success and failure based on how much your total roll is above or below the Difficulty. For example, if you fail a Climb check, you don't make any progress. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall.

ABILITY CHECKS

An ability check is like a skill check, but measures raw ability, like strength, endurance, or intellect. It is a roll of $d20 + \text{your ability modifier}$ against a Difficulty. Ability checks tend to be all or nothing (you can either accomplish the task or you can't), although there are sometimes gradations of success or failure. Attempting a skill check without training (in other words, without ranks in the skill) is an ability check.

EXAMPLE ABILITY CHECKS

Task	Ability
Forcing open a jammed or locked door	Strength
Tying a rope	Dexterity
Resisting injury, holding your breath	Constitution
Navigating a maze	Intelligence
Recognize a stranger you've seen before	Wisdom
Getting yourself noticed in a crowd	Charisma

POWER CHECKS

A power check measures a character's capability with a supernatural power. It is a roll of $d20 + \text{your power rank (adept level +3)}$ plus the power's key ability score against a Difficulty. See **Chapter 4: Powers** for details on power checks.

ATTACK ROLLS

An *attack roll* determines whether or not you hit an opponent in combat. It is a $d20$ roll + your attack bonus. The Difficulty is your target's Defense, which measures their ability to avoid attacks. If you equal or exceed your target's Defense, your attack hits. Otherwise, you miss.

A roll of 20 on the die (called a *natural 20*) means the attack hits automatically and may be a *critical hit*. A roll of 1 on the die (a *natural 1*) means the attack automatically misses.

SAVING THROWS

Saving throws allow your hero to avoid different forms of danger, including injury, traps, poisons, tricks, and even supernatural powers. A saving throw is a $d20$ roll + the appropriate ability score (Constitution for Toughness and Fortitude saves, Dexterity for Reflex saves, and Wisdom for Will saves) and the appropriate save bonus, along with any bonuses from feats, special abilities, and the like.

Saving throw Difficulty is based on the potency of the hazard, such as the power of an attack or the strength of a disease or poison. Like skill checks, there are sometimes gradations to a saving throw's results. For example, a Toughness save may result in no damage at all if you beat the Difficulty, but could result in a glancing blow, a stunning blow, or an immediate knockout if you fail, depending on how much the roll misses the Difficulty.

THE COMBAT ROUND

When things really start happening in a *True20* game, time is broken down into six-second segments called *rounds*, or *combat rounds*, since they're most often used in fights. A round isn't very much time, just long enough for a hero to do something. The types of actions your hero can perform during a round are standard actions, move actions, full-round actions, free actions, and reactions. During a round you can do one of the following:

- Take a standard action and a move action.
- Take a move action and then another move action (in place of your standard action).
- Take a full-round action.

You can perform as many free actions and reactions in a round as you wish, although the Narrator may choose to limit them to a reasonable number to keep the game moving.

STANDARD ACTIONS

A *standard action* generally involves acting upon something, whether it's an actual attack or using some skill to affect something. You're limited to one standard action in a round.

MOVE ACTIONS

A *move action* usually involves moving. You can move your speed in a single move action or twice your speed in a round by taking two move actions. You can take a move action before or after a standard action, so you can attack then move or move then attack. You cannot normally split your move action before and after your standard action. Move actions also include things like drawing weapons, standing up from being knocked down, and picking up objects.

FULL-ROUND ACTIONS

A *full-round action* occupies all your attention for a round, meaning you can't do anything else that round. Full-round actions include charging an opponent at full speed or moving as quickly as you can. Certain maneuvers require a full-round action to perform, as do some skills.

FREE ACTIONS

A *free action* is something so comparatively minor it doesn't take any significant time at all, so you can perform as many free actions in a round as the Narrator considers reasonable. Free actions include things like talking (heroes and villains always seem to find time to say a lot in the middle of a fight), dropping something, and so forth.

REACTIONS

A *reaction* is something you do in response to something else. A reaction doesn't take any time, like a free action. The difference is you might take a reaction when it's not even your turn to act, in response to something else happening during the round.

DAMAGE

Characters may suffer damage during combat. Damage in *True20* uses a series of damage conditions, running from fairly minor to serious and life threatening. The damage conditions (in increasing order of severity) are: bruised, hurt, dazed, wounded, staggered, disabled, unconscious, and dying.

Damage is determined by a Toughness saving throw: a roll of the die plus the hero's Toughness bonus against a Difficulty of 15, modified by the source of the damage: with more damaging attacks more difficult to save against. The result of the saving throw determines the damage condition: a successful save means no damage, a failure is a bruised or hurt result, failure by 5 or more a dazed or wounded result, failure by 10 or more a staggered or disabled result, and failure by 15 or more an unconscious or dying result. The first result is from non-lethal damage, the second from lethal damage.

CONVICTION

Heroes in *True20* have a trait called *Conviction*, representing their inner determination. Players can spend Conviction to improve heroes' abilities in various ways. You can spend Conviction to re-roll a bad die roll, bounce back from being hurt, and various other things. See **Conviction** in **Chapter 1** for more information. Conviction helps give heroes an edge, but don't get overconfident, because many villains also have Conviction!

IMPORTANT TERMS

ability score: The numerical rating of an ability, applied as a bonus or penalty.

ability: One of the six basic character traits—Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha).

action: A character activity. There are standard actions, move actions, full-round actions, free actions, and reactions.

adventure: A story for players to experience.

attack bonus: A modifier used to measure a character's combat skill.

attack roll: A roll to determine whether an attack hits. To make an attack roll, roll d20 and add the appropriate modifiers for the attack type. An attack hits if the result is equal to or greater than the target's Defense.

attack: Any of numerous actions intended to harm, disable, or neutralize an opponent.

bonus: A positive modifier to a die roll.

challenge: A challenge is either an increase in Difficulty or a penalty on a check. If successful, it provides some pre-determined benefit, such as completing a task faster or more efficiently.

character: A fictional individual in the game. The players control heroes, while the Narrator controls Narrator characters.

check: A method of deciding the result of a character's action (other than attacking or making a saving throw). Checks are based on a relevant ability, skill, or other trait. To make a check, roll d20 and add any relevant modifiers. If the check result equals or exceeds the Difficulty of a task or the result of an opponent's check, it succeeds.

Conviction: A quality of heroic and villainous characters, used to enhance their abilities and actions in various ways.

critical hit (crit): An attack inflicting extra damage. To score a critical hit, an attacker must first score a *threat* (usually a natural 20 on an attack roll, depending on the attack being used), and then make another attack roll equal or greater than the target's normal Defense.

d20: A twenty-sided die, used to resolve all actions in *True20*.

damage bonus: A modifier used to determine the damage of an attack.

damage: Harm caused to a character by injury, illness, or some other source.

Defense: The Difficulty to hit a target in combat. Defense equals 10 + any relevant modifiers.

Difficulty: The number a player must meet or beat for a check, attack roll, or saving throw to succeed.

dodge bonus: Bonus applied to Defense to determine how difficult a character is to hit. Characters lose their dodge bonus when they are flat-footed, stunned, or otherwise incapable of reacting to an attack.

dying: Near death and unconscious. A dying character can take no actions.

flat-footed: Especially vulnerable to attacks at the beginning of a fight. Characters are flat-footed until their first turn in the initiative cycle. Flat-footed characters lose their dodge bonus to Defense.

free action: A minor activity, requiring very little time and effort.

full-round action: An action requiring all your effort in a round. Some skills, feats, and powers require a full-round action (or longer) to use.

hero: A character controlled by a player, one of the protagonists of an adventure or series.

initiative: A roll to determine the order in which characters act in action scenes. Initiative is a roll of d20 + initiative bonus, which is based on Dexterity.

lethal damage: Damage that can potentially disable or kill a target.

melee attack: A physical attack in close combat.

melee weapon: A handheld weapon designed for close combat.

modifier: Any bonus or penalty applied to a die roll.

move action: An action intended to move a distance or to manipulate or move an object. You can take up to two move actions per round.

Narrator character: Also *supporting character*. A character controlled by the Narrator (as opposed to a hero controlled by a player).

Narrator: The player who portrays characters not controlled by the other players, makes up the story and setting for the game, and serves as the referee.

natural: A natural result on a roll or check is the actual number appearing on the die, not the modified result obtained by adding bonuses or subtracting penalties.

non-lethal damage: Damage that can potentially stun or knock out a target, but does no permanent harm.

penalty: A negative modifier to a die roll.

percent chance: To roll a percent chance on 1d20, count each number on the die as 5 percent. An event with a 20 percent chance (such as the miss chance for concealment) happens on a roll of 17 or higher, a 50 percent chance on 11 or higher, and a 75 percent chance on 6 or higher.

power: A supernatural ability or trait. Powers are discussed in detail in **Chapter 4**.

range increment: Each full range increment of distance between an attacker using a ranged weapon and a target gives the attacker a cumulative –2 penalty to the ranged attack roll. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of five range increments. Other ranged attacks have a maximum range of ten range increments.

ranged attack: Any attack made at a distance.

ranged weapon: A projectile or thrown weapon designed for attacking at a distance.

rank: A measure of a character's level of ability with a skill or other trait.

round: A six-second unit of game time used to manage actions, usually in combat.

saving throw (save) : A roll made to avoid or reduce harm. The four types of saving throws are Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.

scene: A variable length of time in which one major event or "chapter" of an adventure takes place. The Narrator determine the length of each scene.

series: A string of linked adventures.

stack: Combine for a cumulative effect. In most cases, modifiers to a given check or roll stack. If the modifiers of a particular roll do not stack, only the best bonus or worst penalty applies. Sometimes there is a limit to how high a stacked bonus or penalty can be.

standard action: An action intended to do something within about 3 seconds. You can perform a single standard action per round.

target (also subject) : The intended recipient of an attack, action, or effect.

threat range: The natural die roll results constituting a critical hit threat when rolled for an attack. For most attacks, the threat range is a roll of 20.

threat: A possible critical hit.

trained: Having knowledge of, and therefore ranks in, a skill.

trait: Any of a character's game-defined qualities. Ability scores, skills, and feats are all traits.

unarmed attack: A melee attack made without a weapon.

untrained: Having no ranks in a skill. Some skills cannot be used untrained.

TRUE20 RESOURCES

True20 uses the Open Game License (OGL), allowing it to incorporate basic game systems and terms familiar to players of many popular roleplaying games. The OGL also allows *True20* Narrators to adapt material from other popular games to their own *True20* games, as detailed in the **Appendix** of this book. Using the guidelines given there, you can greatly expand the range of roleplaying game material you can use in conjunction with *True20*.

Green Ronin Publishing works in partnership with other game publishers to provide support and settings for *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. The *True20* logo indicates a product licensed and approved by us for use with the game, so you know it's compatible with the rules in this book and other *True20* products.

While *True20* has many similarities to other games produced under the Open Game License, it is not necessarily 100% compatible with them. It is designed as a complete self-contained game system, with elements familiar to players of other roleplaying games. For more information on the Open Game License, consult the copy of the license in the back of this book, or visit www.opengamingfoundation.org.

Green Ronin provides support for *True20*, and all of our products, at our website, www.greenronin.com, where you can find complete product lists, errata and corrections, our online store, all the latest news, and discussion forums where you can ask questions and meet and talk with other *True20* players around the world. You can also find links to other *True20* resources online, including our publishing partners and their *True20* worlds of adventure for you to explore.



CHAPTER ONE: HERO CREATION

THIS CHAPTER TELLS YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN **TRUE20** HEROES, READY TO EMBARK ON EXCITING ADVENTURES.

IT COVERS BASIC ABILITIES, BACKGROUNDS, ROLES, AND THE VARIOUS DETAILS FOR DESCRIBING YOUR HERO. IT ALSO LOOKS AT THE TRAIT OF CONVICTION AND THE BENEFITS IT GRANTS IN THE GAME.



ABILITIES

Everyone has certain basic abilities: how strong, fast, smart, and clever they are. These *ability scores* influence almost everything your character does. Stronger characters can lift greater weights, more dexterous characters have better balance, tougher characters can soak up more damage, and so forth.

Characters have six abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution are called *physical abilities*, whereas Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are *mental abilities*. Each above-average ability score provides a bonus on certain die rolls; below average abilities apply a penalty to some die rolls.

CHOOSING ABILITY SCORES

Ability scores have a numerical value, expressed as a penalty or bonus, from -5 (abysmal or disabled) to +5 or more (legendary, practically superhuman), with an average of +0. When ability scores are noted in this book, the score follows the ability's name, for example: Strength +2, Dexterity -1, and so forth.

You have 6 points to divide among your hero's abilities, which all start at 0, neither a bonus nor a penalty. This means you can have +1 in all six abilities; +3 in one ability, 0 in two others, and +1 in the remaining three; or any combination adding up to 6. The only limitation is you cannot put more than 5 points in a single ability score. (Scores can only go higher than +5 as a result of level advancement and a few other factors.)

Ability Scores = 6 points divided between six abilities.

If you choose to have a *negative* value in an ability, you gain bonus points to assign to your other ability scores. For example, if you give your hero Strength -1, you have 1 more point to assign to another ability (such as Intelligence). If your hero has Strength -2, you have 2 bonus points, and so on. Heroes cannot have abilities lower than -5, and abilities lower than -2 aren't recommended unless the hero is seriously deficient in that ability. Even with bonus points, you cannot put more than 5 points in a single ability score.

Your ability score is added to or subtracted from die rolls when you do something related to that ability. For example, your Strength score affects the amount of melee damage you do, your Intelligence score affects your Knowledge skills, and so forth. Sometimes your score is used to calculate another value, such as when you use your Dexterity score to help determine how good you are at avoiding harm using your reflexes (your Reflex saving throw).

VARYING ABILITY POINTS

The starting amount of 6 points for abilities is intended to create fairly competent heroes who can be, at the least, above average at *everything*, or average at most things and really capable in one or two areas. However, that amount isn't set in stone and you can vary it if you like. In more low-key games, the Narrator may want to give the players fewer ability points, say 4, while in especially over-the-top epic games, you might want to give the players a couple more ability points, perhaps as many as 8-10, ensuring their heroes are capable. Most *True20* games should offer at least 3 points for abilities, otherwise the heroes aren't going to be all that heroic when compared to the average person.

THE ABILITIES

Given here are descriptions of the six abilities and how they affect your character.

STRENGTH (STR)

Strength measures sheer muscle power and the ability to apply it. Your Strength score applies to the following:

- Damage dealt by melee and thrown weapon attacks.
- Defense when parrying, blocking attacks in melee combat.
- Climb, Jump, and Swim checks.
- Your carrying capacity, how much you can lift and carry.
- Strength checks for breaking through doors, smashing things, and other deeds of strength when a specific skill doesn't apply.

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity is a measure of coordination, agility, and manual dexterity. Your Dexterity score applies to the following:

- Attack rolls.
- Defense when dodging, evading attacks in combat.
- Reflex saving throws, for avoiding danger with coordination and quick reflexes.
- Initiative checks.
- Acrobatics, Escape Artist, Ride, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks.
- Dexterity checks for tasks requiring agility and coordination when a specific skill doesn't apply.

CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution is a measure of endurance, health, and overall physical toughness. Constitution is important because it affects your hero's ability to resist damage. Your Constitution score applies to the following:

- Toughness saving throws, for resisting damage.
- Fortitude saving throws, for resisting disease, poison, fatigue, and other effects involving your hero's health.
- Constitution checks for recovering from damage.

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence is a measure of reasoning, memory, and quick thinking. Your Intelligence score applies to the following:

- Your number of known skills at 1st level.
- The number of skill ranks you gain from successive levels.
- Craft, Disable Device, Knowledge, and Search checks.
- Intelligence checks to solve problems using sheer brainpower when a specific skill doesn't apply.

WISDOM (WIS)

While Intelligence measures reasoning, Wisdom is a measure of awareness, common sense, intuition, and strength of will. Your Wisdom score applies to the following:

- Will saving throws, for resisting attempts to influence you, whether by mundane or supernatural means.

- Concentration, Medicine, Notice, Sense Motive, and Survival checks.
- Wisdom checks to resolve matters of intuition when a specific skill doesn't apply.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma is a measure of persuasiveness, force of personality, leadership ability, and attractiveness (not necessarily physical). Your Charisma score applies to the following:

- Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Handle Animal, Intimidate, and Perform checks.
- Charisma checks to use force of personality when a specific skill doesn't apply.

ALTERING ABILITY SCORES

Over the course of play, your hero's ability scores may change for the following reasons:

- Some effects—including disease and poison—temporarily lower ability scores.
- Characters improve their ability scores permanently as they increase in level.

Whenever an ability score changes, all traits associated with the ability change as well. For example, if you increase your Dexterity, your attack bonus, Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throw modifier also increase. Likewise, if your Dexterity bonus decreases, your attack bonus, Dexterity-based skills and Reflex saving throws suffer.

DEBILITATED ABILITIES

There is no limit to how high an ability score can be raised, but there is a limit on how low it can drop. If one of your hero's ability scores drops below -5 for any reason, the score is debilitated. Your hero suffers serious effects, depending on the ability. Debilitated Strength or Dexterity means the hero is helpless and unable to move. Debilitated Constitution means the hero is dying (and suffers a -5 on checks to avoid death). Debilitated Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma means the hero is unconscious and incapable of waking until the score is restored to at least -5.

NONEXISTENT ABILITIES

Some things in True20 actually lack a basic ability (having no score in it at all, which is not the same as having a debilitated ability). The effect of lacking a particular ability is as follows:

STRENGTH

Any creature capable of physically manipulating other objects has a Strength score. A creature with no Strength is incapable of exerting any physical force, either because it has no physical form (like an incorporeal ghost) or simply can't move (like a tree). The creature automatically fails Strength-based checks.

DEXTERITY

Any creature capable of movement has a Dexterity score. A creature with no Dexterity cannot move (like most plants) or take physical actions and automatically fails Dexterity-based checks.

CONSTITUTION

Any living creature has a Constitution score. A creature with no Constitution has no physical body (like a ghost) or no living metabolism (like an animated statue or other construct). It is immune to effects requiring Fortitude saving throws unless they work on inanimate

MENTAL ABILITIES

Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are a bit more difficult to quantify than the physical abilities of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. They also have a more dramatic effect on your character's personality and behavior.

INTELLIGENCE

A character with a high Intelligence score tends to be knowledgeable, clever, and prone to using big words. A character with a high Intelligence but a low Wisdom may be smart but absent-minded or easily distracted. A character with a high Intelligence and low Charisma may be knowledgeable but something of a know-it-all or lacking in social skills. Characters with high Intelligence and low Wisdom and Charisma tend to be social misfits. A character with a low Intelligence may be slow, poorly educated, or just not very cerebral.

WISDOM

High Wisdom characters are aware, sensible, and confident in themselves and their abilities. High Wisdom, low Intelligence characters are simple-minded but capable of surprising insights. High Wisdom, low Charisma characters are quietly confident and tend to work behind the scenes. Low Wisdom characters are indecisive, absent-minded, impulsive, or just gullible.

CHARISMA

Characters with high Charisma are outgoing, forceful, and often attractive. High Charisma, low Intelligence characters either manage to seem to know what they're talking about, or they attract people who find them endearing and want to help them. Characters with high Charisma and low Wisdom aren't very good at choosing their friends wisely. Low Charisma characters may be cold, aloof, rude, awkward, or simply plain and nondescript.

objects. The creature always fails Constitution-based checks. Creatures with no Constitution do not recover from damage (since they can't make recovery checks). They must be repaired in some fashion. The same is true of objects.

INTELLIGENCE

Any creature that can think, learn, or remember has an Intelligence score. A creature with no Intelligence is an automaton, operating on simple instinct or pre-programmed instructions. It is immune to all mental effects and automatically fails Intelligence-based checks. Note that animals have low Intelligence scores (usually -4), but they *do* have Intelligence.

WISDOM

Any creature aware of its environment has a Wisdom score. Anything with no Wisdom also has no Charisma. It is an inanimate object, not a creature. Objects are immune to mind-influencing effects and automatically fail Wisdom-based checks.

CHARISMA

Any creature capable of interacting with others has a Charisma score. Creatures without Charisma cannot interact, are immune to interaction checks, and automatically fail Charisma-based checks.

Inanimate objects have no abilities other than their Toughness score. Animate but nonliving beings, like undead, have Strength and Dexterity. They might have Wisdom and Charisma, if they are aware of their environment and capable of interaction. They might have Intelligence, if they are capable of thought, but they never have Constitution, since they are not alive.

BACKGROUNDS

Although *True20* is about telling your hero's story, an important part of creating a hero is figuring out his or her background, and how that history affects the hero's traits in the present.

Background is an optional trait in *True20*, suitable for some games and allowing you to further differentiate heroes from each other. It provides extra detail as well as a few capabilities to give your hero an edge.

BACKGROUND FEATURES

Backgrounds have a number of features that influence and modify a character's traits. The features a background may have include:

Ability Adjustments: The background adjusts some of the hero's starting abilities from the normal baseline score of +0. Generally speaking, a background should only increase or decrease abilities by +/-1 and should decrease an ability for every increase in equal measure.

Note that these ability adjustments are to the *baseline* or starting ability scores. The player can spend the hero's ability points normally to raise the scores. However, the adjustment also affects the maximum score the hero can have, since players cannot put more than 5 of the hero's starting ability points into any one ability score.

Bonus Feat: A background either grants a bonus feat of the player's choice or two bonus feats that are part of the background and cannot be changed. The Narrator chooses the bonus feats in the latter case when creating a background for the setting. These bonus feats must be general feats or favored feats for the background (see the following).

Bonus Skill: A background either grants a bonus starting skill of the player's choice, two bonus starting skills that are part of the background,

or one bonus feat that is part of the background. The latter two options are set by the Narrator and cannot be changed. The bonus skill(s) can be any available in *True20* and the hero's starting rank in the skill(s) is 4 (level +3), as usual.

Favored Feats: A background grants access to two *favored feats*. These are feats the hero can acquire regardless of role, even if they are not normally available to that role. Since general feats are available to any hero, they are never favored; favored feats are chosen from the expert, warrior, and supernatural feat lists. Optionally, a supernatural power can replace two feats for this purpose, using up both of the background's favored feats. The character does not have to acquire the background's favored feats; they're just strongly associated with the background and common to it, therefore always available as an option.

SAMPLE BACKGROUNDS

The following are some sample backgrounds for a classic fantasy setting that you can use as examples for creating your own *True20* backgrounds. You can find other sample backgrounds in the *True20* settings later in this book.

HUMAN

This is the default background for *True20* heroes in a game using backgrounds. Human heroes may have cultural backgrounds in addition to their racial background to provide additional depth and options for the players. The traits of a human background are:

- **Ability Adjustments:** None.
- **Bonus Feat:** The hero gains one bonus feat at 1st level out of the list of feats available for the hero's role.



- **Bonus Skill:** The hero gains one bonus known skill at 1st level, in addition to those gained for the hero's role and Intelligence score.
- **Favored Feats:** Choose any two feats as the character's favored feats. These feats are available to the hero regardless of role. Favored feats for humans often vary by region and culture, and the Narrator may wish to come up with an appropriate list of favored feats for the human cultures in the setting.

DWARF

Dwarves are a race of stocky, taciturn humanoids that generally live underground and are known for their skill in stone- and metalworking. Dwarves have the following background traits:

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Constitution, –1 Charisma
- **Bonus Feats:** Great Fortitude, Night Vision, Talented (Craft and Search, only involving stonework)
- **Favored Feats:** Diehard, Favored Opponent (goblins or giants)

ELF

Elves are a race of slender humanoids with delicate features and pointed ears. They live in forest and sylvan environments and are known for their love of beauty and their skill with magic. Elves have the following background traits:

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, –1 Constitution
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Talented (Notice and Search), Weapon Training
- **Favored Feats:** Choose one supernatural power (elves treat their total level as their adept level for this power).

GNOME

Gnomes are small humanoids (see the **Small Heroes** sidebar). They prefer to live in comfortable burrows in hillsides where animals abound, and they're well known for both their gregarious nature and as cunning tricksters and practical jokers.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Constitution, –1 Strength
- **Bonus Feats:** Iron Will, Night Vision, Talented (Craft [chemical] and Notice)
- **Favored Feats:** Choose Fascinate and Favored Opponent (goblins), or a supernatural power.

HALF-ELF

The offspring of a human and an elf parent, half-elves exist between both cultures. Some feel alienated, while others feel welcome in both worlds. Half-elves combine some of the refinement of elves with the hardiness and adaptability of humans.

- **Ability Adjustments:** None
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Talented (Diplomacy and Gather Information), Talented (Notice and Search)
- **Favored Feats:** Choose two (based on the half-elf's home culture).

FAVORED FEATS AND CULTURE

One use of favored feats in a background is to provide context for the hero's culture or social background. Since favored feats are merely the *opportunity* to acquire certain traits, rather than required as part of the background, they can represent inclinations of a culture. For example, perhaps dwarven culture offers the opportunity to acquire the Favored Opponent feat for goblinoids, because dwarves often fight them. A human raised among dwarves might have this favored feat as well, representing the cultural background. Likewise, a barbarian culture might have Rage as one of its favored feats, people from a particular planet or colony might have cultural feats, and so forth. The Narrator should feel free to create "packages" or lists of suitable favored feats for different cultures within the setting.

SMALL HEROES

Some backgrounds—such as gnomes and halflings—involve races smaller than humans. Such small heroes get a +1 to their Combat bonus due to their size (they're small targets, while normal-sized targets seem big to them), and a +4 bonus on Stealth checks. They suffer a –1 penalty on Toughness saves, however. A Small character's carrying capacity is three-quarters of that of a normal (medium-sized) character and a Small character generally moves about two-thirds as fast as a medium character. See **Size** in **Chapter 8** for more on the effects of relative size on characters.

HALF-ORC

Born of a human and an orc parent, half-orcs are most often outcast from both cultures. They have great strength and equally great tempers. Half-orcs make fierce warriors and usually become soldiers, mercenaries, or raiders.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Strength, –1 Intelligence
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision, Weapon Training
- **Bonus Skill:** Half-orcs have one bonus known skill (this balances out the one that they lose due to their lower natural Intelligence score).
- **Favored Feats:** Choose two of Cleave, Favored Opponent, Tough, or Rage.

HALFLING

Halflings are small humanoids, almost exactly half the height of humans (thus the name, see **Small Heroes**). They're clever and insist they have to be in a world of "big people." They're most often found living among other races, particularly humans.

- **Ability Adjustments:** +1 Dexterity, –1 Strength
- **Bonus Feats:** Lucky, Talented (Climb and Jump), Talented (Notice and Stealth)
- **Favored Feats:** Evasion, Weapon Specialization (thrown weapon or sling)

ROLES

Heroes in *True20* come in different types and from many walks of life. Your hero's *role* is the part he or she plays in the game. A role is like a character's part in a story; stories have different sorts of heroes, from brave and skilled warriors to cunning diplomats to wise wielders of the supernatural arts. The role you choose for your hero affects the other choices you make, including your hero's skills and feats. Still, roles in *True20* are broad enough to allow plenty of freedom of choice in creating your hero.

There are three roles in *True20*, in addition to heroes with mixed, or multiple, roles. The roles are:

- **Adept:** Someone with a talent for the supernatural powers.
- **Expert:** Someone experienced in a wide range of skills.
- **Warrior:** Someone with training in many forms of combat.
- **Mixed-Role Heroes:** Heroes start out with only one role at 1st level. However, as your hero advances in level, you may choose levels in other roles, creating a mixed-role hero. This mixing of roles gives a hero a wider range of abilities at the cost of slowing advancement in any one role.

For example, a 1st-level warrior attaining 2nd level might choose to take the 1st level in adept instead of a 2nd level in warrior. The hero is now

a 1st-level warrior/1st-level adept, but still a 2nd-level character. The character's combat abilities are less than those of a 2nd-level warrior, but the character now has the abilities of a 1st-level adept.

The key difference for mixed-role heroes is that each role has a *core ability*, obtained *only* when a character starts out at 1st-level in that role. A mixed-role hero taking on a new role does not gain the new role's core ability, but does gain all of its other traits.

Guidelines for creating mixed-role heroes can be found at the end of this chapter.

LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS

Heroes improve in experience and power by advancing in level. This represents the progress of a hero's career during a long series, from novice to seasoned expert. As heroes advance in level, they gain additional bonuses and access to more skills and feats, improving and expanding their capabilities. After 1st level, heroes also get the opportunity to begin mixing roles to further expand their options and capabilities.

Certain benefits are based on a hero's overall level, regardless of role. The **Level-Dependent Benefits** table summarizes these. See each role description for the benefits specific to each.

SKILL RANK

This lists the maximum rank a hero can have in any known skill, equal to the hero's level + 3. This is also the hero's rank in any known supernatural powers. See **Chapter 2: Skills** and **Chapter 4: Powers** for details.

ABILITY INCREASE

Upon gaining any level divisible by six (6th, 12th, and 18th), heroes can increase an ability score by 1. You choose which ability you want to

improve, and the improvement is permanent. You can increase the same ability more than once or a different one each time. You can increase an ability score above +5 in this way.

CONVICTION

Heroes start out with 3 points of Conviction at 1st level and gain a point of Conviction every two levels thereafter (3rd, 5th, and so on). The number indicated at each level is a hero's maximum Conviction points at that level. See **Conviction** later in this chapter for details.

FEATS

Your hero gets a certain number of starting feats at 1st level (determined by role), plus an additional feat for each level beyond 1st. You choose feats from among those available to your hero's role(s).

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

The following sections describe the three roles in detail. Each provides an overall view of the role, the role's traits in game terms, and examples of different types of heroes who fit that particular role.

The role's traits are organized as follows:

ABILITIES

What ability scores are most important to the role and why? While you can certainly choose your hero's abilities as you wish, you might want to keep these important abilities in mind, if you want your hero to be effective in the chosen role.

CORE ABILITY

Each role has a *core ability*, which you only gain if you take your 1st level in that role. If you add a role later on (see **Mixed-Role Heroes**) you don't gain the new role's core ability, just the ability of your first role.

SKILLS

This is the number of skills you choose for a hero of that role at 1st level. You apply your hero's Intelligence modifier to this number, but it cannot be lower than 1, no matter how low a hero's Intelligence might be. The role also gains a number of additional skill ranks (also modified by Intelligence) for each additional level.

FEATS

These are the feats a hero starts with at 1st level. Each role allows you to choose some or all of these feats from lists of feats available to characters of that role.

Each role has a table indicating the role's other game abilities, all based on level:

COMBAT

A role's base combat bonus measures skill in all forms of fighting. It is used as the basis for a hero's attack rolls, modified by Dexterity. It is also used as the basis for a hero's Defense score, which is the Difficulty to strike that hero in combat. It is modified by the hero's Dexterity for dodging or evading attacks, and Strength for parrying them.

SAVE BONUSES

Roles have three save bonuses, measuring the ability to avoid certain kinds of harm when they make saving throws. The bonuses are improvements to Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves. Toughness saving throws do not improve by level, although some feats may improve them.

REPUTATION

Every hero has a reputation score based on role and level. See **Reputation**, later in this chapter, for details.

LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS

Level	Maximum Skill Rank	Ability Increase	Conviction	Feats
1st	4	—	3	4
2nd	5	—	3	1
3rd	6	—	4	1
4th	7	—	4	1
5th	8	—	5	1
6th	9	1st	5	1
7th	10	—	6	1
8th	11	—	6	1
9th	12	—	7	1
10th	13	—	7	1
11th	14	—	8	1
12th	15	2nd	8	1
13th	16	—	9	1
14th	17	—	9	1
15th	18	—	10	1
16th	19	—	10	1
17th	20	—	11	1
18th	21	3rd	11	1
19th	22	—	12	1
20th	23	—	12	1

ADEPT

Intellectual, scholar, mystic, sorcerer, shaman, psychic, the adept specializes in the sciences and arts of the supernatural. Adepts are known and respected for their knowledge and insight as well as their command of various supernatural powers. Whether part of secret societies, hidden from the eyes of most, or as an accepted part of the social order, publicly flaunting their extraordinary abilities, adepts are a breed apart from normal beings.

Adepts fill many roles in the world of *True20*. Their supernatural powers range from subtle visions and insight into the psyche to overt manipulations of the physical world. Depending on the manifestation of the supernatural in the setting (see **Chapter 4**), adepts may be widely known and respected (or feared) for their powers, or operate entirely behind the scenes.

Adepts have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Mental abilities are usually more important to adepts than physical ones. In particular, adepts tend to require strong Wisdom scores, since using their powers depends on force of will to stave off fatigue. Intelligence is nearly as important, given the adept's emphasis on scholarship. Adepts also choose a mental ability as the key ability of their supernatural powers. Adepts also find a healthy Constitution helpful, especially if they plan to exercise their arts in the field rather than in the comfort of a college or hermitage.

THE TALENT (CORE ABILITY)

The adept can spend a Conviction point to make one use of a supernatural power they do not possess. This works much like spending a Conviction point to emulate a feat. An adept with the Talent can also spend a Conviction point to eliminate any accumulated modifiers to fatigue saving throws for using powers. See Chapter 4 for more information on supernatural powers and later in this chapter for more on Conviction.

POWERS

Adepts can develop and use certain supernatural powers, described in detail in Chapter 4. An adept can choose to acquire a power in place of one of the adept's normal feats, either starting feats or those acquired by improving in level. So a starting adept can have up to four powers (at the cost of taking no starting feats), one power and three feats, two and two, or any combination adding up to the adept's starting number of feats. Each time the adept gains a level the player has a choice of taking a new feat or a new power.

SKILLS

Choose 4 + Intelligence score starting skills (minimum of 1). Adepts gain 4 + Int skill ranks per additional level (minimum of 1). Important skills for adepts include Concentration, Craft, Gather Information, Knowledge (particularly supernatural), Language, and Notice.

FEATS

Choose 4 starting feats from the General and Adept categories. An adept can also choose a power in place of a feat.



EXPERT

Experts range from diplomats and nobles to traveling storytellers and adventurous scholars or scientists, from merchants with an eye for profit to cunning thieves with an eye for an easy mark. Some experts choose to focus on the ability to handle any social situation, others emphasize physical skills allowing them to avoid unwanted entanglements, and some focus on scholarly skills, but for use “in the field” rather than solely in a laboratory or classroom.

Adventuring experts tend to combine different skills. They have to be able to endure long journeys yet be ready to negotiate with various parties when they reach the journey’s end, able to appraise and understand people, situations, and objects. Experts essentially handle everything adepts and warriors do not.

Experts have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Agility is the name of the game for experts, both physical agility (represented by Dexterity) and social agility (represented by Charisma), with a bit of mental agility (represented by Intelligence) thrown in for good measure. Nimble experts are often trained in skills like Acrobatics and Ride, while the personable and charming ones focus on interaction skills like Bluff and Diplomacy. Wisdom is useful to experts in avoiding danger, from traps to deception, and keen Intelligence can help an expert go far (and pick up a few extra useful skills).

EXPERTISE (CORE ABILITY)

An expert can spend a point of Conviction to gain 4 temporary ranks in any skill, including skills in which the expert is not currently trained or that cannot be used untrained. These temporary skill ranks last for the duration of the scene and grant their normal benefits.

SAVING THROWS

Experts vary in their Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses. Choose one of these three to be the expert’s good save, with the other two as normal saves, consulting the appropriate column on the table. For example, your expert’s Fortitude save might be good, while her Reflex and Will saves are normal. At 1st level, her base Fortitude save bonus would be +2, while her base Reflex and Will saves would be +0.

SKILLS

Choose 8 + Intelligence score starting skills (minimum of 1). Experts gain 8 + Int skill ranks per additional level (minimum of 1).

Virtually all skills are important to one sort of expert or another. Experts tend to pick certain areas where they specialize, such as athletic or outdoor skills (Acrobatics, Climb, Jump, and Survival, for example), interaction skills (Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, and Sense Motive), or scholarly skills (such as Craft, Knowledge, and Notice).

FEATS

Choose 4 starting feats from the Expert or General categories.



WARRIOR

Flashing blades, roaring guns, or even bare fists are the tools of the warrior. Some fight for the safety of their homeland and their loved ones. For others it is religious zeal, wealth, or the simple joy of battle. Warriors include trained and disciplined soldiers, heroic knights, grizzled hunters, savage mercenaries, and daring swashbucklers. Although they don't command the mysterious powers of adepts or the breadth of knowledge of experts, warriors have courage, determination, and skill at arms, and for them, it's enough.

Warriors have the following traits:

ABILITIES

Warriors prize physical abilities over mental ones. Strength is important in striking a powerful blow. Dexterity allows warriors to evade incoming attacks and gives them accuracy with their own. Constitution may be a warrior's most important quality, granting them the endurance to sustain long marches and to fight on when others fall due to injury or fatigue.

DETERMINATION (CORE ABILITY)

A warrior can spend a point of Conviction to immediately erase all bruised and hurt damage conditions (and their associated penalties).

SKILLS

Choose 4 + Intelligence score starting skills (minimum of 1). Warriors gain 4 + Int skill ranks per additional level (minimum of 1).

Important skills for warriors tend to be physical, such as Climb, Jump, and Swim. They often acquire some type of vehicular skill (from Ride to Drive or Pilot, depending on the transportation available). and Utility skills like Concentration, Notice, and Sense Motive are common.

FEATS

All warriors have Firearms Training or Weapon Training as a starting feat. Choose 3 other starting feats from the General or Warrior categories.

ROLE ARCHETYPES

The three roles in *True20* are meant to capture certain heroic archetypes commonly found in mythology and fiction. Consider these archetypal characters when creating your own heroes and choosing appropriate roles for them.

ADEPTS

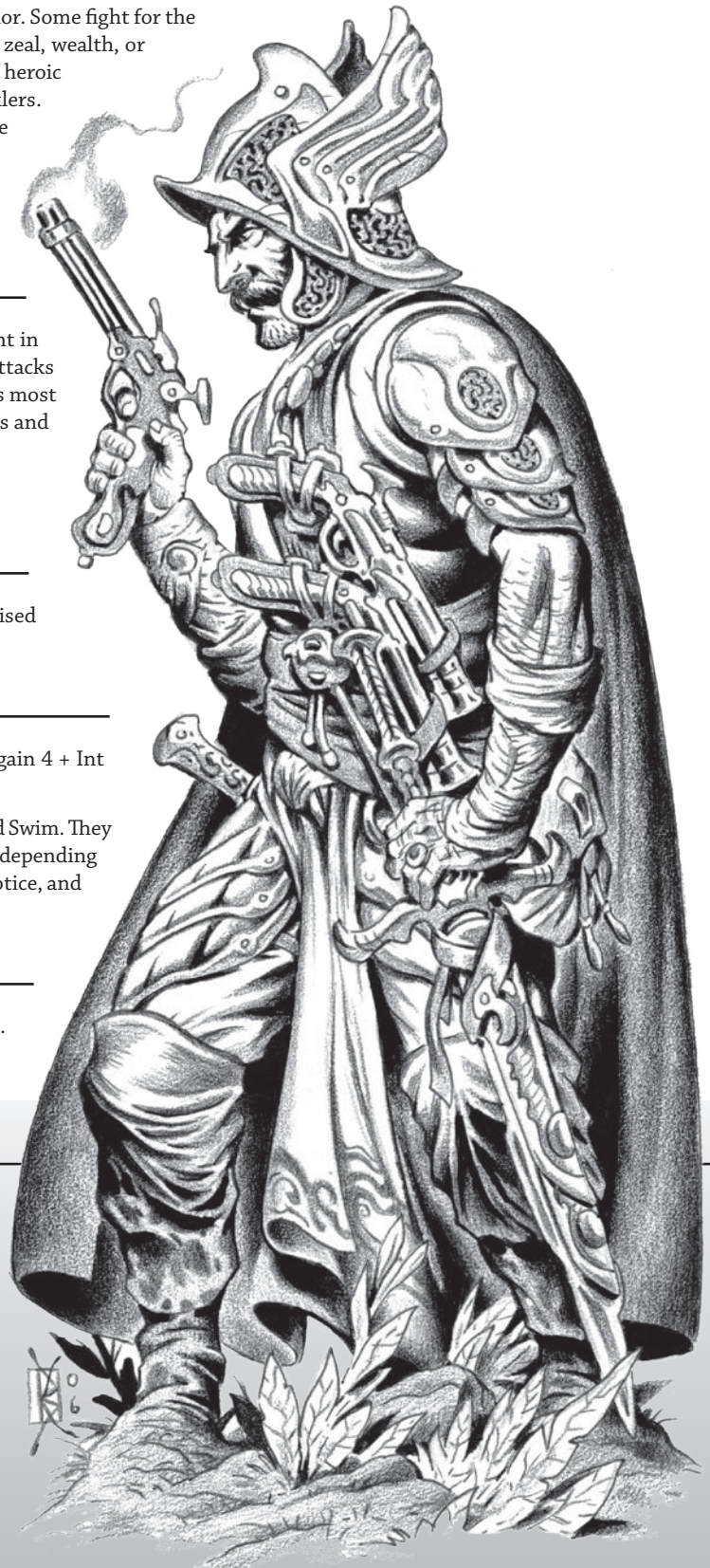
Examples of archetypal adepts include Merlin the Magician, the sorceresses Medea and Morgan LeFay, prophetic priests and miracle-workers, science-fiction psychics, and other wielders of supernatural power.

EXPERTS

Examples of archetypal experts include the inventor Daedalus, the Greek heroes Jason and Theseus, the cunning Robin Hood, Japanese ninja, fantasy thieves, and similar characters.

WARRIORS

Examples of archetypal warriors include Hercules, King Arthur and his knights, the Three Musketeers, Japanese samurai, and virtually all soldiers and professional fighters.



ROLE LEVEL ADVANCEMENT TABLES

THE ADEPT

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+2
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+2
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	+3
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+3
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+3
12th	+6	+4	+4	+8	+4
13th	+6	+4	+4	+8	+4
14th	+7	+4	+4	+9	+4
15th	+7	+5	+5	+9	+4
16th	+8	+5	+5	+10	+5
17th	+8	+5	+5	+10	+5
18th	+9	+6	+6	+11	+5
19th	+9	+6	+6	+11	+5
20th	+10	+6	+6	+12	+6

THE WARRIOR

Level	Combat	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Reputation
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	+0
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	+1
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	+2
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	+2
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	+2
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	+2
11th	+11	+7	+3	+3	+3
12th	+12	+8	+4	+4	+3
13th	+13	+8	+4	+4	+3
14th	+14	+9	+4	+4	+3
15th	+15	+9	+5	+5	+4
16th	+16	+10	+5	+5	+4
17th	+17	+10	+5	+5	+4
18th	+18	+11	+6	+6	+4
19th	+19	+11	+6	+6	+5
20th	+20	+12	+6	+6	+5

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

The Narrator will tell you when your hero advances in level. When this happens, do the following:

- Decide whether to add a level to your hero's existing role (or one of your hero's existing roles, for mixed-role heroes) or to add a level in a new role. See the next section, **Mixed-Role Heroes**, for details on this.
- Look at the **Level-Dependent Benefits** table and the level table for your hero's role(s). Note any increases to combat bonus, saving throws, skill ranks, and reputation.
- Pick a new feat for your hero from among the feats available for the new role level. Adepts may choose a new supernatural power in place of a new feat.
- If your hero's new total level is divisible by six (6th, 12th, or 18th), increase one of your hero's ability scores by 1.

MIXED-ROLE HEROES

Heroes may acquire other roles as they progress in level, becoming mixed-role heroes. The traits from a hero's different roles combine or mix, so a mixed-role hero has versatility at the expense of focus.

As a general rule, the traits of a mixed-role hero are the sum of the traits of each of the hero's roles, as follows:

LEVEL

Total level is a character's total number of levels in all roles. For example, a hero who is a 2nd-level warrior and 1st-level adept has a total level of 3rd. Total level is used to determine a hero's benefits on the **Level-Dependent Benefits** table.

Role level is a hero's level in a particular role. For a hero whose levels are all in the same role, total level and role level is the same thing. Role level is used to determine the hero's benefits from each particular role.

THE EXPERT

Level	Combat	Good Save	Normal Save	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+1
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+2
5th	+3	+4	+1	+2
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+3
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3
11th	+8	+7	+3	+3
12th	+9	+8	+4	+4
13th	+9	+8	+4	+4
14th	+10	+9	+4	+4
15th	+11	+9	+5	+4
16th	+12	+10	+5	+5
17th	+12	+10	+5	+5
18th	+13	+11	+6	+5
19th	+14	+11	+6	+5
20th	+15	+12	+6	+6

For example, certain powers are dependent solely on adept level; levels in other roles don't count.

CORE ABILITY

Your hero's core ability is that of the hero's first role. So a hero who starts out as an expert, then later adds levels as a warrior, has the expert core ability, but not the warrior core ability. Characters cannot have more than one core ability.

COMBAT

Add the combat bonuses for each role together to get the hero's total combat bonus.

SAVING THROWS

The hero's save bonuses equal the save bonuses for the hero's first role, plus the save bonuses for each additional role, minus 2. For example a 1st-level adept (Will save bonus +2), who adds a level of warrior, does not gain any save bonuses (since the 1st level of warrior has no save bonuses greater than +2). If the character adds another level of warrior upon becoming 3rd level, he gets a +1 Fortitude save bonus (the warrior's +3 bonus for 2nd-level, minus 2).

REPUTATION

The hero's reputation bonus equals the reputation bonus for the hero's first role, plus the reputation bonuses for each additional role.

SKILLS

The hero gains the normal additional skill ranks for that role's level. So a warrior who adds a level of expert gains 8 skill ranks for that level. Conversely, an expert who adds a level of warrior gets only 4 skill ranks for that level (like a normal warrior does).

FEATS

A mixed-role hero gains one feat per level like everyone else. The role acquired at each level determines the feat list you choose from. For



example, if you add a level of adept to your hero, you choose the hero's feat for that level from the adept's list of available feats (General and Adept). Characters gaining a level of adept may choose a supernatural power in place of that level's feat, as usual.

CHARACTERISTICS

This section helps you round out your hero. Here you pick your hero's name, age, and other details. You'll choose a virtue and a vice for your hero's nature. This section also explains how heroes can go that extra mile when they need to pull out all the stops in order to succeed, using extra effort and the strength of their Conviction.

DETAILS

A lot of details go into making your hero more than just a collection of numbers; things like name, gender, age, appearance, and so forth help to define who he or she is. Take a moment, if you haven't already, to consider the following things about your True20 character.

NAME

What is your character's name? You can give your hero any name you like, based on a real-world name, one from fiction, or a name entirely of your own creation. Appropriate names depend on the kind of character and the type of story you're telling, so consult with your group and your Narrator.

GENDER

Is your hero male or female? There's no requirement to play a character of the same gender as you. In fact, you may find it interesting to play a hero of a different gender, to experience a little of what life is like from another perspective.

AGE

How old is your character? Heroes tend to range from their teens to middle age, but some heroes are older, depending on a hero's background, possibly much older.

Consider the effects of age on the hero. A teenager on her first adventure away from home isn't likely to have the same views as a mature adult. A hero's age may influence the choice of certain traits. Older characters are likely to have lower physical ability scores, for example, while younger characters may have fewer Craft and Knowledge skills (having had less time to train in them).

APPEARANCE

What does your hero look like? Consider things like the character's race, sex, and other factors in appearance. Is the character short or tall? What about hair and eye color? Does the hero have any distinguishing marks or unique features?

PERSONALITY

How would you describe your hero's personality? While heroes tend to share a desire to use their powers for good and uphold the law, they show a diverse range of attitudes. One hero may be dedicated to the ideals of truth, justice, and equality, while another is willing to break the rules in order to ensure things get done. Some heroes are forthright and cheerful while others are grim and unrelenting.

CHARISMA VS. APPEARANCE

Although Charisma can be a measure of attractiveness, it isn't necessarily a reflection of a character's physical appearance. Charisma is much more about personality, affability, and similar traits, rather than looks. A high Charisma hero might be physically attractive, however they could also be fairly plain looking, but with a forceful and magnetic personality. Likewise, a low or average Charisma character might be good-looking, even striking, but with a bland or unpleasant personality. You're free to make up the details as best suits your character in the game, with the Narrator's help and guidance.

Consider your hero's attitudes and personality traits, particularly in light of the hero's nature.

NATURE

All intelligent creatures make moral choices, to live according to their better nature or to give in to immoral impulses. Many walk a difficult line between the two. Each character in True20 has a particular nature, which is made up of a virtue and a vice.

During character creation, select a virtue and a vice to decide your character's nature. A list of examples is given below, but you can make up your own virtues and vices with the Narrator's permission. The key is to give your hero one good quality (virtue) and one bad quality (vice).

VIRTUES

Courageous, Free-Spirited, Bold, Generous, Gregarious, Hopeful, Daring, Thoughtful, Compassionate, Industrious, Honest, Fair, Kind, Determined.

VICES

Cowardly, Hidebound, Fearful, Miserly, Cynical, Impulsive, Selfish, Lazy, Capricious, Petty, Arrogant, Stubborn, Manipulative, Insensitive.

CHANGING NATURE

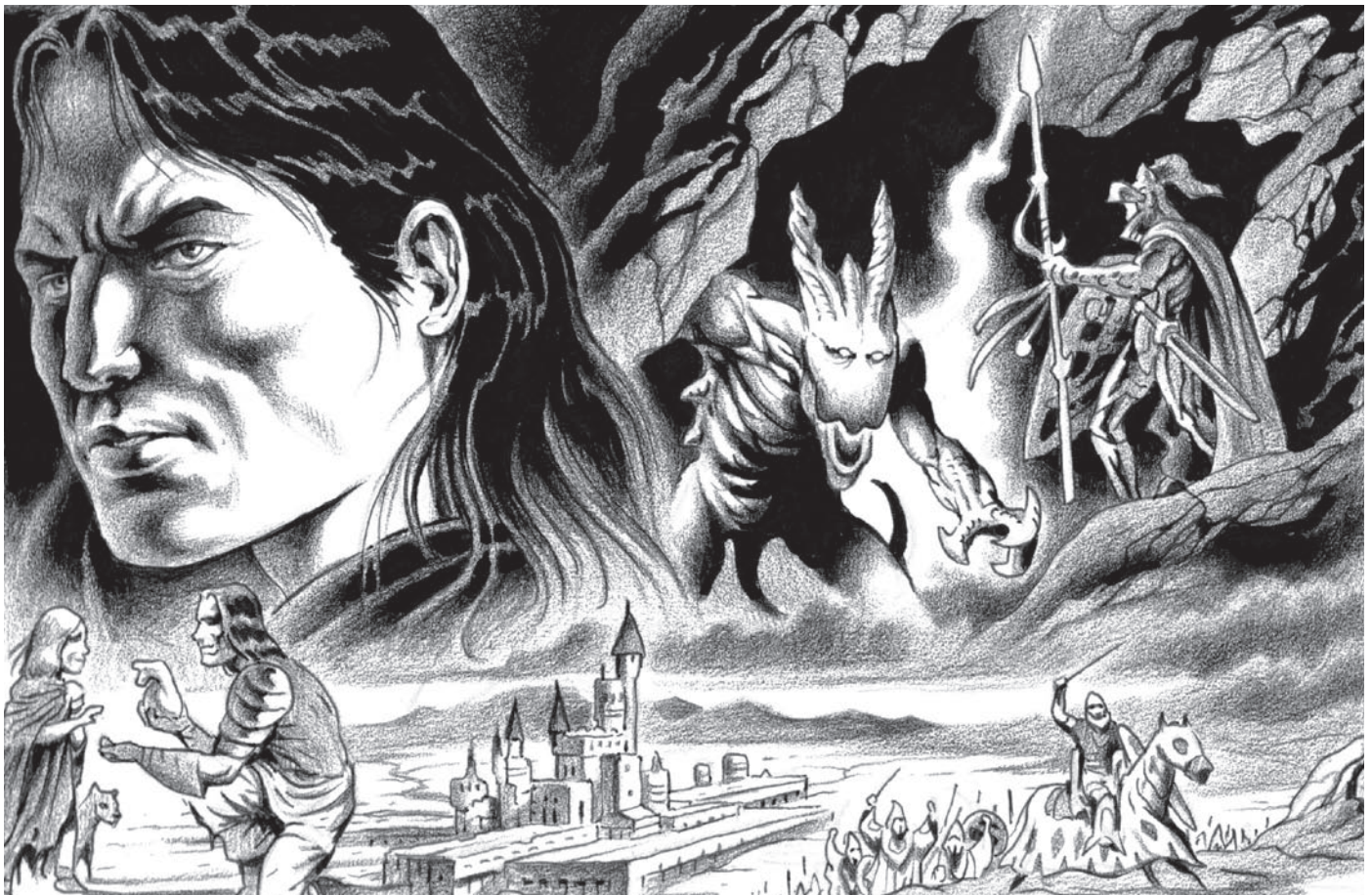
Generally speaking, a person's nature is fixed. Virtue and vice are deep-seated facets of the character's personality; some might say the halves of the soul. So changing one's true nature is difficult.

If the Narrator allows, you may change your hero's virtue or vice at the cost of a point of Conviction, which cannot be regained until the hero gains a new level. You can never *eliminate* either nature, as everyone must have both a virtue and a vice. Changing each one takes Conviction, so changing both requires two Conviction points.

At the Narrator's discretion, certain major events in a character's life can lead to a change in nature (either virtue or vice or both), but these events are largely beyond the players' control. The Narrator shouldn't allow changes in nature to happen lightly; they're pivotal events in an individual's life.

CONVICTION

Whether it's luck, talent, or sheer determination, heroes have something setting them apart from everyone else, allowing them to perform amazing deeds under the most difficult circumstances. In True20, that something is Conviction. Spending a Conviction point can make the difference between success and failure.



OPTION: CONVICTION AND CHARISMA

At the Narrator's option, there may be a connection between Conviction and a character's Charisma, representing force of personality, sense of self...a measure of a hero's conviction, in other words. This makes Charisma a somewhat more useful ability and encourages charming devil-may-care heroes with extraordinary luck and determination. On the other hand, it somewhat limits the use of Conviction for other characters.

In this option, a character's starting Conviction is equal to his or her Charisma score, plus 1. The character's starting Conviction increases by 1 every two levels as normal. This means someone with average (+0) Charisma starts with 1 point of Conviction. Negative Charisma means a "debt" of Conviction the hero must "pay off" until the Charisma score plus starting Conviction for level is a positive number. So a character with below average Charisma (-1) has *no* Conviction until reaching 3rd level (when the character has a starting Conviction of 1).

Tying Conviction to Charisma in this way makes the ability more valuable, even for heroes who don't emphasize social interaction or leadership qualities. Narrators may find it useful if players believe they can gain an unfair advantage by assigning a penalty to Charisma and using those ability points to make their heroes inordinately capable in other areas, with no corresponding drawbacks.

GAINING CONVICTION

Characters have Conviction based on their level (see **Level-Based Benefits**, earlier in this chapter). As heroes improve in level, their maximum Conviction increases.

USING CONVICTION

Unless otherwise noted, spending a Conviction point is a reaction, taking no time, and can be done at any time. You may spend only one Conviction point per round on any given benefit, but may otherwise spend as many points as you have available. You can spend Conviction for any of the following:

RE-ROLL

One Conviction point allows you to re-roll any die roll you make and take the better of the two rolls. On a result of 1 through 10 on the second roll, add 10 to the result; an 11 or higher remains as-is (so the second roll is always a result of 11-20). You must spend the Conviction point to improve a roll *before* the Narrator announces the result of your roll.

ACTIVATE CORE ABILITY

Activating your role's core ability costs one Conviction point. See the role descriptions in this chapter for details on their core abilities.

CHALLENGE

You can spend a Conviction point when performing a challenge (see **The Basics** in the **Introduction**). If you do so, you ignore up to a -5 penalty or +5 increase in Difficulty from the challenge. In essence, you perform the challenge as if it were a normal check. If the challenge imposes a greater Difficulty increase or penalty, you only ignore the first +/-5.

HEROIC FEAT

You can spend a Conviction point to gain the benefits of a feat your hero doesn't already have for one round. You must be capable of acquiring the feat normally, meaning it must be a feat available to your role(s) and you must meet all the prerequisites. For feats that can be acquired multiple times, you gain the benefit of one acquisition of the feat by spending a Conviction point.

DODGE BONUS

You can spend a Conviction point whenever you are denied your dodge bonus, but are still capable of action (surprised, flat-footed, and so forth). In this case, you retain your dodge bonus until your next action.

SURGE

Gain an additional standard or move action, before or after your normal actions for the round (your choice). Using this extra action does not change your place in the initiative order. You can use a standard

action gained from a surge to start or complete a full round action in conjunction with your normal actions for the round.

CANCEL FATIGUE

Any time you would suffer fatigue (including the effects of using powers and extra effort), you can spend a Conviction point and reduce the amount of fatigue by one level (so you're only winded by a fatigued result, fatigued by an exhausted result, etc.).

RECOVER

You can spend a Conviction point to recover faster from damage. A Conviction point allows you to immediately shake off a stunned or fatigued condition. If you are exhausted, spending a Conviction point causes you to become fatigued. If you have suffered damage, a Conviction point allows you an immediate recovery check (see **Recovery** in **Chapter 6**). This check is made normally; the Conviction point just allows you to make it in addition to your normal recovery check. While disabled, you can spend a Conviction point to take a strenuous action for one round without your condition worsening to dying.

ESCAPE DEATH

Spending a Conviction point automatically stabilizes a dying character (you or someone you are assisting) although this doesn't protect the character from further damage.

REGAINING CONVICTION

Heroes regain expended Conviction points in a few ways:

First, heroes regain one point of Conviction each day. The player chooses a time appropriate for the hero, such as in the morning, at midday, at sunset, or at midnight. By default, heroes regain Conviction in the morning (representing the renewed hope of a new day).

Second, heroes regain Conviction by acting in accordance with their nature. When a hero successfully does something in accordance with one of his natures that affirms his conviction, he regains a point of Conviction. The Narrator decides when an action is appropriate for the hero's natures and awards the Conviction point if the hero is successful.

Note that heroes can follow *either* of their natures, virtue or vice, to regain Conviction, and the Narrator may occasionally use this to put temptation in a hero's path. A good hero with a vice of Greed might have the opportunity to steal, for example, and regain Conviction. If the hero steals to further his goal, he gets a point of Conviction, but also has to deal with the consequences of his actions. Likewise, an otherwise amoral character who shows an unusual kindness or streak of honor may be following her virtue to regain Conviction. Which nature a character chooses to follow most often, tends to indicate what kind of person he or she is.

OPTION: REPUTATION QUALITIES

Not all reputations are created equal. Some may have a reputation for honest dealings while another hard-bitten hero has a menacing reputation that leaves them quaking in their boots. Narrators wanting to differentiate between these sorts of reputations may implement the option of Reputation qualities. These are specialized feats associated with a character's Reputation. See **Chapter 3** for details on feats and how they apply to *True20* heroes.

CONVINCING (GENERAL)

You're known as trustworthy (whether that reputation is deserved or not). On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Bluff skill checks, although a failed Bluff check with a particular character may result in you losing this bonus against them in the future.

DIPLOMATIC (GENERAL)

You're known for your open and honest dealings. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Diplomacy skill checks.

EXCELLENCE (GENERAL)

You're known for a particular skill, chosen when you acquire this feat. For every three ranks you have in the skill, you gain a +1 bonus on Reputation checks with people who may recognize your expertise.

INFLUENTIAL (GENERAL)

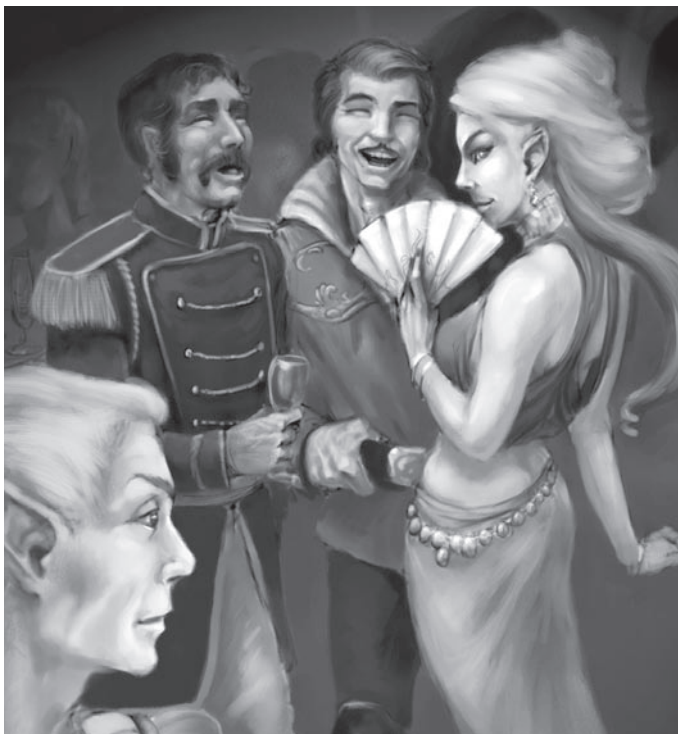
Your reputation opens doors. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Gather Information skill checks.

MENACING (GENERAL)

Your reputation intimidates people. On a successful Reputation check, you can add half your Reputation bonus to your Intimidate skill checks.

RENOWN (GENERAL)

You're especially well known (famous or infamous, depending on who you're dealing with). Each time you acquire this feat, increase your Reputation bonus by +3.



Third, the Narrator can award the heroes Conviction for a particularly impressive success or achievement in the adventure that renews confidence and faith. Overcoming a difficult challenge or solving a complex puzzle might give the heroes a burst of inspiration in the form of renewed Conviction. The Narrator chooses when to do this, but it should only happen once or twice in an adventure, and may not occur at all in some adventures.

REPUTATION

Reputation is used to determine whether a Narrator character recognizes a hero. Those who recognize the hero are more likely to help the hero, provided the hero has a positive reputation. A high Reputation bonus also makes it difficult for heroes to hide their identities and go unnoticed.

Most of the time, the Narrator decides when a hero's reputation is relevant to a scene. The Narrator makes a Reputation check for a Narrator character that might be influenced in some fashion due to the hero's fame or infamy.

FAME AND INFAMY

Whether reputation has a positive or negative connotation depends on the point of view of the person who recognizes the hero.

When a character has a positive opinion of a hero's reputation, the hero is considered *famous*. Fame, when recognized, provides a bonus to certain interaction skill checks.

When a character has a negative opinion of a hero's reputation, the hero is considered *infamous*. Also, at the Narrator's option, a hero might be considered infamous in certain situations due to events that have transpired in the past. Infamy, when recognized, provides a penalty to certain interaction skill checks.

USING THE REPUTATION BONUS

Whenever the Narrator decides a character's reputation is a factor in a scene, make a Reputation check (Difficulty 25) for the Narrator character involved. A Reputation check is $d20 + \text{the hero's Reputation bonus} + \text{the Narrator character's Intelligence}$. (Some Knowledge skill modifiers might apply instead of the Intelligence score, if the hero would be well known in the field covered by a Knowledge skill.) Modifiers to the Reputation check depend on the hero and the Narrator character in question, as shown in the table. Note that if the Narrator character has no possible way of recognizing a hero, then the Reputation check isn't necessary (or even possible).

If the Reputation check succeeds, the Narrator character recognizes the hero. This provides a +4 bonus or a -4 penalty on checks involving interaction skills for the duration of the scene.

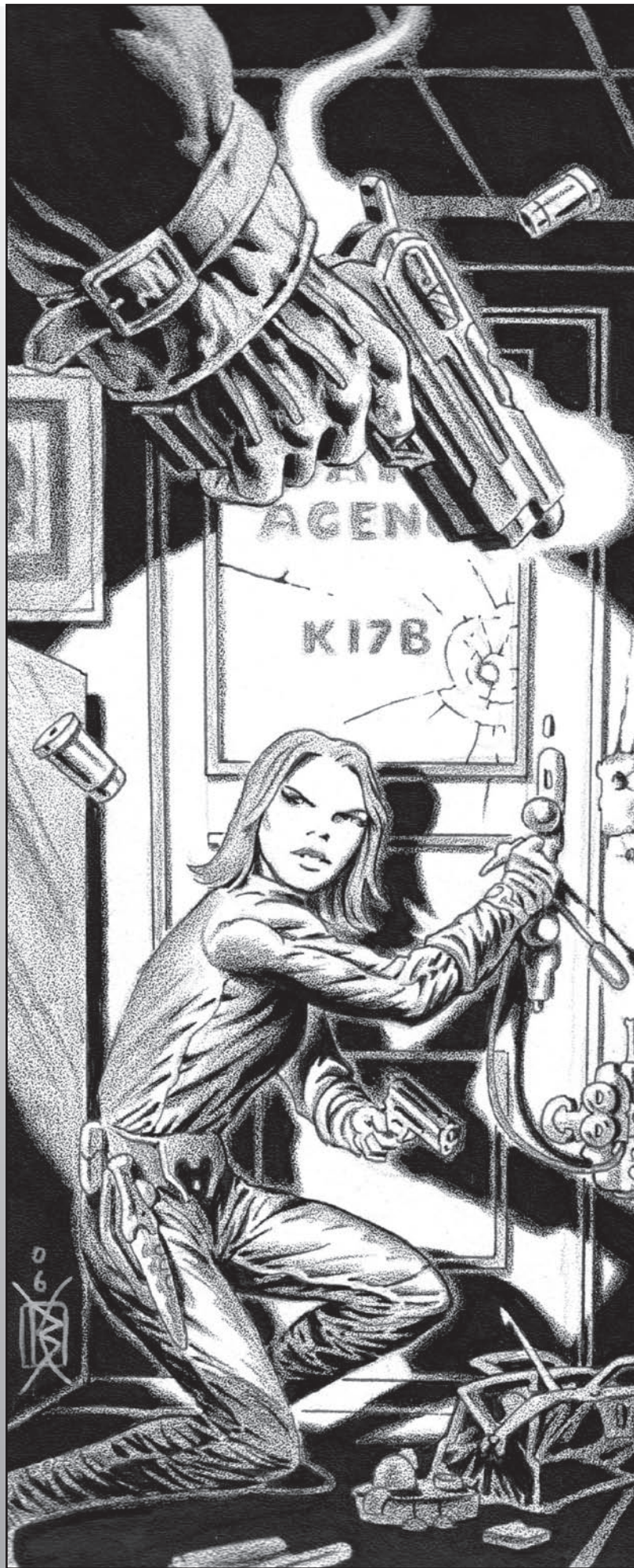
Situation	Reputation Check Modifier
The hero is famous, known far and wide with either a positive or negative connotation	+10
Narrator character is part of the hero's professional or social circle	+5
The hero has some small amount of fame or notoriety	+2

The Narrator must decide that a character's fame or infamy can come into play in a given situation to make a Reputation check necessary. A character that doesn't know, or know of, the hero can't be influenced by the hero's reputation.

CHAPTER TWO: SKILLS

HEROES SLIP UNSEEN PAST THE GUARDS OF A VILLAINOUS MASTERMIND. THEY TAME AND TRAIN THE BEASTS OF THE WILD. THEY PIECE TOGETHER CLUES TO A TYRANT'S LATEST PLOT. THEY RUN ALONG LEDGES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT IN PURSUIT OF THEIR ENEMIES. THEY CHANGE MINDS AND WIN HEARTS.

THEY DO SO THROUGH THE USE OF VARIOUS **SKILLS**, DESCRIBED IN THIS CHAPTER.



SKILL BASICS

Skills are learned abilities acquired through a combination of training (skill ranks) and natural talent (an ability). These factors combine to form the parts of a skill check, which is a roll of the die, plus the skill's rank, key ability score, and any applicable modifiers.:

**Skill check = d20 + skill rank +
key ability score + modifiers**

The higher the roll, the better the result. You're usually looking for a total that equals or exceeds a particular Difficulty or another character's check total.

SKILL RANK

Your *rank* in a skill indicates how well trained you are with it. You assign ranks from your role and level to skills, and the maximum rank you can have in any skill is your level +3. You can use some skills even if you aren't trained in them (having no rank). This is known as using a skill *untrained*.

ABILITY SCORE

Each skill has a *key ability*, applied to the skill's checks. Each skill's key ability is noted in its description.

MODIFIERS

Miscellaneous modifiers to skill checks include favorable or unfavorable conditions, bonuses from feats, and penalties for not having proper tools, among others.

ACQUIRING SKILLS

You choose a certain number of skills your character knows at 1st level, based on your role and Intelligence score. For example, a warrior knows four skills at 1st level, plus or minus the character's Intelligence score, so a warrior with Intelligence +1 is trained in five skills at 1st level. A 1st-level character is always trained in at least one skill, regardless of Intelligence. These starting skills begin at four ranks, the maximum rank for 1st level.

IMPROVING SKILLS

As your hero advances in level, you gain additional ranks to assign to skills. You can assign these ranks to existing skills your hero knows, improving them up to the maximum rank of (level +3) or you can assign earned skill ranks to entirely new skills, making your hero trained with a rank in that skill.

Example: A 1st level adept has *Concentration*, *Diplomacy*, *Knowledge* (supernatural), and *Stealth* as her starting skills, all at rank 4. At 2nd level, the adept gains 4 more skill ranks. She may add one rank to each of her known skills, increasing them to 5 ranks each (the maximum rank for 2nd level), apply all 4 ranks to an entirely new skill, or split them up, perhaps adding a rank each to *Concentration* and *Diplomacy*, while applying the remaining 2 ranks to learning a new skill.

UNTRAINED SKILLS

Characters can perform some tasks without any training in a skill, using only raw talent (as defined by their ability scores), but trained characters tend to be better at such things. If a skill description doesn't include "Trained Only," you can attempt tasks involving that skill even if you have no training in it. Your bonus for the skill check is just the key ability score for that skill, with no ranks added in. Untrained characters can still hide or swim, for example; they're just not as good at it as those with training.

Skills that cannot be used untrained are designated as "Trained Only" in their descriptions. Attempts to use these skills untrained automatically fail. In addition to trained only skills, some skills given in this chapter may be in appropriate to certain settings, and the Narrator should feel free to limit access to those skills or ban them entirely. For example, a medieval knight isn't going to learn the Computers skill and while a peasant might pick up ranks in Drive for his ox-cart, he won't be using it to compete in the Indy 500.

HOW SKILLS WORK

When you use a skill, make a skill check to see how well you do. The higher the result, the better the outcome. Based on the circumstances, your check result must equal or beat a particular Difficulty number. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll. See Checks in the Introduction for more information.

INTERACTION SKILLS

Certain skills, called *interaction skills*, are aimed at dealing with others through social interaction. Interaction skills allow you to influence attitudes and get others to cooperate with you. Since interaction skills are intended for dealing with others socially, they have certain requirements.

First, you must actually be able to interact with the subject or subjects of the skill. That means the subject must be aware of you and able to understand you. If you don't speak the same language, or they can't hear you for some reason, that's the same as working without the proper tools, imposing a -4 on your skill check, since you have to convey your meaning through gestures, body language, tone, and so forth.

Interaction skills work best on intelligent subjects, ones with Intelligence -3 or higher. You can use them on creatures with lower Intelligence (-4 or -5) but with a -8 penalty on your check; they're just too dumb to get the subtleties of your point. You can't use interaction skills at all on subjects lacking a mental ability. (Try convincing a rock to be your friend—or afraid of you—sometime.)

Some interaction skills last a particular amount of time. Using Intimidate to demoralize an opponent, for example, lasts for only a few seconds (one round). In these cases, the time is always measured from the subject's point of view. If you successfully demoralize an opponent, the effect lasts one full round starting on the target's initiative and ending on the target's place in the initiative order on the following round.

You can use interaction skills against groups, but you must be trying to influence the entire group in the same way. You can use Diplomacy, for example, to sway a group of people and improve their attitude toward you, but you must be trying to convince all of them about the same thing. Everyone in the group must be able to hear and understand you. You make one interaction skill check and the Narrator compares it against each person in the group (or against an average value for the group, to speed things up).

SPECIALTY SKILLS

Some skills cover a wide range of knowledge or techniques. These skills are actually groups of similar skills, called *specialty skills*. When learning one of these skills, you must choose a specialty or a particular aspect of the skill your character is trained in. For example, you might choose the history specialty of Knowledge or the leatherworking specialty of Craft. Skill ranks in one specialty do not provide training in the skill's other specialties.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes each skill, including its common uses. You may be able to use skills for tasks other than those given here. The Narrator sets the Difficulty and decides the results in those cases.

The format for skill descriptions follows. Items that don't apply to a specific skill are left out of its description.

SKILL NAME

KEY ABILITY, TRAINED ONLY, INTERACTION, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION, REQUIRES TOOLS

The skill name line and the line below it contain the following information:

Skill Name: What the skill is called.

Key Ability: The ability applied to the skill check.

Trained Only: If “Trained Only” is included, you must be trained in the skill in order to use it. If “Trained Only” is absent, characters may use it untrained.

Interaction: If “Interaction” is included, the skill is an interaction skill.

Requires Specialization: If “Requires Specialization” is included, you must choose a specialty for the skill.

Requires Tools: If “Requires Tools” is included, you need to have the proper tools to use the skill. Not having the proper tools results in a –4 penalty to the skill check.

The skill name line is followed by a brief description of the skill and five other categories:

Check: How to make a check for the skill, what the results of the check are, and the basic Difficulty.

Challenges: Any specific challenges associated with the skill and their effects.

Try Again: Conditions on retrying a check with the skill. If this section is absent, the skill can be retried an unlimited number of times.

Action: The type of action required to use the skill, how long it takes.

Special: Any extra information about the skill.

SKILLS					
Skill	Ability	Untrained?	Specialization?	Action	Take 10/20
Acrobatics	Dex	No	No	React or move	10
Bluff	Cha	Yes	No	Standard or full	10
Climb	Str	Yes	No	Move or full	10
Computers	Int	No	No	—	10/20
Concentration	Wis	Yes	No	React	—
Craft	Int	No	Yes	—	10 (20 on repair)
Diplomacy	Cha	Yes	No	Full	10
Disable Device	Int	No	No	Full	10/20
Disguise	Cha	Yes	No	—	10
Drive	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Escape Artist	Dex	Yes	No	Full	20
Gather Information	Cha	Yes	No	—	10
Handle Animal	Cha	Yes	No	—	10/20
Intimidate	Cha	Yes	No	Standard or full	10
Jump	Str	Yes	No	Move	10
Knowledge	Int	No	Yes	React or full	10/20
Language	—	No	Yes	—	—
Medicine	Wis	No	No	—	10/20
Notice	Wis	Yes	No	React or move	10/20
Perform	Cha	Yes	Yes	—	10
Pilot	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Ride	Dex	No	No	Move	10
Search	Int	Yes	No	Full	10/20
Sense Motive	Wis	Yes	No	React	10
Sleight of Hand	Dex	No	No	Standard	10
Stealth	Dex	Yes	No	Move	10
Survival	Wis	Yes	No	—	10
Swim	Str	Yes	No	Move or full	10

An “—” entry in the **Action** column means the skill takes longer than a full round. See the skill description for details.

ACROBATICS

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

You can flip, dive, roll, tumble, and perform other acrobatic maneuvers.

Check: You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 5) to lessen the damage from a fall. Subtract the amount your roll exceeds the Difficulty (in feet) from the distance of a fall before determining damage. For example, an Acrobatics check of 20 (15 more than the Difficulty) reduces the effective distance of a fall by 15 feet. A fall reduced to 0 feet does no damage. You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 25) to move through a space occupied by an opponent or obstacle (moving over, under, or around). A failed roll means you don't get past the obstacle.

Balancing: You can walk on a precarious surface. A successful check lets you move half your speed along the surface as a move action. A failure indicates you spend your move action just keeping your balance and do not move. A failure by 5 or more indicates you fall. The Difficulty is based on the surface. You lose your dodge bonus to Defense while balancing. If you take any damage while balancing, you must make another Acrobatics check to avoid falling.

Surface	Difficulty
More than 12 inches wide	5
7–12 inches wide	10
2–6 inches wide	15
Less than 2 inches wide	20
Uneven or angled	+5
Slippery	+5

Avoiding Being Tripped: You can make an Acrobatics check in place of the normal Strength or Dexterity check to avoid a trip attack (see **Trip** in **Chapter 6**). You cannot use Acrobatics to make trip attacks, however.

Instant Up: You can make an Acrobatics check (Difficulty 20) to stand up from a prone position as a free action rather than a move action.

Performance: You can use Acrobatics as if it were the Perform skill to impress an audience. See **Perform** later in this chapter.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Acrobatics:

Accelerated Acrobatics: You can try to cross a precarious surface faster than normal. If you increase the Difficulty by 5, you can move your full speed as a move action. Moving twice your speed in a round requires the penalty plus two skill checks, one for each move action. You can also accept this penalty to charge across a precarious surface; this requires one skill check per multiple of your speed (or fraction thereof) that you charge.

Perfect Balance: In return for increasing the Difficulty of your Acrobatics check by 5, you move with such grace and agility that you maintain your dodge bonus while balancing.

Perilous Balance: You can shake or disturb the surface on which you are balancing (e.g., swaying on a tightrope). If your check succeeds after increasing the Difficulty by 5, you keep your balance and impose a +5 modifier on the Difficulty of all Acrobatics checks others must make on the surface until the next round.

Try Again: No.

Action: You can try to reduce damage from a fall as a reaction once per fall. Balancing while moving one-half your speed is a move action. Accelerated movement, allowing you to balance while moving your full speed, is also a move action.

Special: The balancing aspects of Acrobatics can be used untrained.

BLUFF

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

Bluff is the skill of making the outlandish seem credible. It covers acting, fast-talking, trickery, and subterfuge.

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Bluff or Sense Motive check, whichever is higher (it's harder to bluff someone who knows all the tricks). Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can work against you: the bluff is hard to believe, or the action the bluff requires goes against the target's self-interest, nature, or orders.

If it's important, the Narrator can distinguish between the two. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky, and the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target's Sense Motive check succeeds by 11 or more, he sees through the bluff, and would have even if it had not placed any unusual demands on him (that is, even without the +10 bonus).

A successful Bluff check indicates the target reacts as you want, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less), or the target believes something you want him to believe.

Example Circumstances	Sense Motive Modifier
The target wants to believe you.	–5
The bluff is believable and doesn't affect the target much one way or the other.	+0
The bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at some kind of risk.	+5
The bluff is hard to believe or entails a large risk for the target.	+10
The bluff is way out there; it's almost too incredible to consider.	+20

Diversion: You can use Bluff to help you hide. A successful Bluff check gives you the diversion needed to attempt a Stealth check while people are aware of you.

Feint: You can use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat. If your Bluff check succeeds, the next attack you make against the target ignores his dodge or parry bonus to Defense.

Innuendo: You can use Bluff to send secret messages while talking about other things. The Difficulty for a basic message is 10. Complex messages have Difficulties of 15 or 20. The recipient of the message, and anyone listening in, makes a Bluff or Sense Motive check against the same Difficulty to understand your message. Whether trying to send or understand a message, a failure by 5 or more points means the receiver misinterprets the message in some fashion.

Seduction: You can use Bluff to convince someone else you are a potential romantic partner, provided they could possibly be attracted to you (in the Narrator's judgment). Make a Bluff check against your target's Sense Motive check. Success improves the target's attitude like a use of the Diplomacy skill. Seduction is a one-time modification of the target's attitude, not a long-term change.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Bluff:

Conversational Paralysis: In return for a –5 penalty to your Bluff check, a successful check dazes your target for one round. Your claims are so outlandish the target can do nothing but sputter or reel in confusion. This skill challenge does not work in combat situations. Each additional –5 check penalty you accept increases the duration of the effect by one round.

Durable Lie: In return for a –5 penalty on your check, your target believes your bluff longer than usual. The target continues to act as you wish for an additional round. You can apply another –5 penalty to extend this to two rounds. This challenge does not work with the feint use of Bluff.

Try Again: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious to try again in the same circumstances. For feinting in combat, you may try again freely.

Action: A bluff takes at least a full round, but can take much longer if you try something elaborate. Using Bluff as a feint in combat is a standard action, as is using Bluff to create a diversion to hide.

CLIMB

STRENGTH

You're skilled in scaling angled and uneven surfaces.

Check: With each successful Climb check, you can move up, down, or across a slope, wall, or other steep incline at one-quarter your normal speed. The Difficulty of the check depends on the conditions of the climb. If the climb is less than 10 feet, reduce the Difficulty by 5.

A failed Climb check means you make no progress, and a check that fails by 5 or more means you fall from whatever height you attained (unless you are secured with some kind of harness or other equipment).

If you fall, make a Climb check (Difficulty equal to climb's Difficulty + 20). Success means you arrest your fall about halfway and suffer no damage.

It's somewhat easier to catch someone else who falls, assuming they are within arm's reach. Make a Climb check (Difficulty equal to climb's Difficulty +10) to do so. If you fail the check, you do not catch the other person. If you fail by 5 or more, you fall as well.

Difficulty	Example Wall or Surface or Task
0	A slope too steep to walk up. A ladder.
5	A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
10	A rope with a wall to brace against. A knotted rope. A surface with sizable ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a rugged cliff-face.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a rough natural rock surface or a tree. An unknotted rope. Pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands.
20	An uneven surface with just a few narrow handholds and footholds, such as a coarse masonry wall or a sheer cliff face with a few crevices and small toeholds.
25	A rough surface with no real handholds or footholds, such as a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface can't be climbed.
–10	Climbing inside a chimney, or other location where you can brace against two opposite walls (reduces normal Difficulty by 10).
–5	Climbing a corner where you can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces normal Difficulty by 5).
+5	Surface is slippery (increases normal Difficulty by 5).

Fighting While Climbing: Since you can't easily avoid attacks, you are flat-footed while climbing (losing your dodge bonus to Defense). Any time you take damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the Difficulty of the climb. Failure means you fall.



Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Climb:

Accelerated Climb: You can try to climb more quickly than normal. By accepting a +5 Difficulty modifier to your check, you can move half your speed instead of one-quarter your speed while climbing. You can accept this challenge twice, for a total Difficulty modifier of +10, to move at your normal speed while climbing.

Fighting Climb: You can accept a +5 Difficulty modifier to a Climb check to maintain your dodge bonus to defense while climbing.

Secured Climb: If you take a +5 Difficulty modifier to your Climb check, you do not have to make a Climb check to maintain your position if you take damage. You climb in such a way as to brace yourself for any attacks.

Action: Climbing is a move action.

Special: Someone using a rope can haul a character up (or lower a character down) by sheer strength. Use a character's carrying capacity to determine how much weight he can lift in this way (see **Carrying** in **Chapter 6: Playing the Game**).

COMPUTERS

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY

You're trained in the operation of computers and modifying or creating software.

Check: Most normal computer operations—using software, getting your e-mail—don't require a Computers check and can be done untrained. However, searching an unfamiliar network for a particular file, writing programs, altering existing programs to perform differently, and breaking computer security all require skill checks (and training).

Find File: The Difficulty and the time required to locate a file on an unfamiliar system are determined by the size of the site, from 10 for a personal computer to 25 for a massive network. Finding public information on the Internet does not fall under this category; this only pertains to finding files on unfamiliar computer systems.

Defeat Computer Security: The Difficulty of the check is determined by the quality of the security installed to defend the system, from 20 for minimal security to 40 for the best-defended systems. If the check fails by 5 or more, the system immediately alerts its administrator that there has been an unauthorized entry. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify you or cut off access to the system.

Defend Security: If you are the system administrator for a site (which may be as simple as being the owner of a personal computer), you can defend it against intruders. If the site alerts you to an intruder, you can attempt to cut off the intruder's access or even to identify the intruder.

To cut off access, make an opposed Computers check against the intruder. If the check succeeds, the intruder's session is ended. The intruder might be able to defeat your security and access your site again, but has to start over. Attempting to cut off access takes a full round.

One surefire way to prevent further access is to simply shut the site down. With a single computer, that's no big deal, but on a large site with many computers (or computers controlling functions that can't be interrupted), it may be time-consuming or even impossible.

To identify the intruder, make an opposed Computers check. If the check succeeds, you learn the site from which the intruder is operating (if it's a single computer, you learn the name of the computer's owner). Identifying the intruder requires 1 minute and is a separate check from cutting off access. This check can only be made if the intruder is accessing your site for the entire length of the check—if the intruder's session ends before you make the Computers check, your attempt fails.

Degrade Programming: You can destroy or alter programs on a computer to make it harder or impossible to use. Crashing a computer with a Difficulty 10 check simply shuts it down. Its user can restart it without a skill check, although restarting takes at least 1 minute. Destroying programming with a Difficulty 15 check makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired. Damaging programming with a Difficulty 20 check imposes a -4 penalty on all checks made with the computer (sometimes this is preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might not know anything is wrong, and won't simply decide to use a different computer).

Fixing damaged programming requires an hour and a Computers check against a Difficulty equal to the Difficulty for damaging it + 5. Destroyed programming must be re-installed.

Write Program: You can create a program to help with a specific task. Doing so grants a +2 bonus to the task. A specific task, in this case, is one type of operation with one target. The Difficulty to write a program is 20; the time required is one hour.

Action: Computers requires at least a full-round action, usually a minute or more.

Special: You can take 10 when using the Computers skill. You can take 20 in some cases, but not those involving a penalty for failure. You cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security, for example.

CONCENTRATION

WISDOM

You can focus your mind and concentrate despite distractions.

Check: Make a Concentration check whenever you might be distracted (by damage, harsh weather, and so on). If the check succeeds, you may continue

what you are doing. If the check fails, the action you're attempting also fails. The check Difficulty depends on the nature of the distraction.

Distraction	Difficulty
Damaged during the action	10 + damage bonus
Taking continuous damage during the action	10 + half of continuous damage bonus last dealt
Vigorous motion (bouncy vehicle ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, riding a horse)	10
Violent motion (very rough vehicle ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, galloping horse)	15
Extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake)	20
Bound, grappling, or pinned	20
Weather is a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet	5
Weather is wind-driven hail, dust, or debris	10

Concentrating on Powers: Using or maintaining various supernatural powers often requires Concentration checks, particularly when distracted. See **Chapter 4** for more information.

Try Again: Yes, though a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure, such as the disruption of an action you were concentrating on.

Action: Making a Concentration check doesn't require an action; it is either a reaction (when attempted in response to a distraction) or part of another action (when attempted actively).

CRAFT

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION, REQUIRES TOOLS

Craft is actually a number of separate skills involving arts and crafts. You must choose a specialty, such as blacksmith, brewing, leatherworking, mechanics, or weaving. Training in one Craft specialty does not provide skill in other specialties.

Check: Craft skills are specifically focused on making things. To use a Craft skill effectively, you must have an appropriate set of tools.

Making Items: The Difficulty, time, and resources required to make an item depend on its complexity. Make a Wealth check against the Wealth Difficulty to acquire the necessary raw materials, and then make your Craft check. (Example Difficulties are given in the table.) If your Craft check succeeds, you make the item. If the Craft check fails, you do not produce a usable end result, and any raw materials are wasted.

Complexity	Craft Difficulty	Wealth Difficulty	Time	Examples
Simple	15	5	1 hr.	garment, household item
Moderate	20	10	12 hrs.	fine garment, lock, weapon
Complex	25	15	24 hrs.	plate armor, mechanism
Advanced	30	20	60 hrs.	building, vehicle

Repairing: You can use Craft skills to repair damaged items. In general, simple repairs have a Difficulty of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a Difficulty of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. The repairs have a cost 5 lower than making the item (negligible for simple items).

Forgery: Characters can use Craft to produce forgeries in their areas of specialty. The result of the Craft check becomes the Difficulty for a Notice check to detect the forgery. The Narrator can modify either the Craft or Notice check based on the conditions and the characters' familiarity with the original subject.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Craft:

Fast Craft: You may add +5 or +10 to the indicated Difficulty to craft an item. This increase allows you to make the item faster than usual, reducing the time to half or one-quarter normal, respectively.

Masterwork: By increasing Difficulty and cost by +5, you can make a masterwork item. These items are especially well made and provide a +1 bonus when used. For making masterwork weapons and armor, see **Chapter 5: Equipment**.

Try Again: Yes, although in some cases the Narrator may decide a failed attempt to repair an item has a negative effect, preventing further attempts.

Action: The time to make something varies depending on its complexity, as shown in the table. The Narrator may increase or decrease the time for a particular Craft project as necessary.

Special: Generally, you can take 10 when using a Craft skill, but can't take 20 since doing so represents multiple attempts, and you use up raw materials with each attempt. You can take 10 or take 20 on repair checks.

If you don't have the proper tools, you take a -4 penalty on Craft checks.

DIPLOMACY

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

You're skilled in dealing with people, from proper etiquette and social graces to a way with words and public speaking. Use this skill to make a good impression, negotiate, and win people over.

Check: You can change others' attitudes with a successful Diplomacy check. In negotiations, all participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks to see who gets the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve cases where two advocates plead opposing cases before a third party.

Diplomacy can influence a character's attitude. The Narrator chooses the character's initial attitude based on circumstances. Most of the time, people the heroes meet are indifferent toward them, but a specific situation may call for a different initial attitude. The Difficulties given on the **Influence** table in **Chapter 6** show what it takes to change someone's attitude with a use of Diplomacy. You don't declare a specific outcome; instead, make the check and compare the result to the table to see what you've accomplished. For more information, see **Social Actions** in **Chapter 6: Playing the Game**.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Diplomacy:

Combat Diplomacy: You can make a Diplomacy check in combat as a full-round action by accepting a +10 modifier to the Difficulty. Opponents in combat with you are considered hostile. An unfriendly opponent doesn't attack you unless you give him reason to do so. Indifferent foes stop fighting altogether, while a helpful one actually joins your side, even turning against former allies.

Try Again: Generally, trying again doesn't work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be persuaded so far. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his position, and trying again is futile. At the Narrator's discretion, you can try again when the situation changes in some way: you find a new approach to your argument, new evidence appears, and so forth.

Action: Diplomacy is at least a full-round action. The Narrator may determine some negotiations require a longer period of time, perhaps much longer.

DISABLE DEVICE

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You can disarm or sabotage various devices, including locks and traps.

Check: The Narrator makes Disable Device checks secretly so you don't necessarily know whether you have succeeded.

Open Lock: You can pick locks. You must have thieves' tools. The Difficulty depends on the quality of the lock.

Lock Quality	Difficulty
Simple	20
Average	25
Good	30
Amazing	40

Traps and Sabotage: Disabling a simple mechanical device has a Difficulty of 10. More intricate and complex devices have higher Difficulties. The Narrator rolls the check. If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If the check fails by 4 or less, you have failed but can try again. If you fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it's a trap, you set it off. If it's some sort of sabotage, you think that the device is disabled, but it's not. You can rig simple devices to work normally for a while and then fail later, if you choose.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Disable Device:

Hide Tampering: If you add +5 to your Difficulty, you can conceal any tampering with a device. Anyone who inspects the device must make a check against your Disable Device check result to notice your tampering. On a failed check, it goes unnoticed.

Try Again: Yes, though you must be aware you have failed in order to try again.

Action: Disabling a simple device is a full-round action. Intricate or complex devices require multiple rounds at the Narrator's discretion.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Disable Device check. You can take 20 to open a lock or to disable a device, unless trying to prevent your tampering from being noticed, or if there is a consequence for failure (such as setting off a trap).

If you do not have the proper tools, you take a -4 penalty on your check.

DISGUISE

CHARISMA, REQUIRES TOOLS

You can use makeup, costumes, and other props to change your appearance.

Check: Your Disguise check determines the effectiveness of your disguise. It is opposed by others' Notice checks. Make one Disguise check even if several people make Notice checks. The Narrator makes



the Disguise check secretly so you are not sure exactly how well your disguise will hold up under scrutiny.

If you don't draw any attention to yourself, however, others don't get to make Notice checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious, they get to make a Notice check. (The Narrator can assume suspicious observers take 10 on their Notice checks.)

The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you attempt to change your appearance.

Disguise	Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Appropriate uniform or costume	+2
Disguised as different sex	-2
Disguised as different age	-2

If you are impersonating a particular individual, those who know the subject automatically get to make Notice checks. Furthermore, they get a bonus on the check.

Familiarity	Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friend or associate	+6
Close friend	+8
Intimate	+10

Usually, an individual makes a Notice check to detect a disguise immediately upon meeting you and each hour thereafter. If you casually meet many different people, each for a short time, the Narrator checks once per day or hour using an average Notice modifier for the group (assuming they take 10).

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Disguise:

Face in the Crowd: With a -5 penalty to your check result, you can craft a disguise that is less likely to draw attention. Only people who specifically single you out and try to notice your deception receive Notice checks to do so. Guards and other passive observers take no special notice of you unless you draw attention to yourself or interact directly with them.

Quick Change: You can adopt a disguise as a full-round action by taking a -5 penalty to your check. However, anyone who comes within one visual range increment of you (usually 10 feet) automatically sees through your disguise due to its makeshift nature.

Try Again: No, though you can assume the same disguise again at a later time. If others saw through the previous disguise, they are automatically treated as suspicious if you assume the same disguise again.

Action: A disguise requires at least 10 minutes of preparation. The Narrator makes Notice checks for those who encounter you immediately upon meeting you and again each hour or day thereafter, depending on circumstances.

Special: If you don't have any makeup, costumes, or props, you take a -4 penalty on Disguise checks.

DRIVE

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to operate any ground or water vehicle. Vehicles that move through the air or space are covered by the Pilot skill.

Check: Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists or when driving in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). While driving, you can attempt maneuvers or stunts.

Maneuver	Difficulty
Easy (low-speed turn)	5
Average (sudden reverse, dodging obstacles)	10
Difficult (tight turns)	15
Challenging (bootlegger reverse)	20
Formidable (high-speed maneuvers, jumping obstacles)	25

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Drive:

One Hand on the Wheel: By taking a +5 Difficulty increase to your Drive check, you can perform a standard action in the same round as your Drive check with no penalty.

Try Again: Most Drive checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

Action: A Drive check is a move action. You can perform a standard action during the same round, but suffer a -4 penalty due to the distractions involved in driving.

Special: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check and may be done untrained.

ESCAPE ARTIST

DEXTERITY

You're trained in escaping from bonds and other restraints.

Check: Make a check to escape from restraints or to squeeze through a tight space.

Restraint	Difficulty
Ropes	Opponent's Dexterity bonus +20
Tight space	30
Grapple	Opponent's grapple check

Tight Spaces: For a tight space, a check is only called for if your head fits but your shoulders don't. If the space is longer than your height, such as a chimney, the Narrator may call for multiple checks. You can't fit through a space your head doesn't fit through. You can also reach through a tight space that your hand fits through but your arm normally does not by making an Escape Artist check.

Escaping Grapples: You can make an Escape Artist check opposed by an opponent's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition (so you are just being grappled). Doing so is a standard action, so if you escape the grapple you can move in the same round.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Escape Artist:

Conceal Efforts: In exchange for a +5 to the Difficulty, you can conceal your efforts to escape. Anyone who inspects your bindings must make a Notice check with a Difficulty equal to your Escape Artist check result. If the Notice check fails, they do not notice your efforts to escape. So, for example, you could leave your bonds apparently in place so a villain doesn't realize that you're actually free.

Try Again: You can make another check after a failed check if you are squeezing through a tight space. If the situation permits, you can make additional checks as long as you are not being actively opposed.

Action: Making a check to escape from being bound by ropes or other restraints requires 1 minute. Escaping a grapple is a standard action. Squeezing or reaching through a tight space takes at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on the distance.

GATHER INFORMATION

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

You know how to make contacts, collect gossip and rumors, question informants, and otherwise gather information from people.

Check: By succeeding at a skill check (Difficulty 10) you can get a feel for the major news and rumors in an area. This assumes no obvious reasons exist why information would be withheld. The higher the check result, the more complete the information. Information ranges from general to protected, and the Difficulty increases accordingly for the type of information you want to gather, as given in the table below.

Information	Difficulty
General	10
Specific	15
Restricted	20
Protected	25

General information concerns local happenings, rumors, gossip, and the like. Specific information usually relates to a particular question. Restricted information includes facts that aren't generally known and require you to locate someone who has access to such information. Protected information is even harder to come by and might involve some danger, either for the one asking the questions or the one providing the answers.

There's a chance someone takes note of anyone asking about restricted or protected information. The Narrator decides when this is the case. In some situations, opposed Gather Information checks are appropriate to see if someone else notices your inquiries (and you notice theirs).

Challenges: You can take these challenges with Gather Information:

Discretion: While seeking out news and information, you keep a low profile. You increase your Gather Information check Difficulty by +5, but you avoid leaving any clues about the information you seek. If your check fails, you may be detected as normal, but you still avoid spreading clues about what you seek.

Try Again: Yes, but it takes additional time for each check, and you may draw attention to yourself if you repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

Action: A Gather Information check takes at least an hour, possibly several, at the Narrator's discretion.

HANDLE ANIMAL

CHARISMA

You know how to handle, care for, and train various types of animals.

Check: The time required to get an effect and the Difficulty depend on what you are trying to do.

Task	Time	Difficulty
Handle an animal	Move action	10
"Push" an animal	Full-round action	25
Teach an animal a trick	1 week	See text
Train an animal for a purpose	4 weeks	See text

Handle an Animal: This means to command an animal to perform a task or trick it knows. If the animal's condition is something other than normal (it's fatigued or injured, for example), the Difficulty increases by +5. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

"Push" an Animal: Pushing an animal means getting it to perform a task or trick it doesn't know but is physically capable of doing. If the check is successful, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

Teach an Animal a Trick: You can teach an animal a specific trick, such as "attack" or "stay," with one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check (Difficulty 15 for simple tricks, 20 or more for complex tricks). An animal with an Intelligence of -5 can learn a maximum of three tricks, while an animal with an Intelligence of -4 can learn a maximum of six tricks.

Train an Animal: Rather than teaching an animal individual tricks, you can train an animal for a general purpose, like combat, guarding, riding, and so forth. This requires a Difficulty 20 skill check. Essentially, an animal's purpose represents a set of tricks fitting a common scheme. An animal can be trained for one purpose only.

Try Again: Yes.

Action: See above.

Special: An untrained character uses Charisma checks to handle and push animals, but can't teach or train animals.

INTIMIDATE

CHARISMA, INTERACTION

You know how to use threats (real or implied) to get others to cooperate with you.

Check: Your Intimidate check is opposed by the target's modified level check (d20 + target's total level + target's Wisdom score + target's modifiers on saves against fear). If your check succeeds, you may treat the target as friendly for 10 minutes, but only for purposes of actions taken while in

your presence. That is, the target retains his normal attitude, but will talk, advise, offer limited help, or advocate on your behalf while intimidated. Your target will only cooperate so much, and won't necessarily obey your every command or do anything that would directly endanger himself.

If you perform some action that makes you more imposing, you gain a +2 bonus on your Intimidate check. If your target clearly has a superior position, you suffer a -2 penalty on your Intimidate check.

If your Intimidate check fails by 5 or more, the target may actually do the *opposite* of what you wanted.

Demoralizing: You can use Intimidate in combat to demoralize an opponent, shaking their confidence. Make an Intimidate check as a standard action. If it succeeds, your target is shaken (-2 on all attack rolls, checks, and saving throws, except Toughness saves) for one round.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Intimidate:

Mass Intimidate: You can attempt to intimidate more than one subject at a time. You suffer a -2 penalty to your check per opponent beyond the first.

Power Intimidate: In return for a -5 penalty to your Intimidate check, you can increase the penalty you inflict for demoralizing a foe by -1 or force your subject to take an action that is against his interests (but not life threatening). You can take this challenge multiple times to increase the demoralize penalty. However, you can't use Intimidate to force someone to accept a life-threatening order.

Try Again: No. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be intimidated so much, and trying again doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the other character has become more firmly resolved to resist, and trying again is futile. You can make Intimidate checks to demoralize an opponent in combat until you fail, after which the target is no longer intimidated by you.

Action: An Intimidate check is a full-round action. Demoralizing in combat is a standard action.

Special: You add a +2 bonus to your Intimidate check for every size category you are larger than your target. Conversely, you take a -2 penalty to your check for every size category you are smaller than your target (see **Size** in **Chapter 8**).

JUMP

STRENGTH

You can jump further than usual.

Check: Distance moved by jumping, which is a move action, is counted against your maximum movement in a round. You can start a jump at the end of one turn and complete the jump at the beginning of your next turn.

Long Jump: This is a horizontal jump. At the midpoint of the jump, you attain a vertical height equal to one-quarter the horizontal distance. The Difficulty of a long jump is 5 plus the distance in feet.

High Jump: This is a vertical leap, made to jump up to grasp something overhead, such as a tree limb or ledge. The Difficulty of a high jump is 10 plus twice the distance in feet.

Hop Up: You can jump up onto an object of half your height or less with a Difficulty 10 Jump check. Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement.

Try Again: No.

Action: Jump is a move action.

KNOWLEDGE

INTELLIGENCE, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

This skill encompasses several specialties, each of them treated as a separate skill. These specialties are defined below.

Check: Make a Knowledge check to see if you know something. The Difficulty for answering a question is 10 for easy questions, 15 for basic questions, and 20 to 30 for difficult questions. The Narrator sets the difficulty for a particular question. Knowledge specialties, and the topics each one encompasses, are as follows:

- **Art:** Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography, and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.
- **Behavioral Sciences:** Psychology, sociology, and criminology.
- **Business:** Business procedures, investment strategies, and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.
- **Civics:** Law, legislation, litigation, and legal rights and obligations. Political and governmental institutions and processes.
- **Current Events:** Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment, and foreign affairs.
- **Earth Sciences:** Geology, geography, oceanography, and paleontology.
- **History:** Events, personalities, and cultures of the past. Archaeology and antiquities.
- **Life Sciences:** Biology, botany, genetics, medicine, and forensics.
- **Physical Sciences:** Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and engineering.
- **Popular Culture:** Popular music and personalities, genre films and books, urban legends, and trivia.
- **Streetwise:** Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.
- **Supernatural:** The supernatural, whatever it may encompass in the setting (and regardless of whether it is true or not).
- **Tactics:** Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.
- **Technology:** Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.
- **Theology and Philosophy:** Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts, and the study of religious faith, practice, and experience.

Try Again: Usually no. The check represents what a character knows; thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you didn't know before. The Narrator may allow another Knowledge check if a character gets access to a better source of information. For

PLAYER VERSUS CHARACTER KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge skills measure what your *character* knows about various things, whether you know anything about them or not. It's fairly easy to measure what your character knows by making the appropriate Knowledge skill check.

However, players may know things their characters do not, either because of the player's life experience or knowledge of the game and its rules. In this case, the Narrator may prefer players limit themselves to what their characters know via their skills and senses rather than what they may or may not know about a given situation as players of the game. If there's a question as to how to handle an issue of player versus character knowledge in the game, consult your Narrator.

example, a hero who doesn't know the answer to a particular question on his own might get another check with access to a library (and could take 20 on that check, depending on the circumstances).

Action: A Knowledge check can be a reaction, but otherwise requires a full-round action. Taking 20 on a Knowledge check requires at least an hour, longer if the Narrator decides the information you're looking for is particularly obscure or otherwise restricted.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, a character can only answer easy or basic questions about a topic.

You can take 10 when making a Knowledge check. You can take 20 only if you have access to the appropriate research materials (such as a library).

LANGUAGE

TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

Languages are unusual skills. They are not based on an ability score and do not require checks. Instead, your rank in Language measures how many languages you can speak, read, and write. Unskilled characters can speak, read, and write their native language, plus one additional language per point of Intelligence. Your Narrator will tell you what languages your hero can learn.

Literacy: Characters are assumed to be literate in their native language and any other language they know. At the GM's discretion, characters may have to spend an additional rank or bonus language to be literate in a language that uses a different alphabet or style of writing from the character's native language (such as Japanese *kanji* or Greek for an English speaker).

Retry: No, because there are no Language checks. You either know a language, or you don't.

MEDICINE

WISDOM, TRAINED ONLY, REQUIRES TOOLS

You're trained in understanding the body and treating injuries and illness.

Check: The Difficulty and effect depend on the task attempted.

Diagnosis (Difficulty 10): You can diagnose injuries and ailments with an eye toward providing treatment. At the Narrator's discretion, a successful diagnosis can provide a +2 bonus on Medicine checks for treatment. This takes at least a full-round action, if not longer.

Provide Care (Difficulty 15): Providing care means treating a wounded person for a day or more or providing routine medical care, such as assisting in the delivery of a baby. If successful, the patient adds your Medicine rank to any recovery rolls (see **Recovery** in **Chapter 6**). You can tend up to your skill rank in patients at one time.

Revive (Difficulty 15): With a medical kit, you can remove the dazed, stunned, or unconscious condition from a character. This check is a standard action. A successful check removes the condition. You can't revive an unconscious character who is dying without stabilizing the character first.

Stabilize (Difficulty 15): With a medical kit, you can tend to a character who is dying. As a standard action, a successful Medicine check stabilizes the dying character.

Treat Disease (Difficulty 15): You can tend to a character infected with a treatable disease. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects (after the initial contamination), you can first make a Medicine check requiring 10 minutes. If your check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the diseased character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.

Treat Poison (Difficulty 15): You can tend to a poisoned character. When a poisoned character makes a saving throw against a poison's secondary effect, you first make a Medicine check as a standard action. If the check succeeds, you provide a bonus on the poisoned character's saving throw equal to your Medicine rank.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Medicine:

Heal Thyself: Taking a -5 penalty on your check, you can use the Medicine skill on yourself to diagnose, provide care, or treat disease or poison.

Try Again: Yes, for reviving dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters, and stabilizing dying characters. No, for all other uses of the skill.

Action: Medicine checks take different amounts of time based on the task at hand, as described above.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Medicine check. You can take 20 only when giving long-term care or attempting to revive dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters.

If you do not have the appropriate medical equipment, you take a -4 penalty on your skill check.

NOTICE

WISDOM

You use this skill to notice and perceive things.

Check: Make a skill check to notice something. Notice checks generally suffer a penalty of -1 per 10 feet between you and the thing you're trying to notice. If you're distracted, you take a -5 penalty on Notice checks. Making out details—such as clearly hearing a conversation or reading text—requires you to beat the Difficulty of the Notice check by 10.

The Narrator might make Notice checks secretly so you don't know whether there was something to notice. The most common sorts of Notice checks are as follows:

Listening: Make a check against a Difficulty based on how loud the noise is or against an opposed Stealth check.

Difficulty	Sound
-10	A battle
0	People talking
10	A person walking at a slow pace, trying not to make any noise
30	A bird flying through the air
+5	Through a door
+10	Listener asleep
+15	Through a solid wall

Spotting: Make a check against a Difficulty based on how visible the object is. Spot is often used to notice a person or creature hiding from view. In such cases, your Notice check is opposed by the Stealth check of the character trying not to be seen. Spot is also used to detect someone in disguise (see the Disguise skill) or to notice a concealed weapon on another person.

Other Senses: You can make Notice checks involving smell, taste, and touch, as appropriate. Use the same guidelines as listen and spot checks above. Noticing something obvious is Difficulty 0. Subtle things are around Difficulty 10, hidden things Difficulty 20 or more. Noticing subtle supernatural phenomena requires special powers (see **Chapter 4: Powers** for details).

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Notice:

Locate Noise: For a –5 penalty on a Notice (listen) check, you can attempt to pinpoint the source of a sound. A successful check tells you the exact location. The source still gets the benefits of total concealment, but you can attack it even if you can't see it. Among other things, this allows you to attack while blinded or fighting an invisible foe. If your check fails, you become confused as to the location of the source of the sound.

Try Again: You can make a Notice check every time you have the opportunity to notice something new. As a move action, you can attempt to notice something you failed (or believe you failed) to notice previously.

Action: A Notice check is either a reaction (if called for by the Narrator) or a move action (if you actively take the time to try to notice something).

Special: When several characters are trying to notice the same thing, the Narrator can make a single d20 roll and use it for all the characters' skill checks.

You can take 10 or take 20 when making a Notice check. Taking 20 means you spend 1 minute attempting to notice something that may or may not be there.

PERFORM

CHARISMA, INTERACTION, REQUIRES SPECIALIZATION

This skill encompasses several types of performance, each treated as a separate skill.

Check: You are accomplished in some type of artistic expression and know how to put on a performance. The quality of your performance depends on your check result.

The Perform specialties are as follows:

- **Action:** You can perform drama, comedy, or action-oriented roles with some level of skill.
- **Comedy:** You are a comedian, capable of performing a stand-up routine or skit for an audience.
- **Dance:** You are a dancer, capable of performing rhythmic and patterned movements to music.
- **Oratory:** You can deliver dramatic and effective speeches and monologues.
- **Percussion Instruments:** You can play percussion instruments, such as drums, cymbals, triangle, xylophone, and tambourine.
- **Singing:** You can sing with some level of skill.
- **Stringed Instruments:** You can play stringed instruments, such as banjo, guitar, harp, and violin.
- **Wind Instruments:** You can play wind instruments, such as flute, bugle, trumpet, tuba, bagpipes, and trombone.

Check Result	Performance
10	Amateur performance. Audience appreciates your performance, but isn't impressed.
15	Routine performance. Audience enjoys your performance, but it isn't exceptional.
20	Great performance. Audience impressed.
25	Memorable performance. Audience enthusiastic.
30	Masterful performance. Audience awed.

Try Again: Not for the same performance and audience.

Action: A Perform check usually requires at least several minutes to an hour or more.

Special: If you don't have an appropriate instrument, you automatically fail any Perform check requiring it. At the Narrator's discretion, impromptu instruments may be employed, but you take a –4 penalty on the check.

PILOT

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to pilot any vehicle that travels through the air or space, such as planes, helicopters, or spacecraft.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when piloting in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in time). While piloting, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts.

Maneuver	Difficulty
Easy (low-speed turn)	5
Average (sudden reverse, dodging obstacles)	10
Difficult (tight turns)	15
Challenging (loop, barrel roll)	20
Formidable (high-speed maneuvers, dodging obstacles)	25

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Pilot:

One Hand on the Wheel: By taking a +5 Difficulty increase to your Pilot check, you can perform a standard action in the same round as your Pilot check with no penalty.

Try Again: Most Pilot checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

Action: A Pilot check is a move action. You can perform a standard action during the same round, but suffer a –4 penalty due to the distractions involved in piloting.

RIDE

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

Use this skill to ride a mount, like a horse or even a dolphin or griffon.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary movement, don't require a skill check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as inclement weather or an icy surface) or when you are riding in a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked, for example, or trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). While riding, you can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts.

Easy riding maneuvers, like staying in the saddle in a fight or guiding a mount with your knees, have a Difficulty of 5. An average maneuver, like a full gallop or dodging around an obstacle, has a Difficulty of 10. Difficult maneuvers, like using your mount as cover, jumping, or suffering no harm in a fall, have a Difficulty of 15. Challenging maneuvers, like a fast mount or dismount (as a free action) or controlling a panicking mount, have a Difficulty of 20.

Try Again: Most Ride checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

Action: A Ride check is a move action.

Special: If you lack the appropriate saddle, tack, and harness for your mount, you suffer a –4 penalty on your Ride checks.

SEARCH

INTELLIGENCE

You can search an area looking for clues, hidden items, traps, and other such details. The Notice skill allows you to notice things immediately, while Search allows you to pick up on details with some effort.

Check: You generally must be within 10 feet of the area to be examined. You can examine up to a 5-foot-by-5-foot area or a volume of goods 5 feet on a side with a single check.

A Search check can turn up individual footprints, but does not allow you to follow tracks or tell you which direction the creature or creatures went or came from (see the Track feat).

Difficulty	Task
10	Ransack an area to find a certain object.
20	Notice a typical secret compartment, a simple trap, or an obscure clue.
25+	Find a complex or well-hidden secret compartment or trap. Notice an extremely obscure clue.

Finding Concealed Objects: The Difficulty for a Search check to find a deliberately concealed object is usually based on the Stealth or Sleight of Hand check of the character who hid it. The Narrator can assume that characters with the time take 20 on their check to hide the object.

Action: A Search check is a full-round action.

SENSE MOTIVE

WISDOM

You can tell someone's true intentions by paying attention to body language, inflection, and intuition.

Check: A successful Sense Motive check allows you to avoid the effects of some interaction skills. You can also use the skill to tell when someone is behaving oddly or assess their trustworthiness.

Evaluate: You can use this skill to make an assessment of a social situation. With a successful check (Difficulty 20), you can get a feeling when something is wrong. You can also tell if someone is trustworthy and honorable (or not) with an opposed Sense Motive and Bluff check.

Notice Influence: You can make a Sense Motive check to notice someone acting under supernatural influence. The Difficulty is 10 + the power's rank.

Notice Innuendo: You can use Sense Motive to detect a hidden message transmitted via the Bluff skill (Difficulty equal to the Bluff check result). If your check result beats the Difficulty, you understand the secret message. If your check fails by 5 or more, you misinterpret the message in some fashion. If you are not the intended recipient of the message, your Difficulty increases by 5.

Resist Interaction: Make a Sense Motive check to resist or ignore the effects of certain interaction skills, such as Bluff or Intimidate. If the result of your check exceeds your opponent's check result, you are unaffected.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Sense Motive:

Read Situation: For every +5 you increase the Difficulty of your Sense Motive check, you learn one fact about the situation at hand when evaluating a situation or individual. The Narrator may tell you things like someone's apparent goal(s), the nature of an interaction, and so forth.

Try Again: No, though you can make a Sense Motive check for each interaction attempt against you.

Action: A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to notice or resist something. (When that's the case, the Narrator may roll the Sense Motive check in secret, so you don't know if there's something to notice or not.) Using Sense Motive to evaluate a person or situation takes at least 1 minute.



SLEIGHT OF HAND

DEXTERITY, TRAINED ONLY

You can perform feats of legerdemain such as picking pockets, palming small objects (making them seem to disappear), and so forth.

Check: A check against Difficulty 10 lets you palm a coin-sized, unattended object. When you perform this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Notice check. The observer's check doesn't prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed. If using Sleight of Hand to do tricks to impress an audience, you can treat it as a Perform specialty.

Thievery: When you try to take something from another person, your opponent makes a Notice check to detect the attempt. To obtain the object, you must get a result of 20 or higher, regardless of the opponent's check result. The opponent detects the attempt if his check result beats your character's check result, whether you take the object or not.

Planting: You can make a Sleight of Hand check to plant a small object on a person, slip something into their pocket, drop something into their drink, and so forth. This has the same Difficulty and Notice check as thievery.

Concealment: You can use Sleight of Hand to conceal a small weapon or object on your body, making your check result the Difficulty of a Search check to find the object.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Sleight of Hand:

Quicker Than the Eye: In melee combat, you can make a Sleight of Hand check as a move action to slip past an opponent's defenses. Your foe opposes this check with a Notice or combat bonus check. If you succeed, your opponent loses his dodge bonus against your next attack. If you fail, you suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls for the next round.

Try Again: A second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, has a Difficulty 10 higher than the first check if the first check failed or if the attempt was noticed.

Action: A Sleight of Hand check is a standard action.

Special: You can make an untrained Sleight of Hand check to conceal a weapon or object, but must always take 10 when doing so, so you can't do it while under stress.

STEALTH

DEXTERITY

You're skilled in moving about unseen and unheard.

Check: Your Stealth check is opposed by the Notice check of anyone who might notice you. While using Stealth, you can move up to half your normal speed at no penalty. At more than half and up to your full speed, you take a -5 penalty. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to use Stealth while attacking, moving all out, or charging.

Size Modifiers: Apply the modifier from your size category to your Stealth checks to represent the difficulty and ease of noticing smaller and larger targets, respectively: Fine +16, Diminutive +12, Tiny +8, Small +4, Medium +0, Large -4, Huge -8, Gargantuan -12, Colossal -16.

Hiding: If others have spotted you, you can't use Stealth to remain unseen. You can run around a corner so you are out of sight and then use Stealth to hide, but others then know at least where you went. Note you can't hide if you have no cover or concealment (since that means you're standing out in the open).

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can make a Bluff check to gain the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Stealth check while people are aware of you. When the others turn their attention from you, you can make a Stealth check if you can get to a hiding place of some kind. (As a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within 1 foot for every rank you have in Stealth.) This check, however, is at a -5 penalty because you have to move fast.

Tailing: You can use Stealth to tail someone at your normal speed. This assumes you have some cover or concealment (crowds of people, shadows, fog, etc.). If the subject is worried about being followed, he can make a Notice check (opposed by your Stealth check) every time he changes course (goes around a street corner, exits a building, and so on). If he is unsuspecting, he only gets a Notice check after each hour of being tailed. If the subject notices you, you can make a Bluff check, opposed by Sense Motive. If you succeed, you manage to pass off your presence as coincidence and can continue tailing. A failed Bluff check, or being noticed a second time, means the subject knows something is up.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Stealth:

Accelerated Stealth: You can move up to your normal speed in exchange for a -5 penalty to your Stealth check. In return for a -20 penalty to your check, you can move faster than your normal speed, such as by running or charging.

Slip Between Cover: You can make a Stealth check at a penalty to quickly cross an area lacking cover or concealment without automatically revealing yourself. For every 5 feet of open space you cross, you take a -5 penalty to your Stealth check. You also take the normal Stealth penalties for moving faster than half your normal speed and such. So, you can slip past a 5-foot open doorway without being seen, for example, or duck from shadow to shadow.

Vanishing: You can "disappear" when no one is watching you. This is essentially a use of Stealth to hide when the character has concealment or a distraction (no one looking directly at him, essentially). It requires a Stealth check with a -5 penalty, and the character must be

within a normal move action of an exit, or some cover or concealment (a window, skylight, ventilation duct, etc.). A successful check means the character seems to disappear; an observer turns around only to discover that he is gone. Characters can use Bluff or Intimidate to gain the momentary distraction needed to vanish in this way.

Action: Stealth is a move action.

SURVIVAL

WISDOM

You use this skill to survive in the wilderness, finding food and shelter and safely guiding others.

Check: You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild.

Difficulty	Task
10	Get along in the wild. Move up to half your overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). You can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points your check result exceeds 10.
15	Gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to half your speed, or a +4 bonus if stationary. You may grant the same bonus to one other character for every point your check result exceeds 15.
18	Avoid getting lost and avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand.

Try Again: No.

Action: Survival checks occur each day in the wilderness or whenever a hazard presents itself.

SWIM

STRENGTH

You can swim and maneuver underwater.

Check: A successful Swim check allows you to swim one-quarter your speed as a move action or half your speed as a full-round action. If the check fails, you make no progress through the water. If the check fails by 5 or more, you go underwater. If you are underwater, you must hold your breath to avoid drowning. The Difficulty for the Swim check depends on the condition of the water:

Condition	Difficulty
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water	20

Each hour you swim, make a Swim check (Difficulty 20). If the check fails, you suffer from fatigue. Unconscious characters go underwater and immediately begin to drown.

Challenges: You can take the following challenges with Swim:

Accelerated Swim: For a +5 Difficulty increase, you increase your swimming speed by one-quarter your normal speed. You can take this challenge up to three times to increase your swimming speed up to your normal speed. You suffer the normal effects of failing your Swim check.

Rescuing: Rescuing another character who cannot swim (for whatever reason) increases the Difficulty of your Swim checks by +5, but allows both of you to remain afloat.

Action: A Swim check is either a move action or a full-round action, as described above.

CHAPTER THREE: FEATS

WHILE ABILITIES, BACKGROUNDS, ROLES, AND SKILLS DEFINE A GREAT DEAL ABOUT HEROES, WHAT REALLY MAKES THEM HEROES ARE **FEATS**, SPECIAL ABILITIES ALLOWING YOUR HERO TO DO THINGS MOST OTHER PEOPLE CAN'T.

FEATS ALLOW HEROES TO “BREAK THE RULES” IN CERTAIN WAYS OR PROVIDE THEM ACCESS TO CERTAIN GIFTS OR TALENTS.

FEATS ALSO ALLOW YOU TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR HERO'S CAPABILITIES.



ACQUIRING FEATS

Heroes start out with a certain number of feats, based on their role. They acquire a new feat each time they gain a level (either in that role or in a new role). Each role has access to the general feats, as well as its own list of feats. Players choose new feats for their heroes from these lists.

TYPES OF FEATS

Some feats are *general*, meaning no special rules govern them as a group and they are available to everyone. Other feats are restricted to heroes of particular roles and related to performing those roles. *Expert* feats

are limited to experts, *warrior* feats are limited to warriors, and *adept* feats are limited to adepts. A feat's type is listed after its name in the feat's description.

PREREQUISITES

Some feats have prerequisites. Your hero must have the indicated ability score, feat, skill, combat bonus, or other requisite trait(s) in order to acquire or use that feat. A hero can gain a feat and its prerequisites at the same time. If you ever lose a feat's prerequisites for any reason, you also lose the ability to use that feat.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Each description lists the feat's name and its type, followed by any prerequisites. The description goes on to specify the feat's effects.

ACCURATE ATTACK (GENERAL)

You can lessen your attack's damage to make a wider, more sweeping attack with a better chance to hit. Subtract a number up to 5 from your attack's damage bonus and add the same number to your attack roll. You cannot lower your damage bonus below 0 nor more than double your attack bonus.

ACROBATIC BLUFF (EXPERT)

You can use your Acrobatics skill in place of your Bluff skill to feint and trick in combat (see the Bluff skill in **Chapter 2**). Your opponent opposes the attempt with Sense Motive or Acrobatics (whichever is better).

ALL-OUT ATTACK (GENERAL)

With an All-out Attack, you ignore defense in favor of accuracy. Subtract a number up to 5 from your dodge and parry bonus and add the same number to your attack roll. You cannot lower your bonus below 0 nor more than double your attack bonus.

ANIMAL EMPATHY (GENERAL)

You have a special connection with animals. You can use the Handle Animal skill like Diplomacy to change the attitude of an animal by interacting with it. Unlike a normal use of Diplomacy, you do not have to speak a language the animal understands, and Animal Empathy affects creatures with Intelligence -4 or less normally. You can also use the Bluff and Gather Information skills normally on animals. You don't actually need to speak to the animals; you communicate your intent through gestures and body language and learn things by studying animal behavior.

Special: The Narrator may allow other forms of this feat for interacting with other unusual creatures, such as Machine Empathy, Plant Empathy, Spirit Empathy, Undead Empathy, and so forth. The specifics of using interaction skills with any unusual subjects are left up to the Narrator.

ARMOR TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained to move and fight while wearing armor. There are two versions of this feat: light and heavy. The heavy version covers both medium and heavy types of armor. Each is considered a separate feat, and you must be trained in wearing light armor before you can acquire training in heavy armor. Characters without Armor Training apply their armor's check penalty (see **Armor** in **Chapter 5**) to all physical rolls and checks while wearing it, including attack rolls. Characters with Armor Training only apply the armor's check penalty to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Swim checks.

ASSESSMENT (GENERAL)

You're able to size up someone's combat capabilities by observing them carefully. As a move action, choose a subject and make a Sense Motive check opposed by the subject's Bluff check result. If you succeed, the Narrator tells you the subject's combat bonus relative to yours (lower, higher, or equal). You don't know the subject's exact bonus unless it equals your own, only a rough estimate of relative ability. In cases of a 5-point or greater difference, the Narrator may choose to tell you the subject's bonus is *considerably* more or less than yours. If you lose the opposed roll, the Narrator should over- or under-estimate the subject's bonus.

ATTACK FOCUS (GENERAL)

You have unusual prowess in one particular kind of attack. Choose one attack: unarmed, grapple, a type of weapon, or a supernatural power. You gain a +1 bonus on all attack rolls you make using the selected attack. You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new attack.

ATTACK SPECIALIZATION (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK FOCUS WITH THE CHOSEN ATTACK.

Choose an attack for which you have already selected the Attack Focus feat. You deal +1 damage when using this attack. You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new attack.

ATTRACTIVE (GENERAL)

You're particularly attractive, giving you a +4 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks to deceive, seduce, or change the attitude of anyone who might find you appealing.

BENEFIT (GENERAL)

You have some significant perquisite or fringe benefit. The exact nature of the benefit is for you and the Narrator to determine. As a rule of thumb it should not exceed the benefits of any other feat. A license to practice law or medicine, for example, should not be considered a benefit; it's simply a part of having enough ranks in the appropriate skill(s) and has no significant game effect.

The following are some potential Benefits. The Narrator is free to choose any suitable Benefit for the campaign.

- **Alternate Identity:** You have an alternate identity, complete with legal paperwork (driver's license, birth certificate, etc.).
- **Diplomatic Immunity:** By dint of your diplomatic status, you cannot be prosecuted for crimes in nations other than your own. All another nation can do is deport you to your home nation.

GENERAL FEATS

General Feats	Summary	General Feats	Summary
Accurate Attack	You can sacrifice damage for accuracy.	Improved Trip	+2 bonus to trip opponents.
All-out Attack	You can sacrifice defense for accuracy.	Iron Will	+2 bonus on Will saving throws.
Animal Empathy	You can use interaction skills on animals.	Leadership	You acquire a number of followers.
Armor Training	You know how to move and fight while wearing armor.	Light Sleeper	No penalty on Notice checks while sleeping.
Assessment	You can get an idea of an opponent's combat bonus.	Lightning Reflexes	+2 bonus on Reflex saving throws.
Attack Focus	+1 on attack rolls with a chosen attack.	Low Profile	Subtract 3 from your Reputation score.
Attractive	+4 on Bluff and Diplomacy checks from your appearance.	Lucky	Add your Cha score to your saving throws.
Benefit	Gain some minor, but significant, benefit.	Move-by Action	Move both before and after your standard action.
Blind-Fight	Half miss chance while in melee combat.	Night Vision	See twice as far in low-light conditions.
Canny Dodge	Add your Int or Wis score to your dodge bonus.	Overrun	You can overrun more effectively while mounted or in a vehicle.
Challenge	Perform a particular challenge with no modifier.	Point Blank Shot	+1 attack and damage with ranged weapons at 30 ft. range.
Connected	You can call in favors from time to time.	Precise Shot	You can make ranged attacks into melee with no penalty.
Contacts	You can make Gather Information checks faster.	Prone Fighting	No penalties while fighting prone.
Dedicated	+4 bonus for checks involving the object of your devotion.	Quick Draw	Draw or reload a weapon as a free action.
Defensive Attack	You can sacrifice accuracy for defense.	Ranged Pin	You can pin an opponent with a ranged weapon.
Dodge Focus	+1 to your dodge bonus.	Run	You run at five times your normal speed.
Eidetic Memory	Total recall and +4 bonus on checks to remember things.	Second Chance	You get a second save against a particular hazard.
Endurance	+4 bonus on stamina-related Con checks and Fort saves.	Set-up	Transfer an interaction bonus in combat to an ally.
Exotic Weapon Training	You're trained in a particular exotic weapon.	Shield Training	You're trained in the proper use of shields in combat.
Far Shot	Increase range increment by one-half (double for thrown weapons).	Skill Focus	+3 bonus with a chosen skill.
Firearms Training	You are trained in the proper use of firearms.	Skill Training	+4 skill ranks.
Great Fortitude	+2 on Fortitude saving throws.	Startle	Use Intimidate in place of Bluff to feint in combat.
Improved Critical	Your threat range with a particular attack is doubled.	Talented	+2 bonus with two related skills.
Improved Defense	+2 bonus when taking the total defense action.	Taunt	Make a Bluff check to shake a target's confidence.
Improved Disarm	+2 bonus when attempting to disarm an opponent.	Tireless	Suffer no penalties from fatigue.
Improved Grab	You can follow an unarmed attack with a free grapple.	Track	You can find and follow tracks.
Improved Initiative	You get a +4 bonus on initiative checks.	Trackless	You leave no trail in natural surroundings.
Improved Pin	Opponents suffer a –4 penalty on grapple checks against you.	Trailblazer	You can move through natural surroundings freely.
Improved Precise Shot	No penalty for less than total cover or concealment.	Two-Weapon Defense	Your two-weapon fighting style improves your Defense.
Improved Ranged Disarm	No penalty when making a ranged disarm attempt.	Two-Weapon Fighting	You can skillfully fight with a weapon in each hand.
Improved Speed	+10 feet movement speed.	Uncanny Dodge	You retain your dodge bonus when flat-footed.
Improved Strike	You do lethal damage unarmed.	Vehicular Combat	Substitute Drive, Pilot, or Ride check for vehicle or mount's Defense.
Improved Sunder	+4 to hit when striking held objects.	Wealthy	+4 Wealth bonus.
Improved Throw	Choose whether an opponent uses Str or Dex against a trip.	Weapon Training	You're trained in the use of martial weapons.

- **Security Clearance:** You have access to classified government information, installations, and possibly equipment and personnel.
- **Status:** By virtue of birth or achievement, you have special status. Examples include nobility, knighthood, aristocracy, being a *samurai* in medieval Japan, and so forth.

The Narrator is the final arbiter as to what does and does not constitute a Benefit in the campaign. Keep in mind some qualities may constitute Benefits in some campaigns, but not in others, depending on whether or not they have any real impact on the game.

BLIND-FIGHT (GENERAL)

In melee combat, you suffer half the usual miss chance due to concealment (see **Concealment**, in **Chapter 6**). If you spend a Conviction point before rolling the miss chance, you *automatically* ignore it for that attack (you gain no other benefit from the Conviction point).

You take only half the usual penalty to speed for being unable to see; darkness and poor visibility reduce your speed to three-quarters rather than half.

ADEPT FEATS

Adept Feats	Summary	Adept Feats	Summary
Empower	You can increase the effective rank of your powers.	Shield Penetration	+2 bonus to overcome a target's Psychic Shield.
Erase Signature	You can erase supernatural signatures.	Subtle Power	You can mute the signature of your powers.
Familiar	You have a supernatural bond with a special animal companion.	Supernatural Focus	+3 bonus with a chosen power.
Imbue Item	You can craft supernatural items.	Supernatural Talent	+2 bonus with two chosen powers.
Mind Over Body	Substitute your Wisdom score for Constitution checks.	Widen Power	Affect an area with your powers.
Quicken Power	Reduce the time required to use your powers.		

EXPERT FEATS

Expert Feats	Summary	Expert Feats	Summary
Acrobatic Bluff	Use Acrobatics in place of Bluff to feint and trick.	Jack-of-All-Trades	You can use any skill untrained.
Crippling Strike	Your surprise attacks inflict 1 point of Str damage.	Mass Suggestion	Make a suggestion to an entire group.
Defensive Roll	+1 bonus on Toughness saves.	Master Plan	Gain a bonus when you have a chance to prepare.
Deflect Arrows	You can deflect one ranged attack against you per round.	Redirect	Redirect a missed attack against another target.
Elusive Target	Double normal penalties for ranged attacks against you while you're in melee.	Skill Mastery	Choose four skills you can take 10 with even under pressure.
Evasion	No damage from area attacks if you make your Reflex save.	Slow Fall	You can slow your fall by 10 ft. per two expert levels.
Fascinate	You can capture and hold someone's attention with an interaction skill.	Snatch Arrows	You can catch ranged weapons.
Hide in Plain Sight	Make Stealth checks without cover or concealment.	Sneak Attack	+2 damage with a surprise attack.
Improved Evasion	Suffer only half damage on a failed Reflex save.	Stunning Attack	You can make a stunning attack in melee.
Improvised Tools	No penalty for using a skill without the proper tools.	Suggestion	You can plant suggestions into the minds of others.
Inspire	You can inspire others with your presence.	Well-Informed	Make a Gather Information check immediately upon meeting someone.

WARRIOR FEATS

Warrior Feats	Summary	Warrior Feats	Summary
Attack Specialization	+1 damage with a chosen attack.	Greater Attack Specialization	+1 damage with a particular attack.
Chokehold	Cause a pinned opponent to suffocate.	Rage	You can go into a rage in combat.
Cleave	Get an extra melee attack when you take out an opponent.	Seize Initiative	Spend a Conviction point to go first in the initiative order.
Critical Strike	Score critical hits normally against favored opponents.	Smite Opponent	You can inflict additional damage on your favored opponent.
Diehard	You automatically succeed on Con checks to stabilize.	Spirited Charge	Deal +3 damage with a melee weapon while charging.
Favored Opponent	+2 bonus against a particular type of opponent.	Stunning Attack	You can make a stunning attack in melee.
Grappling Finesse	Use Dex in place of Str to grapple.	Tough	+1 bonus on Toughness saves.
Great Cleave	Like Cleave, but usable an unlimited number of times.	Weapon Bind	Free disarm attempt after successful parry.
Greater Attack Focus	+1 attack bonus with a particular attack.	Weapon Break	Free attack against an opponent's weapon after a successful parry.

CANNY DODGE (GENERAL)

When unarmored and unencumbered, add your Intelligence or Wisdom score as a dodge bonus to your Defense. Choose which bonus applies when you acquire this feat. The bonus from this feat is in addition to the standard dodge bonus granted by your Dexterity. You lose your Canny Dodge bonus if you are wearing armor or carrying more than a light load.

CHALLENGE (GENERAL)

Choose a specific challenge (see **Challenges** in the **Introduction**). You can pick a standard challenge or one from a skill's individual description in **Chapter 2**. For standard challenges, the challenge only applies to a specific task. So, for example, if you choose the Fast Task challenge,

you need to specify a task, such as the feint application of Bluff, or making an item with Craft. If you take Calculated Risk, you need to specify the two checks (and the skills used for them), and if you take Simultaneous Tasks, you need to specify the two tasks. Once specified, these things do not change.

You can perform the challenge chosen under this feat with a 5-point lesser modifier than usual. So, for challenges with a –5 penalty or a +5 Difficulty, you perform them like normal checks. For challenges with a greater modifier, you reduce the modifier accordingly. So a hero with Fast Feint, for example, can feint in combat as a move action with no Bluff check modifier (since the normal modifier is –5).

You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a different challenge.

CHOKEHOLD (WARRIOR)

If you pin an opponent while grappling, you can apply a chokehold, causing your opponent to begin suffocating for as long as you maintain the pin. See **Chapter 6** for details on grappling and suffocation.

CLEAVE (WARRIOR)

If you knock out, disable, or kill an opponent with a melee attack, you get an immediate extra melee attack against another opponent within reach. You can't move before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and attack bonus as the attack that downed your previous opponent. You can use this feat once per round.

CONNECTED (GENERAL)

You know people who can help you out from time to time. You can call in favors by making a Diplomacy check. It might be advice, information, help with a legal matter, or access to resources. The Narrator sets the Difficulty of the Diplomacy check, based on the aid required. A simple favor is Difficulty 10, ranging up to Difficulty 25 or higher for especially difficult, dangerous, or expensive favors. You can spend a Conviction point to automatically secure the favor. The Narrator has the right to veto any request if it is too involved or likely to spoil the plot of the adventure. Use of this feat always requires at least a few minutes (and often much longer) and the means to contact your allies.

CONTACTS (GENERAL)

You have such extensive and well-informed contacts that you can make a Gather Information check in only one minute, assuming you have some means of getting in touch with your contacts. You can take 10 or take 20 on this check (taking 20 requires 20 minutes rather than 1). Further Gather Information checks on the same subject require the normal length of time, as you need to widen your search.

CRIPPLING STRIKE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: SNEAK ATTACK.

You can sneak attack opponents with such precision that your attacks weaken them. Anyone suffering lethal damage from one of your sneak attacks also takes 1 point of Strength damage. Lost Strength returns at a rate of 1 point per day.

CRITICAL STRIKE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: FAVORED OPPONENT.

You can score critical hits normally on favored opponents that are immune to critical hits. This benefit only affects your favored opponent(s).

DEDICATED (GENERAL)

You are deeply dedicated to a person or cause (and should roleplay this). You have a +4 bonus on saving throws and checks against effects that would sway you from your dedication. Whenever you spend a Conviction point to re-roll a die roll directly concerning your dedication, the roll is treated as a 20 (but not a natural 20). The Narrator decides when this is appropriate.

If you fail or waver in your dedication, you lose the benefits of this feat. You can only regain them by renewing your dedication.

DEFENSIVE ATTACK (GENERAL)

A defensive attack is more cautious, trading accuracy for protection. Subtract a number up to 5 from your attack bonus and add the same number to your dodge or parry bonus for the round. You cannot lower your attack bonus below 0, nor more than double your dodge or parry bonus.

DEFENSIVE ROLL (EXPERT)

You can evade damage through agility and "rolling" with an attack. You receive a +1 bonus to your Toughness saving throws, but lose your

Defensive Roll bonus whenever you are denied your dodge bonus or unable to take a free action. You can take this feat multiple times and its benefits stack.

DEFLECT ARROWS (EXPERT)

You can bat arrows and similar ranged weapons (such as thrown objects) out of the air. You must have at least one hand free to use this feat. Once per round, when you would normally be hit with a ranged weapon, you may deflect it as a reaction so you take no damage from it. You must be aware of the attack and not flat-footed. You cannot deflect bullets, energy beams, or similar ranged attacks.

DIEHARD (WARRIOR)

When your condition is reduced to dying, you automatically succeed on the Constitution check to stabilize on the following round. Further damage can still kill you.

DODGE FOCUS (GENERAL)

Your dodge bonus increases by +1. This additional dodge bonus is lost in the same way as your regular dodge bonus, when you are flat-footed and so forth. You can acquire this feat multiple times and its benefits stack.

EIDETIC MEMORY (GENERAL)

You have perfect recall of everything you've experienced. You have a +4 bonus on checks to remember things, including saving throws against effects that alter or erase memories. You can make any Knowledge skill check untrained, meaning you can answer questions involving difficult or obscure knowledge without ranks in a skill.

ELUSIVE TARGET (EXPERT)

You are expert at dodging and weaving around your foes, making you an elusive target while you're engaged in a melee. When you are fighting in melee combat, others attempting to target you with ranged attacks are at a -8 penalty rather than the usual -4 penalty for shooting into melee combat.

EMPOWER (ADEPT)

You can increase the effective rank of your powers, putting more of your energy and will behind them. For each effective rank you add to a power, increase the fatigue Difficulty of using it by +2. You cannot empower a power by more than +5 ranks (for +10 to the fatigue Difficulty).

ENDURANCE (GENERAL)

You gain a +4 bonus on Swim checks to avoid becoming fatigued, and +4 on Constitution checks or Fortitude saves to hold your breath, to avoid damage from starvation or thirst, and to avoid damage from hot or cold environments.

ERASE SIGNATURE (ADEPT)

PREREQUISITES: SECOND SIGHT POWER.

You can erase supernatural signatures, eliminating evidence of them. You must first be able to sense a signature. It then takes a full-round action to erase it. See **Chapter 4: Powers** for more information.

EVASION (EXPERT)

If you make your Reflex save against an area effect, you suffer *no* damage. See **Chapter 6** for more information on area effects.

EXOTIC WEAPON TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the use of a particular exotic weapon. Each exotic weapon requires a separate feat. For a list of exotic weapons, see **Chapter 5: Equipment**.



FAMILIAR (ADEPT)

You have a supernatural bond with a special animal companion. Choose a 0- or 1st-level animal as your familiar (see **Chapter 8** for animal descriptions).

FAMILIAR			
Adept Level	Abilities	Tricks	Special
1st-2nd	+0	1	Link, Share Powers
3rd-5th	+0	2	Evasion
6th-8th	+1	3	Dedicated
9th-11th	+1	4	Speak
12th-14th	+2	5	
15th-17th	+2	6	Improved Evasion
18th-20th	+3	7	

Your familiar is an enhanced version of the chosen animal, referred to as the base animal. The **Familiar** table indicates how the base animal is enhanced.

Adept Level: Enhancements to the familiar's traits are based on your adept level. A familiar's combat bonus is the same as an expert of your adept level, and a familiar has good Fortitude and Reflex saves and normal Will saves like an expert of your adept level.

Abilities: This is a bonus to the base animal's Strength, Dexterity, and Intelligence scores.

Bonus Tricks: The number in this column is the total number of tricks the familiar knows, in addition to any you might choose to teach it using the Handle Animal skill. These bonus tricks don't require any training time or Handle Animal checks, and they don't count against the normal limit of tricks known by the animal. You select these bonus tricks, and once chosen, they can't be changed.

Link: You have a psychic link with your familiar. The two of you are always in mental contact (like a use of the Mind Touch power). If some outside force, such as the Ward power, interferes, you can make a power check to overcome it. If your psychic link is broken, it is automatically reestablished as soon as possible. Because of your link, you can handle your familiar as a free action and push it as a move action, even if you aren't trained in the Handle Animal skill. You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks involving your familiar.

Share Powers: You can choose to have any power you use on yourself also affect your familiar. This includes powers like Body Control and Psychic Shield, which normally only affect the user. The familiar must be within 5 feet of you when the power is used to receive its effects. If the power has a duration other than instantaneous, it stops affecting the familiar when the familiar moves farther than 5 feet away from you and does not affect it again, even if it returns while the power is still in effect.

Evasion: Your familiar gains the Evasion feat.

Dedicated: Your familiar gains the Dedicated feat towards you.

Speak: Your familiar can speak verbally with you as if you shared a common language. Others cannot understand your communication without the use of powers.

Improved Evasion: Your familiar gains the Improved Evasion feat.

FAR SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: POINT BLANK SHOT.

When you use a projectile weapon, such as a bow or firearm, its range increment increases by half (multiply by 1.5). When you use a thrown weapon, its range increment doubles (multiply by 2).

FASCINATE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN THE CHOSEN INTERACTION SKILL

One of your interaction skills is so effective you can capture and hold someone's attention with it. Choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Perform. Use a standard action and make a check using the interaction skill against your target's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw result (whichever has the higher bonus).

If you succeed, the target pays no attention to anyone other than you. You may maintain the effect by taking a standard action each round, for a maximum number of rounds equal to your skill rank. Any potential threat, such as an ally sneaking up on a fascinated target, grants a new Sense Motive check or Will save. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, automatically breaks the fascination. The fascination ends when you stop maintaining it or the target overcomes it.

You may take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different interaction skill.

FAVORED OPPONENT (WARRIOR)

You have a particular type of opponent you've studied or are especially effective against. It may be a type of creature, like animals or the undead; a profession, like soldiers or thieves; or any other category the Narrator approves. Especially broad categories, like "all humanoids" or "all villains," are not permitted. You get a +2 bonus on Bluff, Intimidate, Notice, Sense Motive, and Survival checks when dealing with your favored opponent, as well as +1 damage on all attacks against them. You may take this feat multiple times, either choosing a different favored opponent or stacking with your existing bonus to a maximum of +6 on skills checks and +3 damage.

FIREARMS TRAINING (GENERAL)

You are trained in the proper use of firearms. Characters lacking Firearms Training have a -4 penalty to attack rolls with firearms. See **Chapter 5** for details on various types of firearms.

GRAPPLING FINESSE (WARRIOR)

You can use your Dexterity bonus, rather than your Strength bonus, to make grapple checks. You retain your dodge bonus to Defense against all opponents while grappling. See **Chapter 6** for more on grappling.

GREAT CLEAVE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: CLEAVE.

This feat works like Cleave, except you can use it an unlimited number of times per round, until you miss an attack or there are no more opponents within range.

GREAT FORTITUDE (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

GREATER ATTACK FOCUS (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK FOCUS.

You gain an additional +1 attack bonus with the chosen attack. The benefit of this feat stacks with Attack Focus.

GREATER ATTACK SPECIALIZATION (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: ATTACK SPECIALIZATION

You gain an additional +1 damage bonus with the chosen attack. The benefit of this feat stacks with Attack Specialization.

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: STEALTH RANK 13

You can make Stealth checks while being observed and even if you do not have cover or concealment. Characters normally must have cover or concealment to hide and cannot make Stealth checks while being observed.

IMBUE ITEM (ADEPT)

You can craft supernatural items, including weapons, armor, and charms. It takes the normal time to make the item, but its cost is increased. See **Supernatural Items** in **Chapter 5** for details.

IMPROVED CRITICAL (GENERAL)

Your critical threat range with a particular attack is doubled. An attack that normally threatens a critical on a natural 20 instead threatens a critical on a 19 or 20, an attack that normally threatens a critical on a 19 or 20 instead threatens a critical on 17–20, and so forth. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to a different attack.

IMPROVED DEFENSE (GENERAL)

When you take a total defense action in combat you gain a +6 bonus rather than the usual +4 bonus. You can take this feat a second time, giving you a +8 bonus when you take a total defense action.

IMPROVED DISARM (GENERAL)

You have a +2 bonus on attack rolls when attempting to disarm an opponent, who does not get an opportunity to disarm you if you fail (see **Disarm** in **Chapter 6**).

IMPROVED EVASION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: EVASION.

This works like Evasion except you only take half damage from an area effect even if you *fail* the Reflex save, and no damage if you succeed.

IMPROVED GRAB (GENERAL)

When you hit with an unarmed attack, you can immediately make a grapple check against that opponent as a free action. Your unarmed

attack counts as the initial attack roll required to start grappling. The opponent must be no larger than your size category. See **Grappling** in **Chapter 6** for details.

IMPROVED INITIATIVE (GENERAL)

You get a +4 bonus on initiative checks.

IMPROVED PIN (GENERAL)

Your grappling attacks are particularly difficult to escape. Opponents suffer a –4 penalty on grappling checks against you to escape a grapple or pin.

IMPROVED PRECISE SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: PRECISE SHOT

While using a ranged weapon, you ignore the Defense bonus provided by anything less than total cover and the miss chance from anything less than total concealment. A target's own Defense still applies. You can make finesse attacks with ranged weapons (see **Finesse Attack** in **Chapter 6**).

IMPROVED RANGED DISARM (GENERAL)

You have no penalty to your attack roll when making a ranged disarm attempt (see **Disarm** in **Chapter 6**).

IMPROVED SPEED (GENERAL)

Your speed increases by 10 feet while wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor and not carrying a heavy load. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it increases your speed by 10 feet, to a maximum increase of +30 feet.

IMPROVED STRIKE (GENERAL)

You can inflict lethal damage with your unarmed strikes. Normally, unarmed attacks only inflict non-lethal damage. Your unarmed attacks are also more effective than normal. Increase your unarmed striking (but not grappling) damage by +1 for every four total levels, rounding up (+1 at levels 1–4, +2 at levels 5–8, and so forth).

IMPROVED SUNDER (GENERAL)

You have +4 to hit when you attempt to strike an object held by another character.

IMPROVED THROW (GENERAL)

You're skilled at throwing opponents off-balance. When making a trip attack, choose which ability bonus your opponent uses to defend, Strength or Dexterity.

IMPROVED TRIP (GENERAL)

You have a +2 bonus on Strength and Dexterity checks to trip an opponent, and they do not get an opportunity to trip you if you fail. See **Trip** in **Chapter 6** for details.

IMPROVED TOOLS (EXPERT)

You can make do with whatever tools you have at hand. You ignore the –4 penalty for using a tool-dependent skill without proper tools.

INSPIRE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: CHARISMA +1 OR HIGHER.

You can inspire others with your presence. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you acquire a new type of inspiration. Using any Inspire effect requires a standard action and is considered a use of an interaction skill, even though no skill check is required. This means your subjects have to be able to hear and understand you.

You can affect a number of subjects equal to half your expert level (with a minimum of one), and the effects last for a number of rounds equal to your expert level. Unwilling targets make a Will saving throw (Difficulty 10 + half your expert level + your Charisma). You can use any combination of Inspire effects a total of once per day per two expert levels with a minimum of one (so a 6th-level expert can Inspire three times per day). You can spend a point of Conviction for an additional use of Inspire that day.

Each time you take this feat, choose one of the following effects:

Awe: The subjects are overcome with your presence. They are dazed (taking no action, but defending normally) for one round. On each of the following rounds, subjects can make a Will save (with a cumulative +1 bonus for each save) to shake off their awe and act normally.

Competence: Subjects are better able to focus on the task at hand, gaining a +2 bonus on all skill checks.

Complacency: The subjects let down their guard. They suffer a –5 penalty on Notice and Sense Motive checks. This also counts as a distraction sufficient to hide using Stealth.

Courage: The subjects overcome fear and doubt. They gain a +1 bonus on saves against fear and doubt and a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage. This bonus increases to +2 when you are an 8th level expert, +3 at 14th, and +4 at 20th.

Fear: Subjects are overcome with fear and anxiety. They are shaken and suffer a –2 penalty to attack rolls, checks, and saving throws (except Toughness saves). If the save fails by 5 or more, they are panicked and flee from you as quickly as possible.

Fury: Subjects gain the benefits of the Rage feat but also the normal fatigue when the rage wears off. The rage lasts for the duration of your inspiration (rounds equal to your expert level) rather than its normal duration, but so does the fatigue.

IRON WILL (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Will saving throws.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES (EXPERT)

You can use any skill untrained, even skills that normally cannot be used untrained. You must still have proper tools if a skill requires them.

LEADERSHIP (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: 6TH LEVEL.

You attract loyal companions and devoted followers, subordinates who assist you. See the tables for what sort of companion and how many followers you can recruit, based on your leadership score.

Several factors can affect your Leadership score, causing it to vary from the base score, which is equal to your total level plus your Charisma:

Leader's Reputation	Modifier
Great renown	+2
Fairness and generosity	+1
Special power	+1
Failure	–1
Aloofness	–1
Cruelty	–2

Other modifiers may apply when you try to attract a companion:

The Leader . . .	Modifier
Has a familiar	–2
Caused the death of a previous companion	–2

Followers have different priorities from companions. When you try to attract followers, the following modifiers apply to your leadership score:

The Leader . . .	Modifier
Has a stronghold, base of operations, guildhall, etc.	+2
Moves around a lot	–1
Caused the death of other followers	–1

Cross-reference your final leadership score with the table to determine the level(s) of a companion or any followers you attract.

Leadership Score	Companion Level	Number of Followers by Level					
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1 or lower	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	1st	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	2nd	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	4th	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	6th	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	7th	5	—	—	—	—	—
11	7th	6	—	—	—	—	—
12	8th	8	—	—	—	—	—
13	9th	10	1	—	—	—	—
14	10th	15	1	—	—	—	—
15	10th	20	2	1	—	—	—
16	11th	25	2	1	—	—	—
17	12th	30	3	1	1	—	—
18	12th	35	3	1	1	—	—
19	13th	40	4	2	1	1	—
20	14th	50	5	3	2	1	—
21	15th	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	15th	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	16th	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	17th	110	11	6	3	2	1
25 or higher	17th	135	13	7	4	2	2

Leadership Score: Your base leadership score is your total level plus your Charisma. In order to take into account negative Charisma scores, this table allows for very low Leadership scores, but you must still be 6th level or higher to acquire the Leadership feat. Outside factors can affect leadership score, as detailed above.

Companion Level: You can attract a companion of up to this level. Regardless of your leadership score, you can only recruit a companion two or more levels lower than your level. You can try to attract a companion of a particular background and role, if you wish. At the Narrator's option, you can also attract a creature as a companion, particularly if you have the Animal Empathy feat.

Number of Followers by Level: You can lead up to the indicated number of characters of each level. Followers are similar to a companion, except they're generally low-level. When your hero attains a new level, consult the leadership table above to determine if the hero acquires more followers, some of which may be higher level than existing followers. Again, no follower can be higher than two levels lower than your level.

LIGHT SLEEPER (GENERAL)

You do not suffer the +10 Difficulty modifier to Notice checks for being asleep. This means you're much less likely to be caught by surprise while

sleeping. You can also act normally immediately upon waking. Other characters are normally dazed for one round after waking (taking no actions, but defending normally).

LIGHTNING REFLEXES (GENERAL)

You get a +2 bonus on all Reflex saving throws.

LOW PROFILE (GENERAL)

You're less well known than you might be. Reduce your Reputation score by 3 each time you acquire this feat. Your Reputation cannot decrease below +0.

LUCKY (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: CHARISMA +1.

The universe just seems to like you. Add your Charisma score as a bonus to your Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws.

MASS SUGGESTION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: SUGGESTION.

You can make the same suggestion simultaneously to any number of subjects you have already fascinated (see the **Suggestion** feat). You must make the same suggestion to everyone.

MASTER PLAN (EXPERT)

If you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter, you can formulate a plan to deal with it. This requires at least a few minutes, longer at the Narrator's discretion. Make an Intelligence check (Difficulty 10). If successful, you and your allies gain a bonus on all skill checks and attack rolls in the scene depending on the result of your check: +1 for a roll of 10–14, +2 for 15–24, and +3 for 25 or higher. You choose when during the scene to initiate your master plan. The bonus lasts for 3 rounds, then begins decreasing at a rate of 1 per round until it is gone. You can only use this feat when you have the opportunity to prepare for an encounter in advance, not when dealing with sudden or unexpected encounters.

MIND OVER BODY (ADEPT)

You can exert great mental control over your body. When you make Constitution checks, you can substitute your Wisdom score for your Constitution score, so long as you are conscious. You can also apply your Wisdom bonus rather than your Constitution bonus to your Fortitude saving throws.

MOVE-BY ACTION (GENERAL)

When taking a standard action you can move both before and after the action, provided your total distance isn't greater than your movement speed.

NIGHT VISION (GENERAL)

You can see twice as far in low-light conditions as a normal human. Your vision is still hindered normally by total darkness.

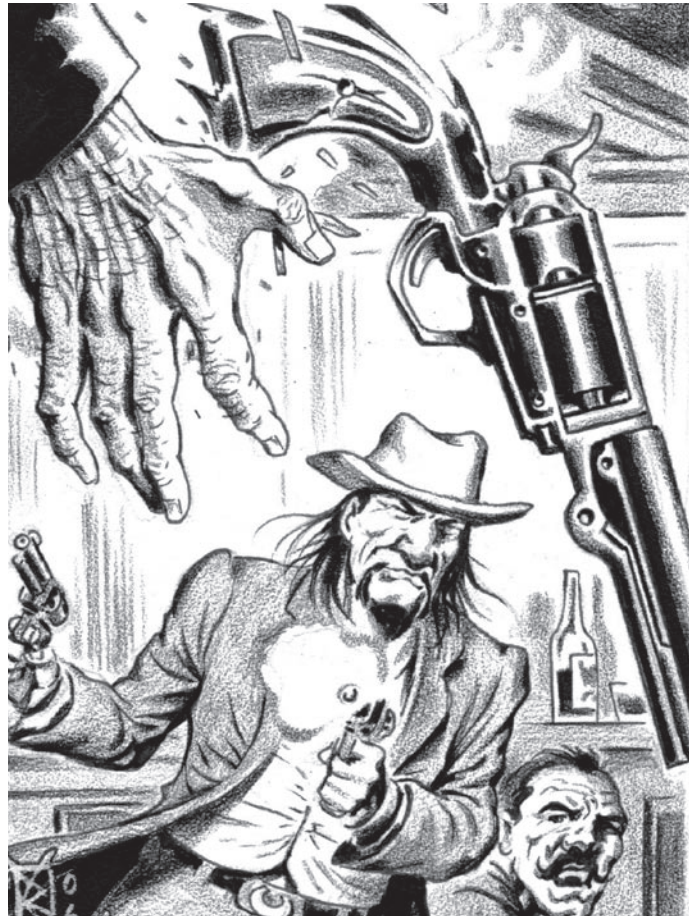
OVERRUN (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: VEHICULAR COMBAT.

When you attempt to overrun an opponent while mounted or in a vehicle, your target may not choose to avoid you. A successfully-tripped target suffers +1 damage per 10 MPH of your vehicle's speed or your mount's normal melee damage (if you are riding a mount).

POINT BLANK SHOT (GENERAL)

You get a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage with all ranged weapons at ranges of up to 30 feet.



PRECISE SHOT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: POINT BLANK SHOT.

You can make ranged attacks on an opponent engaged in melee with your allies without the usual –4 penalty. When attacking an opponent with the Elusive Target feat, you suffer a –4 penalty rather than –8.

PRONE FIGHTING (GENERAL)

You suffer no penalties on your attack rolls for being prone, and opponents do not gain any bonus to hit you with melee attacks while you are prone. Opponents making ranged attacks against you still have –4 on their attack rolls. You can crawl at half your speed rather than the usual 5-feet per move action.

QUICK DRAW (GENERAL)

You can draw or load a weapon as a free action, rather than a move action. You can only do one of these things as a free action each round; the other remains a move action, as normal. So you could draw a weapon as a free action, then load it as a move action, for example, but not draw *and* load it as a free action. Taking this feat a second time allows you to both draw and load a weapon in the same round as free actions.

QUICKEN POWER (ADEPT)

Once per round, you can use a power that normally requires a full-round action as a standard action, or a power that normally requires a standard action as a move action. You can't use powers more quickly than a move action using this feat. The fatigue Difficulty of the quickened power increases by +8.

RAGE (WARRIOR)

You can fly into a berserk rage as a free action, gaining +2 Strength, +2 to your Fortitude and Will saves, and a –2 penalty to Defense. While raging

you can't use skills or powers requiring concentration or patience, and you can't take 10 or take 20 on checks. Your rage lasts five rounds, after which you are fatigued for five rounds (see **Fatigue** in **Chapter 6**). You can use Rage once per day at 1st level and an additional time per day for every four warrior levels (twice at 4th level, three times at 8th level, and so on). You can spend a point of Conviction to use Rage an additional time that day.

You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you gain an additional +1 Strength and +1 Fortitude and Will save bonus to a maximum of +4 Strength and +4 to saves total (the -2 penalty to Defense and other effects remain the same). Instead of increasing your Rage benefits, taking the Rage feat an additional time can extend the duration of your rage by 5 rounds (to a maximum of 20 rounds). This extends the duration of your post-rage fatigue by the same amount.

RANGED PIN (GENERAL)

You can pin an opponent using a ranged weapon to nail a bit of clothing to a nearby surface. The target must be within 5 feet of a wall, tree, or similar surface. Make a normal attack roll against the target. If your attack is successful, the target is pinned. To break free, the victim must take a move action and make a successful Strength or Escape Artist check (Difficulty 15).

REDIRECT (EXPERT)

You can redirect a missed attack against you from that opponent at another target. Make a Bluff check against your opponent as a standard action. If the Bluff succeeds, and the opponent's next attack against you misses, you can redirect it as a reaction. The new target must be adjacent to you and within range of the attack. The attacker makes a new attack roll with the same modifiers as the first against the new target. If there are no other targets in range, you cannot redirect the attack, it simply misses.

RUN (GENERAL)

When running, you move five times your normal speed (if wearing medium, light, or no armor and carrying no more than a medium load) or four times your speed (if wearing heavy armor or carrying a heavy load). If you make a jump after a running start, you get a +4 bonus to your Jump check.

SECOND CHANCE (GENERAL)

Choose a particular hazard, such as falling, being tripped, triggering traps, being mentally controlled (or affected by another specific power), or a particular skill with consequences for failure. If you fail a saving throw against that hazard or a check with that skill, you can immediately make another roll and use the better of the two results. Unlike spending a Conviction point, you do not treat rolls below 10 as a result of 10. You only get one second chance against any given save or task, and the Narrator decides if a particular hazard or skill is an appropriate focus for this feat.

You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to a different hazard or skill.

SEIZE INITIATIVE (WARRIOR)

You can spend a Conviction point to go first in the initiative order, without having to roll for initiative. You may only do so when you would normally roll initiative. If more than one character uses this feat, they roll for initiative normally and act in order of their initiative result, followed by all the other characters involved in the combat.

SET-UP (GENERAL)

You can transfer the benefits of a successful combat use of an interaction skill to an ally. For example, you can feint and allow your ally to make the surprise attack against that opponent. The interaction skill requires its normal time and skill check and you must be able to interact with your ally.

SHIELD PENETRATION (ADEPT)

You're proficient at overcoming the resistance of Psychic Shields. You get a +2 bonus on checks to overcome a target's Psychic Shield. See **Chapter 4** for more information.

SHIELD TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the proper use of shields in combat. You can use a shield and take only the standard penalties. Characters lacking Shield Training take their shield's armor check penalty on attack rolls and on all Strength- and Dexterity-based checks.

SKILL FOCUS (GENERAL)

Choose a known skill. You get a +3 bonus on all checks involving that skill. You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time you do, it applies to a different known skill.

SKILL MASTERY (EXPERT)

Choose four of your known skills. When making checks with those skills, you can take 10 even when distracted or under pressure. This feat does not allow you to take 10 with skills that do not normally allow you to do so. You can acquire this feat multiple times. Each time you do, choose four other known skills to master.

SKILL TRAINING (GENERAL)

Each time you take the Skill Training feat, you gain 4 additional skill ranks. You may apply these ranks in any manner that you wish, although they do not allow any of your skills to exceed the maximum rank for your level.

SLOW FALL (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: JUMP RANK 5.

You can slow a fall if within arm's reach of a wall or similar structure. Subtract 10 feet from the fall per two expert levels before determining damage, with falls of 0 or less doing no damage. At 20th level expert, you can use a nearby surface to slow your descent and fall any distance without harm.

SMITE OPPONENT (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: FAVORED OPPONENT.

You can charge a blow with the power of your determination. You can use Smite Opponent once per day per four warrior levels, rounded up. When you strike a favored opponent in melee, you can activate this feat: add your Charisma score to your attack roll and half your warrior level to your damage. If you smite an opponent who is not actually a favored foe, there is no additional effect, but the smite use is wasted.

SNATCH ARROWS (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: DEFLECT ARROWS.

When using the Deflect Arrows feat, you may catch the weapon instead of just deflecting it. Thrown weapons can immediately be thrown back at the original attacker (even though it isn't your turn) or kept for later use.

SNEAK ATTACK (EXPERT)

When you make a surprise attack (see **Surprise Attack** in **Chapter 6**), you do +2 damage. You cannot surprise attack an opponent you cannot perceive (due to concealment or some other effect), and opponents immune to critical hits suffer no additional damage. Opponents who cannot be surprise attacked are also immune. You can take this feat multiple times, increasing your damage bonus by +1 each time, to a maximum of +5.

SPIRITED CHARGE (WARRIOR)**PREREQUISITE:** VEHICULAR COMBAT.

When mounted or on a vehicle and using the charge action, you deal +3 damage with a melee weapon (+4 damage with a lance).

STARTLE (GENERAL)

You can make an Intimidate check rather than a Bluff check to feint in combat. Targets can resist with Intimidate, Sense Motive, or Will and gain a +1 bonus on their resistance check per each additional startle attempt against them in the same encounter.

STUNNING ATTACK (EXPERT/WARRIOR)

When you make an unarmed attack, you can choose not to inflict normal damage. Instead, the target makes a Fortitude save against a Difficulty of 10 plus your unarmed damage bonus. A successful save results in no effect. A failed save means the target is dazed for one round. Failure by 5 or more means the target is stunned for one round, and failure by 10 or more renders the target unconscious.

SUBTLE POWER (ADEPT)

You can use your powers with less chance of notice. When using powers, you can mute their supernatural signature. Characters using Second Sight cannot detect your power use nor can its use be detected later using Second Sight. A subtle power use increases fatigue save Difficulty by +2.

SUGGESTION (EXPERT)**PREREQUISITE:** FASCINATE (FOR THE SAME SKILL).

You can use an interaction skill to plant a suggestion in the mind of a subject you have fascinated (using the Fascinate feat). This works like a use of the Suggestion power (see **Chapter 4**), except you must interact with the target and mental contact is not required. The Difficulty of the target's Will save is 10 + half your expert level + your Charisma score.

SUPERNATURAL FOCUS (ADEPT)

Choose one of your powers. You gain a +3 bonus to power rank with that power. You can take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different power.

SUPERNATURAL TALENT (ADEPT)

Choose two powers you possess. You gain a +2 bonus to power rank with those powers. You can take this feat more than once. Each time, it applies to a different pair of powers.

TALENTED (GENERAL)

Choose two known and related skills, such as Survival and Stealth or Acrobatics and Climb, or two specialties from a specialty skill, such as Craft or Knowledge. You gain a +2 bonus with both skills. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to two different skills.

TAUNT (GENERAL)

You can shake an opponent's confidence with clever taunts. Use a standard action and make a Bluff check against your target's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw, whichever has the higher bonus. If you succeed, your target is shaken for one round (–2 to attack rolls, checks, and saving throws, but not Toughness saves). If you fail, you may try again on the following round. Targets get a +1 on their resistance roll per each additional Bluff attempt against them in the same scene (successful or not).

TIRELESS (GENERAL)**PREREQUISITES:** CONSTITUTION +1, ENDURANCE

You have tremendous energy reserves. You suffer no penalties from being winded or fatigued, although you still gain fatigue levels

normally. This feat has no effect on exhaustion or unconsciousness due to fatigue.

TOUGH (WARRIOR)

Your Toughness save bonus increases by +1. You can take this feat multiple times and its benefits stack, up to a maximum +5 bonus to your Toughness saves. This bonus stacks with any worn armor or other protection.

TRACK (GENERAL)

You can find and follow tracks left by other creatures. To find tracks or to follow them for one mile requires a successful Survival check. You must make another Survival check each time the tracks become difficult to follow. You move at half your normal speed while tracking (or at your normal speed with a –5 penalty on the check, or at up to twice your normal speed with a –20 penalty on the check). The Difficulty depends on the surface, as given on the **Surface** table.

Surface	Difficulty
Very soft ground	5
Soft ground	10
Firm ground	15
Hard ground	20

Very Soft Ground: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which a creature leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, fields, woods, and the like) or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces (thick rugs and dirty or dusty floors). The creature might leave some traces (broken branches or tufts of hair), but it leaves only occasional or partial footprints.



Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all, such as bare rock or an indoor floor. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away. The creature leaves only traces (scuff marks or displaced pebbles).

Several modifiers may apply to the Survival check, as given on the condition table.

Condition	Difficulty Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being tracked	-1
Size of the largest creature being tracked:	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	+0
Large	-1
Huge	-2
Gargantuan	-4
Colossal	-8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility (apply the largest modifier)	
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked party hides trail and moves at half speed	+5

If you fail a Survival check, you can retry after 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Without this feat, you can use Survival to find tracks, but you can follow them only if the Difficulty is 10 or lower. You can use the Search skill to find a footprint or similar sign of a creature's passage using the Difficulties given above, but you can't use Search to follow tracks.

TRACKLESS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN STEALTH AND SURVIVAL.

If you choose, you leave no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked.

TRAILBLAZER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN SURVIVAL.

You can move through any sort of natural surroundings at your normal speed, unimpeded by things like undergrowth, difficult terrain, snow, mud, and similar difficulties. You're still affected by wind, rain, and other weather conditions, however.

TWO-WEAPON DEFENSE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING.

Your two-weapon fighting style improves your Defense. When wielding two weapons (but not while unarmed) and using parry defense, you gain a +1 bonus to your Defense. When using total defense, this bonus increases to +2.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING (GENERAL)

You're more effective fighting with two weapons. You reduce the penalty for doing so by 2 for your primary hand and 6 for your off hand.

UNCANNY DODGE (GENERAL)

You are especially attuned to potential danger, whether through training, experience, or some innate supernatural talent. You retain your dodge bonus to Defense when surprised, flat-footed, or surprise attacked, so long as you are able to react (are not helpless, bound, unconscious, and the like).

VEHICULAR COMBAT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN DRIVE, PILOT, OR RIDE.

You know how to maneuver a vehicle or mount in combat. Once each round, if your vehicle or mount would be hit by an attack, you can make a check using the relevant vehicle skill as a reaction to negate the hit. The skill check result must exceed the result of the opponent's attack roll. You can also make a check using the relevant vehicle skill as a full-round action (including the normal operation of the vehicle), in which case the skill result becomes the vehicle or mount's effective Defense for the entire round against all attacks. This feat applies to all vehicular skills in which you are trained.

WEALTHY (GENERAL)

You are endowed with significant material resources. Each time you select this feat, increase your Wealth bonus by +4.

WEAPON BIND (WARRIOR)

If you are using a parry defense and an opponent misses you with an armed melee attack, you can make a disarm attempt immediately as a free action. The disarm attempt is carried out normally, including the attacker getting the opportunity to disarm you (unless you have the Improved Disarm feat).

WEAPON BREAK (WARRIOR)

If you are using a parry defense and an opponent misses you with an armed melee attack, you can make an attack against your opponent's weapon immediately as a free action. This requires a normal attack roll and inflicts normal damage to the weapon if it hits (see **Sunder** in **Chapter 6** for details).

WEAPON TRAINING (GENERAL)

You're trained in the proper use of martial weapons. Characters lacking Weapon Training suffer a -4 penalty on attack rolls with martial weapons.

WELL-INFORMED (EXPERT)

You are exceptionally well informed. When encountering an individual, group, or organization for the first time, you can make an immediate Gather Information check as a reaction to see if your character has heard something about the subject. This takes the place of a normal Knowledge check (if any). Use the guidelines for Gather Information checks to determine the level of information you gain, and the guidelines for Knowledge checks for the sorts of questions you can answer. See **Chapter 2: Skills** for details. You receive only one check per subject, although the Narrator may allow another upon encountering the subject again once significant time has passed.

WIDEN POWER (ADEPT)

You can broaden the effect of one of your powers. When using powers that normally affect a single target, you can affect an area with a radius of up to twice your adept level in feet. The power affects all targets in the area normally. You must still meet any requirements for range, including mental contact, that the power requires. Make a single check and compare the results to each target in the area. Targets save individually against the power's effects. The widened power's fatigue Difficulty increases by +6.

CHAPTER FOUR:

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

THE WORLDS OF HEROIC ADVENTURE ARE PLACES OF WONDER, AND PART OF THE WONDER IS THE SUPERNATURAL, POWERS BEYOND THE MUNDANE AND ORDINARY.

POWERS ARE THE PROVINCE OF ADEPTS IN TRUE20, WHO CAN EXCHANGE FEATS FOR THE ABILITY TO ACQUIRE AND WIELD VARIOUS POWERS.



ACQUIRING POWERS

Adepts acquire powers like other heroes acquire feats. In fact, an adept can choose to exchange a feat to learn a power instead. Also like feats, some powers have prerequisites that must be met in order to acquire them. An adept can meet a power's prerequisites and acquire it at the same level.

POWER RANK

Adepts have a power rank that operates much like a skill rank, measuring the overall effectiveness of the adept's powers. An adept's power rank is their adept level +3, so a 1st-level adept has power rank 4. Mixed-role characters use only their adept level for determining their power rank; it requires dedication to achieve true mastery of the supernatural arts.

SAVE DIFFICULTY

Adepts also have a Difficulty used when subjects make saving throws against their powers. The base save difficulty is half the adept's level (rounded up), plus 10. So a 1st-level adept has a power save Difficulty of 11 (1/2, rounded up to 1 + 10).

KEY ABILITY

Choose a mental ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) as the key ability for your adept's powers. A hero's total power bonus with any known power is their power rank + key ability score. Total save Difficulty is the base save Difficulty + key ability. So a 6th-level adept with Wisdom +4 as the key ability for her powers has a power bonus of (6 + 3 + 4) or +13 and a power save Difficulty of (10 + 3 + 4) or 17.

In some *True20* settings, a particular key ability for powers has a certain meaning. For example, Intelligence-based powers may be arcane or magical, Wisdom-based powers spiritual, divine or holy (or unholy, as the case may be), and Charisma-based powers psychic or psionic. These distinctions (and their game effects, if any) are up to the Narrator as best suits the setting and story.

In some settings, the Narrator may also choose a single key ability for all supernatural powers, or assign specific key abilities to specific powers, as best suits the style of the setting.

See the sample settings in this book for examples of how supernatural powers can be tailored to suit the setting.

USING POWERS

There are a wide variety of powers that characters can wield in *True20* games, but they all share certain common rules. Unless stated otherwise (in the power description, for instance) all powers follow these guidelines for use.

WHAT ARE POWERS?

In *True20*, "power" is a general term for supernatural traits that characters and creatures may possess. Depending on the nature of the setting, powers could be magical, divine, technological, psychic, or psionic in nature. Perhaps even all or none of these! The key point is that powers are supernatural abilities not found in the ordinary world, and there are people (adepts) skilled in using them. The Narrator decides exactly which powers are available and appropriate in any given setting, and some powers may be restricted solely to Narrator characters.

POWERS AND ADEPTS

The ability to wield powers is the key advantage of the adept role. If you're running a *True20* game with *no* supernatural powers whatsoever (or at least no access to powers for the heroes), consider removing the adept role as an option for heroes as well, since players will find it considerably underpowered otherwise.

Note that you might find "adepts" in surprising places, however. A science-fiction setting, for example, might have psionic adepts with mental powers, but also "technomancers" able to interface with "miracle" nanomachines or hackers whose powers operate solely in the confines of a virtual reality computer network.

DABLERS

If you want to create a hero who just "dabbles" in the supernatural, having only one or two specialized powers, take just a level or two of adept for your hero for the powers, but focus primarily on another role. Experts and warriors with just a few levels of adept can have some interesting surprises up their sleeves.

ACTION

Wielding powers is primarily an act of will. Adepts often gesture or speak when using their powers, but this is not required. An adept can use powers with nothing more than intense concentration.

Using a power takes a particular amount of time, given in the power's description. Most powers require a standard or move action in combat. Others require a full-round action or longer. Powers are subject to the normal rules regarding actions (see **Chapter 6**).

POWER CHECKS

Some powers call for a check using the bonus of the power. This is the same as any other type of check: a die roll plus the power's bonus against a Difficulty. The check result often determines the effectiveness of the power. Some powers do not require checks; they operate automatically. The power's rank or bonus usually determines its effectiveness in these cases.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

An adept not rushed or under pressure can take 10 on a power check, unless the power's description specifies otherwise. If the check carries no penalty for failure, the adept can take 20 as well. Taking 20 with a power check increases the power's fatigue save Difficulty by +20 however, since it counts as twenty uses of a fatiguing power. This is virtually certain to fatigue most adepts. Additional notes on taking 10 and 20 with powers are included in the specific power descriptions.

ATTACK ROLLS

Some powers require an attack roll to affect a target, particularly in the midst of combat. Any ability requiring an attack roll also takes at least a standard action and counts as the adept's attack for that round. Powers requiring attack rolls are subject to the normal combat modifiers and can benefit from feats like Attack Focus.

SAVING THROWS

Powers affecting other creatures allow a saving throw to reduce or overcome the power's effect.

Adepts can choose to deliberately lower the save Difficulty of a power by reducing their effective adept level to as low as 1. This generally makes the power less effective (also lowering its rank), but makes it easier to resist any fatigue it may cause (see **Fatigue** later in this section).

Subjects of powers can choose to forego the saving throw, willingly accepting the power's effects. This choice is made *before* the subject knows what that effect is! Be careful about allowing people to use their powers on you, unless you know and trust them...

RANGE

Specific limitations on the range of a power are noted in its description.

Some powers transcend space, and even time, as we understand them; they can affect targets anywhere. However, using powers against targets out of sight and unfamiliar to the adept is difficult, effectively limiting the range of most powers to somewhat familiar targets or things in the adept's line of sight.

If a power's description doesn't specify a range, assume it is line of sight.

FAMILIARITY

An important factor for some powers is how familiar the subject is to the adept. In power descriptions mentioning a familiarity modifier, determine the relationship between the adept and the target on the **Familiarity** table and apply the appropriate modifier to the Difficulty of the power check. For example, using the Mind Touch power on a somewhat familiar target increases the Difficulty by +15.

Familiarity	Difficulty	Definition
Present	+0	A subject visible to the naked eye or in physical or mental contact with the adept.
Very Familiar	+5	A subject currently seen or sensed through another power, a close friend or relative, an item made by the adept or owned and used for at least a year, a place where the adept spent at least a year's time.
Familiar	+10	A subject the adept has been acquainted with for at least three months, a casual friend.
Somewhat Familiar	+15	A subject the adept has been acquainted with for at least a week, reading someone else's memory of a familiar subject.
Casually Familiar	+20	A subject the adept has been acquainted with only briefly, reading someone else's memory of a somewhat familiar subject.
Slightly Familiar	+25	A subject the adept has only seen briefly or had described in detail.
Unfamiliar	—	A subject totally unfamiliar and unknown to the adept and out of the adept's line of sight or physical contact. Powers cannot be used on unfamiliar subjects.



FATIGUE SAVE OPTIONS

You can modify how powers work in your *True20* game by changing how fatigue saving throws work.

For example, by basing fatigue saves on Fortitude rather than Will, you make it more difficult for adepts, since they generally have lower Fortitude save bonuses. This emphasizes Constitution and physical endurance over willpower and mental strength. It means adepts tire more easily and will be cautious about using fatiguing powers, especially adepts who are frail or otherwise in poor health.

You can also vary the cumulative penalty to fatigue saves for using powers in succession. If you eliminate it altogether, adepts can more reliably use powers in succession. By lowering a power's fatigue save Difficulty, some adepts can even reliably use fatiguing powers almost indefinitely (although only higher-level adepts have Will save bonuses high enough to ensure success on even a Difficulty 11 save). The shorter the time frame where power fatigue penalties accumulate, the more freedom adepts have to use their powers.

Conversely, the longer the time where fatigue penalties accumulate, the more conservative adepts will be. For example, if each fatiguing power used within a day's time (rather than an hour) increases fatigue save Difficulty by +1, then adepts will be careful about using fatiguing powers. They will try to conserve their strength as much as possible for those times when they really need it, and will take precautions after exercising their powers to allow them time to recover.

MENTAL CONTACT

Some powers refer to the adept being in *mental contact* with the subject. This involves the use of the Mind Touch power, allowing the adept to contact another character's mind. Subjects in mental contact are considered present to the adept in terms of familiarity, regardless of the physical distance between them (no increase in Difficulty). Mental contact does not count as line of sight for powers requiring it.

Powers that require mental contact also require it to maintain the power (unless the power description says otherwise). That means if the adept loses mental contact with the subject for any reason, the dependent power stops working as well.

MULTIPLE SUBJECTS

Although it is easiest to use a power on a single subject at a time, an adept can affect multiple subjects with the same power at once: lifting multiple objects, making mental contact with multiple minds, and so forth. This requires time, skill, and effort to achieve.

A character attempting to use a power on more than one subject at once increases the power and fatigue check Difficulties by +2 for every additional target. So, affecting three subjects at once is +4 on the power and fatigue check Difficulties. If the power does not require a check, then reduce the power's saving throw Difficulty by 2 per additional subject. Additionally, the power requires a full-round action to use. If the power normally requires a full-round action or more, then it requires an additional full-round action.

The various subjects must all be within range. If the power requires mental contact, then the user must be in mental contact with all subjects. The Narrator has the final say on whether a power can affect more than one subject at a time and, if so, how many.

The Widen Power feat also allows an adept to affect more than one target with a power at once.

FATIGUE

Some powers are fatiguing, putting a strain on the adept's mind and body. When an adept uses a fatiguing power, make a fatigue save. This is a Will saving throw against Difficulty equal to the power's base save Difficulty, or 10 plus half the adept's level, rounded up. (Note the power's key ability is not added to this Difficulty, unlike the power's saving throw Difficulty.)

A successful save results in no ill effect on the adept. A failed save means the adept suffers a level of fatigue. See **Fatigue** in **Chapter 6**.

Rapid use of powers in a short period of time takes a toll on an adept, and makes it harder and harder to stave off fatigue. Every time an

adept uses a fatiguing power within an hour's time, the Difficulty of any successive fatigue save for using powers (of any type) increases by 1. For example, an adept uses a fatiguing power, making a fatigue save against the normal Difficulty. A minute later, the adept uses another fatiguing power. This time the Difficulty of the fatigue save is 1 higher. Use of certain powers in rapid succession can tire out even the most powerful adepts.

To eliminate the cumulative fatigue save modifier, an adept must refrain from using *any* fatiguing powers for at least an hour. The adept doesn't need to physically rest during that time, just avoid any further uses of fatiguing powers. At the end of the hour, the accumulated penalty is removed.

An adept can also use the role's core ability to spend a Conviction point at any time to eliminate the cumulative fatigue save modifier, setting it back to +0.

MAINTAINING POWERS

Some powers can be maintained; that is, their effects can continue at the same level achieved by the initial use. This *maintenance* requires at least a modicum of concentration on the adept's part. Maintaining an effect is a free action each round.

Using another power (or another application of the same power) while maintaining other powers increases the Difficulty of the power check and the fatigue save by +2 (regardless of the total number of powers maintained).

An adept distracted while maintaining powers must make a Concentration check with Difficulty 10 + 2 per maintained power. Additional modifiers may apply for damage and other distracting conditions (see the **Concentration** skill). A failed check means the adept stops maintaining all the powers. Optionally, the Narrator may rule that the adept stops maintaining one power for every two points the Concentration check missed the Difficulty (rounding up). Keep in mind that powers requiring mental contact require the adept to maintain both that and power the Mind Touch power at the same time. An adept unable to take free actions (due to being stunned, for example) cannot maintain powers.

CONCENTRATION

Some powers require intense *concentration* to maintain. The adept must devote a standard action each round to concentrate and maintain the ability rather than a free action. Concentration checks and Difficulties remain the same as maintenance.

You can maintain a concentration power as a move action rather than a standard action with a Concentration check (Difficulty 10 + power rank) once per round. A failed check means the power lapses.

POWER DESCRIPTIONS

The powers in this section follow the general format for skill descriptions in **Chapter 2**, with a few modifications. Powers cannot be used untrained. If a power causes fatigue, it's listed as fatiguing after the power name. If it requires maintenance or concentration, this is noted. Powers requiring mental contact have this listed on the line after the power's name.

A description of what the power does follows, along with the game rules for the power.

Some powers have a **Try Again** section, describing whether or not it is possible to attempt a failed use of the power again and the conditions for doing so. If this section is absent, assume the power use may be attempted again without restriction.

Each description ends with the time it takes to use the power. In some cases, this varies depending on the conditions when the power is used.

POWERS

Name	Summary	Name	Summary
Apport	Transport creatures or objects to different locations.	Mind Probe	Probe a subject's mind for information.
Beast Link	Perceive through an animal's senses.	Mind Reading	Sense a subject's surface thoughts.
Blink	You can teleport rapidly to avoid attacks.	Mind Shaping	Alter a subject's memories or behavior.
Bliss	Project blissful feelings to daze a subject.	Mind Touch	Establish mental contact with another mind.
Body Control	Exert mental control over your body.	Move Object	Life and move objects at a distance.
Calm	Drain intense emotion from others.	Nature Reading	Sense the flows and signs of the natural world.
Cold Shaping	Create intense cold.	Object Reading	Read psychic impressions from place and objects.
Combat Sense	Gain a temporary Combat bonus.	Pain	Inflict stunning pain on a subject.
Computer Link	Make mental contact with computers.	Phase	You can become incorporeal.
Cure	Heal injuries by touch.	Plane Shift	You can transport yourself to other dimensions.
Cure Blindness/ Deafness	Remove blindness or deafness.	Plant Shaping	Shape living plants and wood and direct their growth.
Cure Disease	Remove a disease, preventing further harm.	Psychic Blast	Inflict mental damage on a target.
Cure Poison	Remove a poison, preventing further harm.	Psychic Reflection	Send a psychic attack back at the attacker.
Dominate	Control a subject's actions.	Psychic Shield	Shield your mind from psychic influences.
Drain Vitality	Drain vital energy by touch.	Psychic Trap	Counterattack an attempt to bypass your Psychic Shield.
Earth Shaping	Shape and direct masses of earth and stone.	Psychic Weapon	Create a melee weapon out of psychic energy.
Elemental Aura	Surround yourself with a damaging aura.	Scrying	Sense distant events as if you were present.
Elemental Blast	Strike a foe with a focused blast of elemental force.	Second Sight	Sense the use and lingering effects of supernatural powers.
Elemental Resistance	Resist the effects of a particular element.	Self-Shaping	Reshape your body into different creatures.
Elemental Weapon	Imbue a weapon with damaging elemental energy.	Sense Minds	Sense the presence and location of other minds.
Energy Shaping	Shape and direct the flow of electromagnetic energy.	Severance	Remove the powers of others temporarily.
Enhance Ability	Temporarily boost your Strength or Dexterity.	Sleep	Put a target into a deep sleep
Enhance Other	Temporarily boost someone else's Strength or Dexterity.	Suggestion	Implant suggestions in the minds of others.
Enhance Senses	Temporary bonus to Notice, Search, and Sense Motive checks.	Supernatural Speed	Move at great speed in short bursts.
Fire Shaping	Shape and direct fire.	Supernatural Strike	Overcome the damage reduction of supernatural creatures.
Flesh Shaping	Shape and mold flesh like clay into other forms.	Supernatural Weapon	Imbue weapons to overcome damage reduction.
Ghost Touch	Touch and affect incorporeal creatures as if they were solid.	Teleport	You can move instantly from place to place.
Harm	Inflict injury with a touch.	Truth-Reading	Sense when someone is lying to you.
Heart Reading	Sense the emotions of other creatures.	Visions	See visions of the future.
Heart Shaping	Impose emotional conditions on others.	Ward	Create interference with supernatural powers or creatures.
Illusion	Create illusions that fool the senses.	Water Shaping	Shape and direct the flow of water.
Imbue Life	Restore life to the recently dead.	Weather Shaping	Shape and direct weather conditions.
Imbue Unlife	Create undead creatures.	Wind Shaping	Shape and direct the force of the wind.
Light Shaping	Shape and direct light and illumination.	Wind Walk	Walk on air.
Manipulate Object	Manipulate and handle objects at a distance.		

APPORT**FATIGUING**

You can teleport objects and creatures to different locations. The Difficulty of the power check is based on the object's mass, modified by its familiarity to you, and the familiarity of the destination (see **Familiarity** previously in this chapter).

Difficulty	Mass
10	2 lb.
15	5 lb.
20	10 lb.
25	25 lb.
30	50 lb.
35	100 lb.
40	200 lb.
+5	x2 mass

For example, apportioning a 2 lb. object (Difficulty 10) in your line of sight (+0 modifier) to a destination in your line of sight (+0 modifier) is Difficulty 10. Apportioning the same object in your line of sight to a somewhat familiar destination (+15 modifier) is Difficulty 25.

Unwilling creatures get a Reflex saving throw to resist apportioning of themselves or any object in their possession. A successful save means there is no effect. You must apportion an entire object, not just part of it, although unattached materials may be left behind. For example, you can apportion a rope or set of manacles without affecting the creature bound by them. Targets cannot be apportioned inside other objects: attempts to do so simply fail.

Time: Apport is a standard action.

BEAST LINK**FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION**

You can forge a mental connection with an animal, allowing you to perceive what it perceives, using its senses. Make a power check with a Difficulty of 10, modified by familiarity. If successful, you can perceive with the animal's senses and communicate with it mentally. The animal is not under your command, although you may be able to convince it, using your other skills and powers, to do things for you.

Time: Beast Link is a move action.

BLINK**FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE**

You can teleport rapidly over a short distance to avoid attacks, appearing and disappearing for a number of rounds equal to your adept level. Attacks have a 50% miss chance against you and you only suffer half damage from area attacks. You can make surprise attacks while blinking, negating your opponent's dodge and parry bonuses to Defense.

You can renew your Blink power's duration when it expires by making a new fatigue saving throw (with the cumulative modifier for successive fatigue saves).

BLISS**FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT**

While in mental contact with another creature, you can project blissful feelings of pleasure. The creature must make a Will saving throw or be dazed for 1 round, taking no action, but defending normally. Since Mind Touch is a move action, you can make mental contact and use Bliss in the same round.

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to their Will save for each new attempt in the same scene.

Time: Bliss is a standard action.

BODY CONTROL**MAINTENANCE**

You have great mental control over your body. You can make a Body Control check for a number of different tasks summarized on the following table.

Task	Difficulty
Sleep normally despite distractions	5
Sleep normally despite difficult distractions	10
Slow breathing to half normal rate	10
Ignore pain or injury	15
Body awareness	15
Resist fear	15
Speed recovery	15
Slow breathing to one-quarter normal rate	15
Willpower	15
Feign death	20
Overcome disease	Disease's Save Difficulty
Overcome poison	Poison's Save Difficulty

Sleeping: A successful Body Control check allows you to sleep in difficult conditions, including bad weather, noise, buzzing insects, and so forth.

Slow Breathing: You can deliberately slow your rate of breathing so that you consume less air, vital in situations where there is a limited amount of breathable air available.

Ignore Pain or Injury: You can ignore the effects of pain or injury while awake or asleep. If you choose, nothing can wake you, as long as you make a successful Body Control check.

Body Awareness: You can become very aware of your body while asleep or concentrating. This allows you to sense if you are touched or moved in any way while using Scrying, for example. If you are damaged, subtract the attack's damage bonus from the Difficulty of the Body Control check.

Resist Fear: You can override your body's natural response to fear. With a successful Body Control check, you gain a new saving throw against any fear effect, with a +4 bonus.

Speed Recovery: You can speed your natural healing process, gaining a recovery check in half the normal time, so long as you spend that time in a deep, healing trance.

Willpower: With a Difficulty 15 Body Control check, you can continue to act while disabled without your condition worsening to dying. You still suffer additional damage normally.

Feign Death: By exerting supreme control over your body, you can enter a deep trance almost indistinguishable from death. A Notice check with a Difficulty equal to your Body Control check is required to determine whether you are still alive. Effects that detect life still work on you. While in this state, you also suspend the effects of any disease or poison in your system for as long as you remain in the trance.

Overcome Disease or Poison: By concentrating for a full round, you can substitute your Body Control check for your Fortitude saving throw against a disease or poison in your system. This usually means you can only use Body Control against the secondary effects of a disease or poison, unless it is slow acting and you are warned soon enough to use Body Control to resist the initial effects (in the Narrator's judgment).

Time: Body Control is a full-round action.

CALM

MAINTENANCE, MENTAL CONTACT

You can drain intense emotion from others, calming them. The target must make a Will saving throw or be drained of all extremes of emotion. The subject is calm and incapable of taking violent action (although it can defend itself) or doing anything else destructive. Any aggressive action or damage against the subject breaks the effect. A successful Will save means the subject continues to act normally. This power suppresses (but does not dispel) powers relying on emotion, such as Heart Shaping. While the Calm effect lasts, the suppressed power has no effect, but it returns once the Calm effect lapses.

Time: Calm is a standard action. It lasts for 1 round per rank after you stop maintaining it.

COLD SHAPING

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can freeze things with the power of your mind. With a Difficulty 15 Cold Shaping check, you can lower the temperature of an area about a foot across, enough to deal cold damage. A targeted creature suffers cold damage equal to half your Cold Shaping rank (round down). Protective clothing has no effect.

You can freeze roughly a gallon of water into solid ice in a round. For every 2 points your check exceeds the Difficulty, you affect an additional cubic foot (or gallon of liquid).

You can also decrease the size and damage potential of a fire by 1 point and 1 square foot for every 2 points your Cold Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. A fire reduced to a size or damage potential of 0 or less goes out. This requires a Cold Shaping check with Difficulty 12 for a normal square foot flame. Otherwise, the reduction in the fire requires maintenance.

Time: Cold Shaping is a standard action.

COMBAT SENSE

FATIGUING

You can improve your ability in combat by sensing the flow of events around you. A Combat Sense check grants you a bonus to your base Combat bonus (see the accompanying table). Each round you can split the bonus between attack and defense as you see fit. You can select a bonus lower than the result you get on the table to reduce fatigue Difficulty, which is 10 + the Combat bonus gained.

Result	Combat Bonus
Up to 4	+1
5–14	+2
15–24	+3
25–34	+4
35+	+5

Time: Activating Combat Sense is a move action. The bonus lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) per use.

COMPUTER LINK

MAINTENANCE

You can make mental contact with computers. Make a Computer Link check. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. Once you are in mental contact with a computer, you can make Computers skill checks as if you were accessing that computer normally. Whenever you need to make a Computers check, you can use your Computer Link power instead, but then each check causes fatigue (so it's generally easier on yourself to have training in Computers).

When dealing with sentient computers or robots, this power functions like Mind Touch (described later in this section) and counts as mental contact for using other powers requiring it on those subjects.

Special: You can take 10 on Computer Link checks. In cases where there is no penalty for failure, you can also take 20. Obviously, Computer Link is only useful in settings that have digital computers. In other settings, it doesn't exist (or it does and is never used).

Time: Computer Link is a move action.

CURE

FATIGUING

You can heal injuries by touch. With a full-round action, you can grant a subject an immediate recovery check using your Cure check result in place of their Constitution check. If the recovery check fails, you must wait the normal recovery time for that condition or expend a level of fatigue before trying again. You can stabilize a dying character with a Difficulty 10 Cure check.

You can use Cure on yourself. You can't cure your own staggered or unconscious conditions or stabilize yourself while dying, since you have to be conscious and able to take a full-round action to use Cure. You can use Cure on your own disabled conditions, but doing so is a strenuous





action. If your recovery check is successful, you suffer no ill effects. If it is not, however, your condition worsens to dying.

Try Again: See above. Otherwise you can retry freely.

Time: Cure is a full-round action.

CURE BLINDNESS/DEAFNESS

FATIGUING

You can remove blindness or deafness with a Difficulty 15 power check. If a subject is both blind and deaf, curing both requires two checks.

Try Again: You get one attempt to cure a subject's blindness or deafness. If it fails, you cannot try again until your power rank improves.

Time: Cure Blindness/Deafness is a full-round action.

CURE DISEASE

FATIGUING

You can cure a subject of disease. The Difficulty of the power check is the disease's saving throw Difficulty.

Try Again: You get only one attempt to cure any given patient of a particular disease. If you fail, you must suffer a level of fatigue to try again.

Time: Cure Disease is a full-round action.

CURE POISON

FATIGUING

You can cure a subject of poison. The Difficulty of the power check is the poison's saving throw Difficulty.

Try Again: You get only one attempt to cure any given patient of a particular poison. If you fail, you must suffer a level of fatigue to try again.

Time: Cure Poison is a full-round action.

DOMINATE

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

You can mentally control another creature's actions. The target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, you control the target's actions while you concentrate and maintain mental contact. You can force the subject to perform any action you wish, within the limits of his abilities. You're generally aware of what the subject experiences via your mental link, but you do not receive direct sensory impressions from him. Subjects forced to take actions against their natures receive a new saving throw with a bonus of +1 to +4, depending on the nature of action. A successful save breaks your control.

Time: Dominate is a full-round action.

DRAIN VITALITY

You can drain someone's vital energy by touch. Make a Drain Vitality check against the result of the target's Will save. If you win, the target suffers a level of fatigue, while you regain a level of fatigue (if you are currently fatigued). You cannot drain targets further once they are unconscious.

Special: You can only take 10 on a Drain Vitality check if the target is helpless.

Time: Drain Vitality is a standard action.

EARTH SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and move earth and stone. An Earth Shaping check can have one of the following effects:

Move Earth (Difficulty 10): You move dirt (soil, clay, loam, sand), possibly collapsing embankments, moving hillocks, shifting sand dunes, and so forth. However, in no event can rock formations be collapsed or moved. The area to be affected determines the time required and the Difficulty. A 150-foot by 150-foot square (up to 10 feet deep), takes 10 minutes and is Difficulty 10. Each additional such square adds 10 minutes and +5 Difficulty.

Earth Shaping does not violently break the surface of the ground. Instead, it creates wavelike crests and troughs, with the earth reacting with glacier-like fluidity until the desired result is achieved. Trees, structures, rock formations, and such are mostly unaffected except for changes in elevation and topography. This effect cannot be used for tunneling and is too slow to trap or bury creatures unless they are helpless the entire time the earth is moved.

Soften Earth (Difficulty 10): All natural, undressed earth or stone softens. Wet earth becomes thick mud, dry earth becomes loose sand or dirt, and stone becomes soft clay that is easily molded. You affect a 10-foot square area to a depth of 1 to 4 feet, depending on the Toughness or resilience of the ground at that spot. Each +5 increase in Difficulty affects another 10-foot square. Dressed or worked stone cannot be affected. Earth and stone creatures are not affected either.

A creature in mud must succeed on a Reflex save against your power or be caught helpless for one round. A creature that succeeds on its save can move through the mud at half speed. Loose dirt is not as troublesome, but all creatures in the area move at only half their normal speed and can't run or charge. Stone softened into clay does not hinder movement, but does allow characters to cut, shape, or excavate areas they may not have been able to affect before.

While this power does not affect dressed or worked stone, cavern ceilings or vertical surfaces such as cliff faces can be affected. Usually, this causes a moderate collapse or landslide as the loosened material peels away from the face of the wall or roof and falls.

A moderate amount of damage can be dealt to a structure by softening the ground beneath it, causing it to settle. However, most sturdy structures are only damaged by this, and not destroyed.

Stonecrafting (Difficulty 10): You can mold stone into any shape you wish. You can affect 10 cubic feet of stone. Each additional cubic foot increases the Difficulty by 1 (so at Difficulty 30 you can affect 30 cubic feet). The Narrator may require a Craft (sculpting or stonecutting) check to achieve precise results. You perform Craft checks involving stone in minutes instead of the hours of normal Craft projects. A complex project, which normally takes 24 hours, would therefore take 24 minutes.

Earthquake (Difficulty 30): An intense but highly localized tremor rips the ground. The shock knocks creatures down, collapses structures, opens cracks in the ground, and more. The effect lasts for 1 round, during which time creatures on the ground can't move or attack. An adept must make a Concentration check (Difficulty 20) to use any powers that round. The earthquake affects all terrain, vegetation, structures, and creatures in an area with a radius of adept level times 10 feet. The specific effects depend on the nature of the terrain.

- *Cave, Cavern, or Tunnel:* The roof collapses, inflicting +16 damage to any creature caught under the cave-in (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and pinning them beneath the rubble.
- *Cliffs:* Cliffs crumble, creating a landslide that travels horizontally as far as it fell vertically. Any creature in its path suffers +16 damage (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and is pinned beneath the rubble.
- *Open Ground:* Each creature standing in the area must make a Difficulty 15 Reflex save or fall down. Fissures open in the earth, and every creature on the ground has a 25 percent chance to fall into one (Difficulty 20 Reflex save to avoid a fissure). On the round after the quake, all fissures grind shut, crushing and killing any creatures trapped within them.
- *Structure:* Any wooden or masonry structure standing on open ground is destroyed. Heavier stone buildings are damaged. Anyone caught inside a collapsing structure takes +16 damage (Difficulty 15 Reflex save for half damage) and is pinned beneath the rubble.
- *River, Lake, or Marsh:* Fissures open underneath the water, draining it away from that area and forming muddy ground. Soggy marsh or swampland becomes quicksand for the duration of the spell, sucking down creatures and structures. Anyone in the area must make a Difficulty 15 Reflex save or sink down in the mud and quicksand. At the end of the round, the rest of the body of water rushes in to replace the drained water, possibly drowning those caught in the mud.
- *Pinned beneath Rubble:* Any creature pinned beneath rubble takes +2 non-lethal damage per minute. Unconscious characters make a Difficulty 15 Constitution check each minute to avoid +2 lethal damage.

Time: Move Earth takes from 10 minutes or more, depending on the size of the area. Stonecrafting depends on the project in question. Soften Earth and Earthquake are standard actions.

ELEMENTAL AURA

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

As a standard action, you can surround your body with a damaging elemental aura, causing no harm to you or anything you are wearing or carrying. Anyone touching you while your elemental aura is active suffers +2 damage, with the type of damage determined by the element: cold (Cold Shaping), fire (Fire Shaping), acid (Water Shaping), or electricity (Energy or Wind Shaping). Adepts trained in more than one Shaping

power may choose the type of aura when activating it. Elemental Aura is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

ELEMENTAL BLAST

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: COLD, EARTH, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

You can strike a foe with a focused blast of elemental force. Your Elemental Blast is a normal ranged attack with a range increment of adept level x 10 feet and a maximum range of ten increments (adept level x 100 feet).

An Elemental Blast has a damage bonus equal to your adept level. Water and Wind Shaping strikes inflict non-lethal damage. If you have Weather Shaping, you can call lightning from storm clouds as an Elemental Blast. If you apply the Widen Power feat to an Elemental Blast, it affects all targets within a radius of adept level x 2 feet from the target point. Targets of a Widened Elemental Blast can make a Reflex saving throw. If successful, the blast only inflicts half damage on that target.

Time: Standard action.

ELEMENTAL RESISTANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, EARTH, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

You can resist the effects of an element you're able to shape. Choose a Shaping power you possess. You have a bonus on all saving throws against harm from its element equal to your adept level, and suffer only non-lethal damage from the element so long as you are conscious and capable of exerting the minimum will required to resist the element's effects. Water Shaping also grants Acid Resistance, and Wind Shaping also grants Electrical Resistance.

You may acquire this power multiple times. Each time, it affects a different element.

ELEMENTAL WEAPON

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITE: COLD, ENERGY, FIRE, WATER, OR WIND SHAPING

As a standard action, you can imbue a melee weapon you wield with damaging elemental energy, without harming either the weapon or yourself. The weapon does +2 damage, in addition to its normal damage, with the type of damage determined by the element: cold (Cold Shaping), fire (Fire Shaping), acid (Water Shaping), or electricity (Energy or Wind Shaping). Adepts trained in more than one Shaping power may choose the type of energy when activating this power. Elemental Weapon is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

ENERGY SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and direct the flow of electromagnetic energy. You can direct electricity, drain power sources, and focus magnetism to affect metallic objects.

Direct Electricity: You can direct electricity from a free-flowing power source in your line of sight, including outlets, generators, or even storm clouds. The target makes a Reflex saving throw to avoid being struck. If the save fails, the target takes +2 damage, +1 point for every 5 points your power check exceeds Difficulty 15. So a check result of 32 inflicts +5 damage, for example.

Drain Power: You can drain a power source of its energy. Unattended power sources are automatically drained, while creatures receive a Will saving throw for power sources in their possession. The power check and fatigue Difficulties are based on the size of the power source: 12

for a simple source such as a battery, 14 for a car battery or larger power pack, 18 for a powerful fuel cell or similar high-power storage device, and 22 for a generator. A generator is only drained as long as you concentrate. You can also direct drained power as above, using drain power to fuel an electrical attack the following round.

Magnetism: You can manipulate magnetic fields, allowing you to move metallic objects as if you were using the Move Object power (later in this chapter), with the same Difficulty and fatigue, based on the object's mass. You can also create a magnetic pulse that erases magnetic storage media (such as videotapes and computer disks) with a Difficulty 20 power check. The pulse affects a radius of 20 ft., +1 ft. per point the power check exceeds the Difficulty.

Special: You can take 10 on Energy Shaping checks, but you can't take 20. Energy Shaping is less useful (and poorly understood) in settings without electrical technology. In these settings, it is primarily used to direct electricity from storms and to affect metallic objects.

Time: Directing electricity and magnetism are standard actions. Draining power is a full-round action.

ENHANCE ABILITY

FATIGUING

You can improve your Strength or Dexterity for a short time. A successful Enhance Ability check adds a bonus to either your Strength or Dexterity score for 1 minute (10 rounds). The result of the check indicates the amount of the bonus. If desired, you can split a bonus of +2 or greater between Strength and Dexterity.

Difficulty	Bonus
15	+1
20	+2
25	+3
30	+4
35	+5

Time: Enhance Ability is a standard action. The bonus lasts 10 rounds (1 minute). If you take 20 when making this check, you spend 2 minutes and suffer a +20 increase in the fatigue Difficulty.

ENHANCE OTHER

FATIGUING

This works like Enhance Ability, except you can enhance others' abilities by touch, and cannot enhance your own abilities with it.

Special: The subject of this power must also make a Fortitude saving throw against fatigue (same Difficulty as the adept) when its duration runs out, to represent the strain placed on the subject's body.

ENHANCE SENSES

You can enhance your normal sensory abilities. An Enhance Senses check adds a bonus to your Notice, Search, and Sense Motive checks. It also adds to skill checks made to find or follow tracks. The result of the check indicates the amount of the bonus.

Difficulty	Bonus
10	+2
15	+4
20	+6
25	+8
30	+10
35	+12

Time: Enhance Senses is a move action. The bonus lasts for 10 minutes. If you take 20 when making this check, you spend 2 minutes and suffer a +20 increase to the fatigue Difficulty.

FIRE SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can mentally start and control fires. You can make a Fire Shaping check to ignite a fire, to increase the size of an existing fire, or to create light but not heat.

Ignite Fire: You can set any flammable object in your line of sight on fire as a standard action with a successful Fire Shaping check (Difficulty 15). Targets must make a Reflex saving throw (Difficulty 15) to avoid taking +2 fire damage. The target must save each round. A successful save means the fire goes out. You can reignite it with another standard action and successful Fire Shaping check. A character on fire can automatically extinguish the flames by dousing in water (or other flame-retardant material). Spending a full round rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on the Reflex saving throw. In addition to using it as an attack, you can use this power to light candles (up to a dozen candles in a 5-foot square with a single skill check), torches, hearth fires, and so forth. At the Narrator's discretion, lighting small fires, like candles, is not fatiguing.

Increase Fire: You can increase the size and intensity of a fire. The Difficulty of the Fire Shaping check is 10 + 1 per square foot of increase. Every two square feet increase the fire's damage potential by +1. The fire maintains its increased size and damage as long as you concentrate, and it can even burn in the absence of fuel; smothering, however, still puts it out. While you maintain an increased flame, a victim does not get a Reflex saving throw to put the fire out (although it can still be extinguished by dousing with water), and the fire does additional damage based on your Fire Shaping check. So, an adept who makes a Difficulty 16 Fire Shaping check can spread a fire over an additional 6 square feet and it does +3 damage.

Light: You can create a glowing spot of supernatural fire that sheds light but no heat, illuminating a 20-foot radius. This requires a move action and a Difficulty 5 Fire Shaping check. You can increase the radius of the illumination by increasing the Difficulty of the check; each +5 Difficulty increases the radius of the illumination by 10 feet. The point of light moves where you direct it within your line of sight, as a move action. Creating light is not fatiguing.

Time: Igniting fires and increasing flames are standard actions. Creating or moving light is a move action.

FLESH SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape and mold flesh as if it were clay in your hands. The subject must be either willing or helpless for the entire duration of your work (and you can use Flesh Shaping on yourself). You make Flesh Shaping checks to alter a subject's physical features. You cannot change body mass or size, other than a few feet more or less in height by resizing the subject's bones. You can sculpt physical features largely at will. The Difficulty and time required for Flesh Shaping is shown in the table.

Difficulty	Time	Task
15	1 min.	Alter facial features or other minor cosmetic features.
20	10 min.	Alter extensive cosmetic features or overall shape.
30	1 hr.	Extensive alterations to shape, duplicating exact appearance.

Treat your Flesh Shaping check result like a Disguise check for purposes of determining if someone notices the change. Among other things, Flesh Shaping can provide alterations in eye, hair, and skin color, even creating tattoo-like patterns of pigmentation in the skin. It can greatly enhance or diminish physical appearance and attractiveness as well. Any alterations made with Flesh Shaping are permanent, unless reversed through this power or the Cure power, either of which must exceed the original check result.

Time: See table.

GHOST TOUCH

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can use your power to combat usually untouchable beings. As a standard action, you can focus supernatural power to imbue yourself, or a weapon you wield, with the power to touch and affect incorporeal creatures as if they were solid. Ghost Touch is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 14.

HARM

FATIGUING

You can inflict injury with a mere touch, disrupting the body's natural energy and balance. You must touch the target as a standard action. Success means the target must make a Fortitude saving throw against your power save Difficulty, with failure per the **Damage Track** for lethal damage. So a failed save results in a hurt condition, failure by 5 or more means the target is wounded, and so forth. Because Harm requires a Fortitude save, armor and other bonuses to Toughness have no effect against it.

Time: Harm is a standard action.

HEART READING

You can sense and read the emotions of others. A successful Heart Reading check allows you to determine the subject's emotional state. The target gets a Will save to resist. Use of this power is not immediately obvious. Whether you succeed or fail, the subject does not know you are reading his emotions.

If the target's save fails, you get a general idea of his emotions and mood (not precise thoughts). This grants you a bonus on the next interaction skill check you make against the subject within the next 10 rounds (1 minute). The bonus is based on your Heart Reading check result.

Result	Interaction Bonus
Up to 4	+1
5–14	+2
15–24	+3
25–34	+4
35+	+5

Try Again: You can only use Heart Reading on a subject once during the same scene.

Time: Heart Reading is a free action. The bonus lasts 10 rounds (1 minute) or until you make an interaction skill check against the target, whichever comes first.

HEART SHAPING

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

With this power, you can impose emotions on others. The target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, you can impose any one of the following emotional states on them:



Despair: As a weight of negative emotion floods them, the target suffers a –2 penalty on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Despair dispels the effects of hope.

Fear: The target flees from the object of its fear (chosen by you). Fear dispels the effects of rage. It also immediately ends a use of the Rage feat.

Friendship: The target's attitude shifts to the next more positive attitude (hostile to unfriendly, unfriendly to indifferent, and so forth). See **Social Actions** in **Chapter 6**. Creatures involved in combat continue to fight back normally, however. Friendship dispels the effects of hatred.

Hatred: The target's attitude shifts to the next more negative attitude (indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile, and so forth). See **Social Actions** in **Chapter 6**. Hatred dispels the effects of friendship.

Hope: The target gains a +2 bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Hope dispels the effects of despair.

Rage: The target gains the effects of the Rage feat from **Chapter 3**. They are compelled to fight, heedless of danger. Rage does not stack with the Rage feat or with itself. Rage dispels the effects of fear.

Time: Heart Shaping is a standard action.

ILLUSION

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

You can fool the senses of others. Make an Illusion check with a Difficulty based on the complexity of the illusion, consulting the table. If successful, the illusion appears to the subject. The illusion exists solely in the subject's mind, so it can be of any size; creating the illusion of something small is just as easy as creating the illusion of something huge.

Complexity	Difficulty
Illusion affects a single sense	10
Illusion affects two senses	15
Illusion affects all senses	20
Simple (random noise, static image, and the like)	+0
Complex (coherent sound, moving images, and the like)	+5
Very Complex (multiple overlapping sounds or images)	+10

Since the illusion isn't real, it cannot produce any real effects. It cannot cause damage, support weight, provide nutrition, illuminate darkness, or provide protection from the elements. Thus, characters fall through an illusory bridge or floor if they try to walk on it, and although they can appear to eat, and taste, illusory food, it has no nutritional value.

Characters encountering an illusion do not get a saving throw against it until they study it carefully or interact with it in some fashion. For example, if characters encounter a section of illusory floor, they would receive a saving throw if they stopped and examined the floor, poked at it, and so forth. Likewise, if an illusory monster attacks the characters, they get a saving throw because they are interacting with the illusion.

A successful saving throw against an illusion reveals it to be false, but a translucent after-image remains. For example, a character making a successful saving throw against an illusory section of floor knows the floor isn't real and isn't safe to walk on, and can see what lies below it, but he can still note where the illusion is.

A failed Will saving throw means the character fails to notice anything is amiss. A character faced with incontrovertible proof that an illusion isn't real needs no saving throw. Someone who falls through an illusory floor knows something is amiss. A character who communicates this information to others gives them a +4 bonus on saving throws against the illusion.

Try Again: No. You can attempt to affect the same character after some time has passed, but not in the same scene.

Time: Illusion is a full-round action.



IMBUE LIFE

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: CURE RANK 12

You can restore the dead to life! The subject cannot have been dead for longer than your adept level in minutes, and you must make a Difficulty 25 power check, taking a minute of intense concentration. If the check succeeds, the subject's condition becomes unconscious and disabled (from which the subject may heal normally). An Imbue Life attempt is fatiguing, with Difficulty 20 + half your power rank.

Try Again: No.

Time: One minute.

IMBUE UNLIFE

FATIGUING

You can lend animation to the dead, creating a mockery of life. Imbue Unlife may create two kinds of undead: mindless or intelligent.

Mindless: You turn the bones or bodies of dead creatures into undead skeletons or zombies, which obey your spoken commands (see **Chapter 8**). They remain animated until destroyed. A destroyed undead creature can't be imbued with unlife again.

A skeleton can be created only from a mostly intact corpse or skeleton. The corpse must have bones. If a skeleton is made from a corpse, the flesh falls from the bones when it is created. A zombie can be created only from a mostly intact corpse. The corpse must be that of a creature with a true anatomy.

Regardless of the type you create, you can't make more mindless undead than twice your adept level with a single use of Imbue Unlife.

The skeletons or zombies you create remain under your control indefinitely. No matter how many times you use this power, however, you can control only four times your adept level in levels of mindless undead. If you exceed this, all newly created creatures fall under your control, and any excess from previous castings become uncontrolled. You choose which creatures are released from your control.

Intelligent: You transform a corpse into an intelligent undead creature. Unlike the mindless undead, this creature is *not* under your control; although, you can use other means, including other powers, to command it. You can create a ghost or vampire using this power (see **Chapter 8**). Creating an intelligent undead creature has a Difficulty of 18.

If you fail an Imbue Unlife check to animate a corpse, that corpse is permanently immune to any further attempts by you to imbue it with unlife.

Time: One minute.

LIGHT SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can mentally control light. With a successful check, you can make your outline blurred and indistinct, or even become invisible.

You can create realistic three-dimensional images of light occupying up to a 10-foot cube. Each additional 10-foot cube that the image occupies increases the Difficulty by 5. Subjects seeing the image get a Will saving throw to realize it is not real if they have any reason to suspect it, such as the fact that the image makes no noise.

You can also create a point of light illuminating a 20-foot radius, which you can move at will anywhere in your line of sight as a move action. For each 10 feet you add to the radius of illumination, the Difficulty increases by 5.

You can create light effects anywhere in your line of sight, and they last as long as you maintain them. Creating multiple effects at once (such as becoming invisible while also creating the illusion that you are elsewhere) counts as maintaining multiple powers.

Task	Difficulty
Illuminate	5 (+5 per additional 10-foot radius)
Visual Illusion	10 (+5 per additional 10-foot cube)
Blur (20% miss chance)	15
Blur (50% miss chance)	20
Invisibility	25

Special: The basic level of illuminate (Difficulty 5) is not fatiguing.

Time: Light Shaping is a standard action.

MANIPULATE OBJECT

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can manipulate objects at a distance as if with a pair of invisible, intangible hands. Your power has the same Dexterity as you, while lifting the object has the same Difficulty as Move Object, except you cannot increase the weight lifted by suffering fatigue (Manipulate Object's fatigue comes from the extra precision required).

You can use your normal skills via Manipulate Object, but you are at a –2 penalty for having to operate remotely, and you can't perform tasks at all if you can't see your target, since your power has no sense of touch.

Remotely Wielding Weapons: An adept can wield a weapon using Manipulate Object. Picking up the weapon is a move action. Attacking with it is a standard action. Concealment is determined by the attacker and defender's positions, not the weapon's, while cover is determined by the defender and weapon's positions. The attacker makes a normal attack roll, but with a –4 penalty for the difficulty in controlling the weapon from afar, and adds his Intelligence score to the attack roll, rather than Dexterity. The weapon deals its normal damage with no modification for Strength (as if wielded by a Str 0 attacker). An adept can take the Exotic Weapon Training feat in remotely wielded weapons to eliminate the –4 penalty to hit.

A remotely wielded weapon can be struck normally by sunder attacks (see **Sunder** in **Chapter 6**). Attempts to disarm the adept by knocking the weapon out of his supernatural "grasp" are resolved by opposed attack rolls as normal or an opposed attack roll and Manipulate Object check, if the adept's Manipulate Object bonus is greater than his attack bonus.

Time: Manipulate Object is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute).

MIND PROBE

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT

You can mentally probe a subject's mind for information. Make a Mind Probe check against the result of the target's Will save.

If successful, you can ask any one question and receive the answer from the target's mind. If the target doesn't know the answer, then you know that. Especially personal or guarded information grants the target a +1 to +5 bonus on the Will save, while information the subject doesn't consciously know (because it is subconscious or forgotten due to amnesia, for example) grants a +5 to +10 bonus on the Will save.

You can continue to ask questions, one per round, for as long as you maintain your Mind Probe. Each question requires a new skill check, an additional Will save, and another fatigue save (with an increasing fatigue save Difficulty).

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to the Will save for each new attempt in the same scene.

Time: Mind Probe is a full-round action.

MIND READING

MAINTENANCE, MENTAL CONTACT

You can read another creature's thoughts. Make an opposed check against the result of the target's Will save. If successful, you can read the target's surface thoughts (whatever the target is presently thinking). Mind Reading transcends language; you comprehend the target's thoughts whether or not you share a language. If you fail your Mind Reading check, you cannot read the target's mind.

If you can interact with your subject, a successful Bluff check against the target's Sense Motive check causes the subject to think consciously about a particular piece of information you're looking for, such as a password or name, allowing you to pluck it from the subject's surface thoughts.

Try Again: Yes, but the target gets a cumulative +1 bonus to the Will save for each new attempt in the same scene, and retries with Mind Reading are fatiguing.

Time: Mind Reading is a standard action.

MIND SHAPING

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

Mind Shaping allows you to remove psychic influence or to alter memories and behavior. Make a Mind Shaping check, with the Difficulty determined by the task.

Remove Mental Influence: Make a Mind Shaping check with a Difficulty equal to the check result of a mind-affecting power. If you succeed, that power no longer affects the subject. Note this only removes the effects of ongoing powers, not permanent aftereffects. This means you could use Mind Shaping to remove a Dominate or Illusion effect, but not to restore damage caused by a psychic attack (for that, use the Cure power). You can undo the effects of Mind Shaping used to alter the subject's mind by equaling or exceeding the Mind Shaping check used to make the alterations.

Alter Psyche: You can make changes in the subject's mind. The Difficulty is based on the extent of the change you wish to make. False or altered memories can cause dissonance within the subject's mind, depending on how well they fit into the subject's other memories. If the subject notices a conflict between the false and true memories (Narrator's discretion), she gets an additional Will save to shake off the effect and regain her true memory. She gains a bonus of +1 to +4 on the save depending on how strong the dissonance is between the true and false memories.

Difficulty	Alteration	Time
15	Alter a single unimportant fact or brief recollection, about 5 minutes worth of memory.	1 full round
20	Alter a single fact or an hour's worth of memory.	1 min
25	Alter a single significant fact, such as the name of the subject's spouse, or a day's worth of memory.	10 min
30	Alter a deeply personal fact, such as the subject's name, or a week's worth of memory.	1 hour
35	Alter up to a month's worth of memory.	6 hrs
40	Alter up to a year's worth of memory. Give the subject an entirely new personality, complete with false memories, or erase the subject's entire memory, causing total amnesia.	10 hrs

Special: Taking 20 requires twenty times the usual time. Generally, this means the subject must be cooperative, unconscious, or restrained in some way. Taking 20 increases the fatigue check Difficulty by +20 as well.

Try Again: If you fail a Mind Shaping check, you must wait at least 24 hours before attempting the same task on the same subject.

Time: Removing psychic influence is a full-round action. For altering a person's psyche, see the table.

MIND TOUCH

MAINTENANCE

You can establish contact with another mind. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. If the subject has a Psychic Shield, you have to make a separate Mind Touch check to overcome it. An unwilling subject also gets a Will saving throw to avoid contact. If the save is successful, no contact is made.

If you do not want the subject to know you are making mental contact, you can make a separate opposed Mind Touch check against the subject's Sense Motive, Second Sight, or Psychic Shield check (whichever has the highest bonus). If you win, the subject is unaware of your attempt. If the subject wins, she is aware of your attempt (whether you succeed or fail in actually establishing contact).

While you are in mental contact with another being, the two of you can communicate at the rate of normal speech, hearing each other's thoughts. You can also send a single visual image each round instead of speaking. Both you and the subject can choose to lie or omit information; you're "speaking" to each other mentally, not reading each other's thoughts. Mind Touch is two-way, meaning you are in mental contact with the subject for purposes of her powers and vice versa.

If a friendly mental contact turns hostile, the subject can make a Will saving throw or Psychic Shield check to break contact. Once the subject has failed an attempt to eject the intruder from her mind, she can't break the contact.

If your Mind Touch is broken, any other powers you are maintaining requiring mental contact are also broken.

Mentally Aiding Others: While in mental contact with another character, you can use the aid action (a standard action) to grant that character a +2 bonus on Will saving throws or on any skill check where your skill rank is equal to or greater than the subject's.

Mental Rapport: Two or more characters with Mind Touch can enter a *mental rapport* with each other, a deep and very intense state of mental contact. Each character establishes mental contact with the other, each of whom must be a willing participant. Characters in rapport are like one mind, each instantly aware of everything that the other thinks and experiences and able to share information instantly. Characters in rapport cannot deliberately lie to or deceive each other.

Deathcry: If a creature you are in mental contact with dies, you must make a Will saving throw or Psychic Shield check (Difficulty 20) to avoid being dazed for 1 round by the psychic feedback and trauma. Since mental contact is a two-way phenomenon, this applies to any creature in mental contact with another, including all the creatures involved in a Mental Rapport. A creature can deliberately avoid letting out a deathcry when it dies by making a Will saving throw (Difficulty 20).

Try Again: You can retry Mind Touch freely, but retries on the same subject within an hour's time are fatiguing.

Time: Mind Touch is a move action. It requires concentration to maintain.

MOVE OBJECT

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can move objects with the power of your thoughts. A Move Object check allows you to move an object in your line of sight. The Difficulty of the Move Object check is based on the mass of the object you want to move and whether or not you choose to risk fatigue. A fatiguing use of Move Object can move ten times the mass listed on the table (so 20 pounds at Difficulty 10, up to 2,000 pounds at Difficulty 40) and doubles the listed damage.

Difficulty	Mass	Damage
10	2 lb.	+1
15	5 lb.	+2
20	10 lb.	+3
25	25 lb.	+4
30	50 lb.	+5
35	100 lb.	+6
40	200 lb.	+7

You can move the object a distance of 5 feet times your Move Object rank per move action.

If two adepts vie for control of an object, use opposed Move Object checks. The winner controls the object for that round. If a creature is holding the object, make a Move Object check opposed by the creature's Strength check.

Grappling Creatures: You can use Move Object to grapple a creature (see **Grappling** in **Chapter 6**). If you successfully pin your target, you can treat them as an ordinary object for purposes of moving them with this ability.

Striking with Objects: You can hurl objects at opponents. This requires a ranged attack roll and the object deals damage based on your Move Object skill check, as shown on the table. Since using Move Object is a move action, you can move an object and strike with it (as a standard action) in the same round.

Moving Multiple Objects: As a full-round action, you can attempt to move multiple objects at once. Use the Difficulty of the heaviest object, then add +2 for each additional object and increase the fatigue check Difficulty by +2 for each additional object. You cannot strike a target with multiple objects as part of the same action.

Time: Move Object is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) and requires concentration to maintain.

NATURE READING

You are attuned to the flows of the natural world, able to read certain signs from it. You can learn the following:

- With a Difficulty 10 power check, you can immediately (as a reaction) identify any animal or plant, or tell if water in a natural environment is safe to drink.
- With a minute of observation and a Difficulty 15 check, you can accurately predict the weather for one day for every 5 points you exceed the Difficulty.
- Once per day with 10 minutes of meditation, you can learn any three facts about the following: the ground or terrain, plants, minerals, bodies of water, people, general animal population, presence of animals, presence of powerful unnatural creatures, or the general state of the natural setting. This covers a 1-mile radius for every 5 points your power check exceeds Difficulty 10.

Time: See the description.

OBJECT READING

You can read psychic impressions from places and objects, getting images of their pasts, as if you were actually present at a particular past event.

Active Object Reading: You can attempt to see the past of a particular place or object. You must be able to touch the object. This requires a full-round action and an Object Reading check. Active Object Reading is fatiguing.

Spontaneous Visions: Your ability may also spontaneously activate at the Narrator's discretion when you are in contact with an object with particularly strong psychic impressions. This requires an Object Reading check.

The Narrator should make Object Reading checks secretly so the player doesn't necessarily know if a particular vision was accurate or not. Consult the table below for the results of a vision, based on the Object Reading check.

Difficulty	Result
10	A vague vision that may not be accurate.
15	A brief and accurate vision of the events.
20	A longer vision of the events, encompassing everything that took place in a particular place and time.
25	The ability to move the vision backward or forward in time to review the event.
30	The ability to track the vision backward through time and space to trace an event to its origin.
35	Near-complete knowledge of a particular past event and everything involving it.

Impressions read from objects generally count as slightly familiar for the purposes of determining familiarity for other powers, possibly more if the vision was long or extremely accurate (in the Narrator's opinion).

Time: Object Reading is a full-round action.

PAIN

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION, MENTAL CONTACT
(SEE DESCRIPTION)

You can inflict terrible pain on a target. You must touch or be in mental contact with the target, who makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, the target is stunned. So long as you maintain concentration, the effect continues. The victim gets a new Will save each round to overcome the pain. A successful Will save means your Pain power stops working. You must use it again to affect the target (with the usual increase in fatigue save Difficulty for successive use). A target gets a +2 Will save bonus for each successive use of Pain in the same scene.

Time: Pain is a standard action.

PHASE

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can shift yourself "out of phase" with the material world, becoming incorporeal. You are unaffected by the material world, able to pass through solid objects and creatures and move in any direction, including up or down, at your normal movement speed. Attacks originating in the material world do not affect you, but you cannot touch or affect material things either. Supernatural powers the affect the mind or spirit still work on you and your supernatural powers of the same type work on material beings, so you can Psychic Blast a material creature while using Phase, for example, and they can Psychic Blast you, but you cannot use Move Object or other powers affecting the material world.



You remain out of phase for one round per adept level. If the power's duration ends while you are inside a material object, you are shunted into the nearest open space and must make a Toughness saving throw against +1 damager per 5 feet you travel in this manner. You can also renew your power's duration with a new fatigue save (including the modifier for repeated power use).

Time: Phase is a move action.

PLANE SHIFT

FATIGUING

You can transport yourself (and perhaps others) to different dimensional planes. You make a power check to move to another plane of existence. The Difficulty is 10, modified by your familiarity with the other plane (see **Familiarity** previously in this chapter). If you carry additional mass along with you, the Difficulty is based on the amount, as follows:

Difficulty	Mass
10	up to 20 lb.
15	50 lb.
20	100 lb.
25	250 lb.
30	500 lb.
35	1,000 lb.
40	2,000 lb.

Generally, alternate dimensions are considered only slightly familiar unless you have visited before. You can also acquire knowledge of another plane using Object Reading or Mind Probe; the plane is then considered somewhat familiar to you. If you choose to visit a random plane, the familiarity modifier is only +5, but this is quite dangerous as your destination is up to the whim of the Narrator. Of course, once you have visited another plane, you can become more familiar with it.

The Narrator may limit this power based on the alternate planes of existence in the setting. If there are none, then Plane Shift isn't available as a power.

Time: Plane Shift is a full-round action.

PLANT SHAPING

FATIGUING

You can shape living plants and, to a degree, dead wood and other plant materials.

Plant Healing: You can heal injured or diseased plants. This requires you to touch the plant and make a Difficulty 15 Plant Shaping check. If you succeed, the plant is restored to health. Plants must be living and reasonably intact in order for this power to heal them.

Plant Growth: You can promote rapid growth in plants, causing an area to become filled with thick undergrowth (see **Hampered Movement** in **Chapter 6**). This affects a radius equal to your adept level times 40 feet. You can also focus the power on a specific area with a 40-foot radius. Plants there become so overgrown they entangle anyone in the area, who must make a Reflex saving throw. A failed save means the target is bound and helpless, needing a Difficulty 20 Strength or Escape Artist check to get free. A successful save means the target isn't trapped, but must still contend with the thick undergrowth created by the tangled plants. Finally, you can use plant growth to enrich an area with a radius equal to your adept level times 400 feet, increasing the yield and growth of crops there by 50 percent for the season.

Woodcrafting: You can use Plant Shaping like a Craft skill to shape objects out of wood. This takes minutes instead of the hours of a normal Craft project. You can therefore complete a simple woodcraft project in a minute and an advanced one in an hour. See **Craft** in **Chapter 2** for details.

Time: Plant healing is a full-round action. Plant growth is a standard action. Woodcrafting requires time based on the project (as noted above).

PSYCHIC BLAST

FATIGUING

You can focus your power to psychically assault a target's mind. You can affect any target in your line of sight or in mental contact. The target makes a Will saving throw against your power's save Difficulty, with the results noted on the **Damage Track** (see **Chapter 6**) as non-lethal damage. So a failed Will save results in a bruise, failure by 5 or more in a daze, and so forth. Psychic Blast cannot cause damage past unconsciousness.

Time: Psychic Blast is a standard action.

PSYCHIC REFLECTION

PREREQUISITE: PSYCHIC SHIELD

You can reflect powers blocked by your Psychic Shield back at their originator (see **Psychic Shield** in this chapter). When your Psychic Shield successfully blocks a power directed at you, you can make a Psychic Reflection check against the same Difficulty. If you succeed, the power directed at you affects the attacker instead, using the attacker's bonus. You do not suffer fatigue for the reflected power (the attacker does), but you are in control of the effect. You must maintain the power yourself (if it can be maintained), and it has its normal effect and duration. The attacker may defend and save against the reflected power normally but cannot also reflect it using Psychic Reflection. Any attempt to do so simply causes the power's effect to dissipate.

Time: Psychic Reflection is a reaction.

PSYCHIC SHIELD

You can shield your mind from psychic influences. When you are the target of a power granting a Will saving throw, make a Psychic Shield check. The attacker must make a power check using the attacking power. If your check result is higher, the power fails. If the attacker's result is higher, the power affects you normally, but you still get your normal saving throw.

You may choose to voluntarily lower your Psychic Shield as a free action, and can raise it again as a free action. Otherwise, your shield is always active, even if you are unconscious or sleeping.

Shields and Maintained Powers: Once a power has overcome your Psychic Shield, it continues to affect you as long as the user maintains it. You're still entitled to your normal saving throws, if any, but your shield no longer protects you from that power. Once the attacker needs to make a new power check, however, your shield comes into play again and must be overcome again. For powers requiring mental contact, so long as the other adept remains in mental contact with you (inside your shield), he can use those powers freely without worrying about your shield.

Overcoming Psychic Shields: An attacker can choose to suffer a fatigue result to gain a +5 bonus to overcome your Psychic Shield. This is in addition to any fatigue caused by the power used against you. If you also choose to suffer a fatigue result, the attacker loses the bonus and must roll normally to overcome your shield. This process takes no actual time; it happens as part of the check to overcome the Psychic Shield. An attacker trying to avoid notice cannot use this option, since it makes it immediately apparent that you are under psychic attack.

Time: Using Psychic Shield as a defense is a reaction; raising or lowering your shield is a free action.

PSYCHIC TRAP

PREREQUISITE: PSYCHIC SHIELD

You can psychically act against anyone who tries to overcome your psychic defenses. When an opponent attempts to use a power against you and fails to overcome your Psychic Shield, you get an immediate power use against the attacker as a reaction. This can be any power you can use as a standard or move action, but not a full-round action. If the power requires mental contact, you are considered in mental contact with your opponent for the purposes of using it. You only get one free power use per opponent per round, regardless of the number of attempts to overcome your Psychic Shield. The reactive power has its normal Difficulty and fatigue.

Time: Psychic Trap is a reaction.

PSYCHIC WEAPON

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can create a melee weapon out of psychic energy. Take a move action to create the psychic weapon in your hand. The appearance of the weapon is up to you; its effects are the same regardless. You wield a psychic weapon like a normal melee weapon, except you are automatically considered trained with it.

The psychic weapon inflicts +1 damage per 4 power ranks. Add your key ability for Psychic Weapon rather than your Strength to the weapon's damage. This damage ignores physical armor. You can score a critical hit with your Psychic Weapon on a natural roll of 20, inflicting +3 damage.

A psychic weapon is immaterial and only affects creatures with an Intelligence score. It has no effect on non-intelligent creatures or objects,

meaning it cannot sunder or even block a material weapon. Two psychic weapons affect each other normally. If your psychic weapon is somehow knocked from your grasp or sundered by another psychic weapon, you can recreate it by taking a move action to do so.

Creating a psychic weapon requires a fatigue save with a Difficulty of 10 + the weapon's base damage bonus (not including your key ability). The weapon lasts for one minute (10 rounds) after you summon it. To maintain it for another minute, make another fatigue save. Your psychic weapon disappears if you are stunned or unconscious.

SCRYING

FATIGUING, CONCENTRATION

You can sense distant events as if you were physically present at them. Make a Scrying check to sense a particular place, creature, or thing known to you. The base Difficulty is 10, modified by familiarity. If successful, you can observe the subject as if you were present. The vision lasts for as long as you maintain it, but your ordinary senses are overridden, so you are unaware of what is happening near you while you are observing events elsewhere. A subject observed via Scrying is considered present in terms of familiarity, but not in your actual line of sight.

Scrying creates a psychic disturbance, which creatures with Intelligence 0 or better can sense. Any such creature under observation can make a Sense Motive or Second Sight check, opposed by your Scrying check. Creatures with no supernatural abilities get the intense feeling of being watched. Adepts see a glowing or shadowy image of you. You also have a present familiarity for any creature that senses you for the purposes of that creature's powers, meaning they may affect you in return.

Time: Scrying is a full-round action.

SECOND SIGHT

You can sense the use and lingering effects of supernatural powers. Make a Second Sight check to detect powers in use in your vicinity, to sense an attempt at mental contact, or to detect and read the supernatural "signature" left behind by powers.

Sense Powers: The Narrator makes a Second Sight check for you in secret as a reaction whenever supernatural powers are used in your general area. The base Difficulty is 10 or the user's Psychic Shield check result, whichever is greater, and the Difficulty increases by +1 for every 10 feet between you and the user or subject of the power (whichever is closer). A successful result means you sense the power use. You also know the general direction and distance to the source of the power and its target. If you succeed by 5 or more, you know which power was used. If you succeed by 10 or more, you also recognize the user, if known to you.

Sense Mind Touch: You make a Second Sight check against the other adept's Mind Touch check to know when someone is trying to secretly get into mental contact with you. If you win the check, you sense the attempt, but you might not be able to avoid it (depending on the results of your Psychic Shield check and Will save).

Sense Supernatural Signature: If you also have the Object Reading power, you can sense old uses of supernatural powers in an area. The base Second Sight Difficulty is 15 to detect that powers were used in the area in the past, and 20 to determine what power was used and roughly when. It is Difficulty 25 to know exactly what or whom the power was used on. Sensing supernatural signatures is fatiguing.

Try Again: No.

Time: Sensing power use and mental contact are reactions, taking no time. Sensing signatures requires a full-round action.



SELF-SHAPING

PREREQUISITES: BODY CONTROL RANK 12

You can reshape your body to assume the form of another creature. The new form must be a humanoid or animal, with a level no greater than your total level.

If you are slain or knocked unconscious while using this ability, you revert to your original form. You gain the Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores of the new form, but retain your own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You also gain the new form's speed and qualities, and you retain your own base combat bonus, saving throws, and skills (modified by your new ability scores).

You can freely designate the new form's cosmetic qualities (such as hair color, hair texture, and skin color, for example) within the normal ranges for a creature of that type. The new form's significant physical qualities (such as height, weight, and gender) are also under your control, but must fall within the norms for the new form's species. You are effectively disguised as an average member of that species. If you use this ability to create a disguise, you get a +10 bonus on your Disguise check.

Your equipment is not affected by the transformation. Any clothing or equipment that cannot be worn by your new form drops off. Likewise, when you return to your normal form, you have only what you are carrying or wearing. This usually leaves you naked if you were in animal form. At the Narrator's discretion, some supernatural items may disappear into your changed form, reappearing when you assume your normal form.

Self-Shaping is fatiguing, with a fatigue save Difficulty of 15. It requires a full-round action to undergo a transformation, during which you can do nothing else. The transformation lasts for one hour per level, but you can make an additional fatigue save to maintain a form for another hour per level.

Assuming a shape with an average species Intelligence lower than your species poses an additional danger: each hour you must make a Will saving throw (Difficulty 15) or lose a point of Intelligence. If your Intelligence score drops to the natural level for that species, you become that creature in mind, as well as body. The effect of your Self-Shaping becomes permanent, and your normal identity is lost. You remain trapped until someone else achieves a Difficulty 30 Mind Touch to reach and reawaken your normal self, allowing you to return to normal form.

SENSE MINDS

You can determine the presence and location of other minds. Make a Difficulty 15 Sense Minds check to sense the presence of any creature with an Intelligence score within 30 feet of you. For every factor of 10 you extend your sensing radius, the Difficulty increases by 5.

Difficulty	Radius
15	30 feet
20	300 feet
25	3,000 feet (about one-half mile)
30	30,000 feet (about 5 miles)
35	300,000 feet (about 50 miles)
40	3,000,000 feet (about 500 miles)

With a successful check, you sense the presence of other minds, their approximate number, their general type (animal, humanoid, and so forth), and their approximate location. The larger the number of minds, the more general the information tends to be. Psychic Shield opposes Sense Minds. A Psychic Shield check greater than your Sense Minds check allows a creature to go unnoticed.

You can focus your attempt to Sense Minds on a particular place you can see, such as a building or island within range, for example, or even a planet seen from the bridge of a spaceship.

Time: Sense Minds is a move action.



SEVERANCE

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

PREREQUISITES: WARD RANK 13

You can remove another creature's supernatural powers. You must be in mental contact with the subject. Make a Ward check (Difficulty 30) as a full-round action to deprive the subject of powers. The target makes a Will saving throw against your power save Difficulty. If the check succeeds and the Will save fails, the subject loses use of all supernatural powers, while retaining knowledge of those abilities. The target gets an additional Will save each day to regain lost powers, and a use of Mind Shaping or another use of this power can reverse the effect (Difficulty 30). You can only take 10 or 20 on the Ward check if the target is helpless.

SLEEP

FATIGUING, MENTAL CONTACT

You can psychically put a target into a deep sleep. The target gets a Will saving throw. Success negates the effect. If the Will save fails, the creature falls instantly asleep and remains so for 1 minute per rank. Sleeping creatures are helpless. Slapping or any damage awakens them, but normal noise does not. Awakening the creature requires a standard action (an application of the aid action). Creatures that do not normally sleep are unaffected by this power.

Time: Sleep is a standard action. It lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) per rank.

SUGGESTION

FATIGUING

You can implant suggestions into the minds of others. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable. Asking a creature to shoot or stab itself, immolate itself, or do some other obviously harmful act automatically fails. However, a suggestion that a pool of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter.

If the target's Will saving throw fails, the suggested course of action is followed for up to 30 minutes per power rank, or until the course of action is complete, whichever comes first. You can also specify conditions that trigger a particular course of action, in which case the duration is counted from when the triggering event occurs. A very reasonable suggestion may impose a saving throw penalty of -1 or -2, at the Narrator's discretion.

Try Again: No. You can attempt to affect the same character after some time has passed, but not in the same scene.

Time: Suggestion is a full-round action. It lasts for 30 minutes per rank.

SUPERNATURAL SPEED

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: BODY CONTROL.

You can move at great speed in short bursts. When you use this feat, your movement speed is multiplied by your adept level for 1 round (6 seconds). This is considered running movement (a full-round action), and it is fatiguing (Difficulty 12). Supernatural speed also multiplies your jumping distances by half your adept level.

SUPERNATURAL STRIKE

PREREQUISITE: IMPROVED STRIKE.

With this power, your unarmed attacks are considered supernatural weapons for overcoming the defenses of creatures vulnerable to such weapons.

SUPERNATURAL WEAPON**PREREQUISITE:** WEAPON TRAINING OR COMBAT +3 OR GREATER

You can imbue any weapon you wield with supernatural power. The weapon is considered supernatural for overcoming the defenses of creatures vulnerable to such weapons. You must personally wield the weapon for it to gain this benefit.

TELEPORT**FATIGUING**

You can move instantly from one place to another without crossing the distance in between. Make a Teleport power check, the base Difficulty is 10, plus the familiarity of your destination. If you carry additional mass along with you, the Difficulty is based on the amount, as follows:

Difficulty	Mass
10	up to 20 lb.
15	50 lb.
20	100 lb.
25	250 lb.
30	500 lb.
35	1,000 lb.
40	2,000 lb.

You choose whether objects you are touching are carried along or left behind (allowing you to teleport out of things such as rope or manacles, or your clothes, for example). You cannot teleport only part of an object or creature. All the material must be touching you or another solid object that is touching you in order to be carried along. Creatures that do not wish to be teleported can make a Will save, with success meaning they're left behind. A failed power check means you don't go anywhere, but still suffer normal fatigue.

Time: Teleport is a move action.

TRUTH-READING**FATIGUING (SEE BELOW)**

You can sense when someone is lying to you. When interacting with a creature of Intelligence –3 or higher, you automatically sense when the creature tells you a deliberate lie. You can do this a number of times equal to your Wisdom score in any given conversation. Detecting further lies in the same conversation is fatiguing (Difficulty 10, +1 per additional statement you verify; make the fatigue save at the end of the encounter). You do not detect half-truths, lies of omission, or things the creature believes are true (even if they are not).

VISIONS

You can get visions of the future, as if you were actually present at a particular future event. The visions you receive are by no means assured; the future can be changed by the actions of those in the present.

Spontaneous Visions: At the Narrator's discretion, you may receive a vision when you are in contact with a subject or when there is a momentous event approaching in the future. This vision can occur while you are awake, yet spontaneous visions often take the form of dreams. You know when a dream is actually a vision, although you may not necessarily know what the vision means.

Danger Sense: Whenever you would normally be surprised in combat, you can make a Visions check (Difficulty 15). If successful, you receive a split-second warning; you are not surprised and can take an action during the surprise round.

The Narrator should make Visions checks secretly so the player doesn't know if a particular vision is accurate or not. Consult the table for the

results of a vision, based on the Visions check, or choose a suitable result, based on the hero's Visions rank and the requirements of the story.

Difficulty	Result
10	A vague vision of the future that may be accurate.
15	An accurate glimpse of the future.
20	Awareness of how long before a event occurs.
25	Awareness of the people involved in a future event.
30	Awareness of the time, subjects, and location of a future event.
35	Near-complete knowledge of a future event and everything involving it.

Things seen in visions count as slightly familiar in terms of familiarity, possibly more if the vision was long or extremely accurate (in the Narrator's opinion).

Time: Visions is a full-round action (at least).

WARD**CONCENTRATION**

You can create interference with other supernatural powers and even creatures. You can affect an area around you with a radius equal to your adept level times 5 feet. Alternatively, you can choose to focus your Ward against a single creature in your line of sight.

Anyone affected by your Ward must make an opposed check against the result of your Ward check to successfully use any powers. Powers with results less than yours fail; although, the users of the failed powers still suffer fatigue, if any. Adepts can choose to suffer a fatigue result, in addition to the normal fatigue of the power used, to gain a +5 bonus to overcome your Ward. If so, you can choose to suffer a fatigue result to reinforce your ward, forcing the subject to make a normal check to overcome it (without the bonus). This takes no actual time; it happens as part of the check to overcome the Ward.

Creature Ward: You can also use Ward to "hedge out" or ward off certain supernatural creatures. The Narrator decides what type of creatures you may ward, depending on the setting. Examples include undead, fey creatures, elementals, psychic or energy beings, demons (or other extraplanar entities), and so forth. Different types of supernatural powers may ward against different types of creatures. Any creature affected by your Ward must make a Will save against the result of your Ward check to pass the boundary of the ward (a radius of adept level x 5 feet). A creature that fails the save cannot cross the boundary so long as the ward is maintained, nor can it directly affect or influence anything within the bounds of the ward.

Time: Ward is a move action.

WATER SHAPING**FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE**

You can shape and direct the flow of water.

Splash: You can cause as much as 10 gallons of water per Water Shaping rank to leap in an arc up to 10 feet per adept level. Hitting a creature with this watery arc requires a ranged attack roll. The creature must make a Fortitude save or be dazed for one round (taking no actions but defending normally). The splash also douses flames with a damage bonus less than your Water Shaping rank.

Shape Flow: You can direct the flow of currents, increasing or decreasing the speed of water vessels by 20 percent for every 5 points your check exceeds Difficulty 10 (at Difficulty 35 you can stop water vessels entirely or double their speed).

Lower Water: Waters lower by as much as 1 foot for every point your Water Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. The water lowers within an area with a 10-foot radius per adept level (a 5th-level adept can lower an area of water with a 50-foot radius). In extremely large and deep bodies of water, such as an ocean, this power creates a whirlpool that sweeps ships and similar craft downward, putting them at risk and making them unable to leave by normal movement for the duration.

Raise Water: Waters rise by as much as 1 foot for every point your Water Shaping check exceeds Difficulty 10. The water rises within an area with a 10-foot radius per adept level (a 5th-level adept can raise an area of water with a 50-foot radius). Boats raised in this way slide down the sides of the watery hump created. If the area includes riverbanks, a beach, or other nearby land, the water can spill over onto dry land, causing floods.

Time: Water Shaping is a standard action.

WEATHER SHAPING

FATIGUING

PREREQUISITE: WATER AND WIND SHAPING

You can shape the complex forces controlling the weather. More than just commanding the winds, you can change the weather to suit your will. A use of Weather Shaping affects an area with a diameter in miles equal to your adept level, centered on you.

It takes (30 - power bonus) minutes for the effects of Weather Shaping to manifest, with a minimum of one round (at power bonus +30). You can call forth weather appropriate to the climate and season of the area you are in.

Season	Possible Weather
Spring	Tornado, thunderstorm, sleet storm, or hot weather
Summer	Torrential rain, heat wave, or hailstorm
Autumn	Hot or cold weather, fog, or sleet
Winter	Frigid cold, blizzard, or thaw
Late winter	Hurricane-force winds or early spring (coastal area)

You control the general tendencies of the weather, such as the direction and intensity of the wind. You cannot control specific effects of the weather—where lightning strikes, for example, or the exact path of a tornado. The weather continues as you left it for up to a number of hours equal to your adept level +4, or until you use a standard action to designate a new weather condition (which fully manifests 30 - power bonus minutes later). Weather Shaping can do away with weather conditions (naturally occurring or otherwise) as well as create them.

WIND SHAPING

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

You can shape and direct the wind. You can make the wind blow in a certain direction and change its speed. The new wind direction and speed last as long as you choose to maintain them. Changing them requires another use of this power. You can affect the winds in a 40-foot radius per adept level. You can create an area of calm air, up to 80 feet in diameter, at the center of the winds, if you wish, and you can limit the winds to an area less than the maximum for your level.

Wind Direction: You may choose one of four basic wind patterns to function over the area.

1. A downdraft blows in all directions, from the center outward.
2. An updraft blows from all directions, from the outer edges toward the center.
3. A rotation causes winds to circle the center (clockwise or counterclockwise, as you wish).

4. A blast causes the winds to blow in one direction across the entire area, from one side to the other.

Wind Speed: With a Wind Shaping check, you can increase or decrease the wind's speed by one level for every 5 points you exceed Difficulty 10. Each round, on your turn, anyone in the area must make a Fortitude save or suffer the effects of the current wind speed. There are seven wind speed levels:

- *Light Wind:* A gentle breeze, having no game effect.
- *Moderate Wind:* A steady wind with a 50 percent chance of extinguishing small, unprotected flames, such as candles.
- *Strong Wind:* Gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a -2 penalty on ranged attack rolls and Notice checks for sounds. Strong winds knock down Tiny and smaller creatures. Flying creatures are blown backwards a short distance. A strong wind can speed or slow sailing vessels by 50 percent.
- *Severe Wind:* In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as in lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50 percent chance of extinguishing them. Ranged weapon attacks and Notice checks are at a -4 penalty. Severe winds blow Tiny and smaller creatures back a short distance and knock down Small creatures. Medium creatures are unable to move forward against the force of the wind.
- *Windstorm:* Powerful enough to bring down branches, if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75 percent chance of blowing out protected ones. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even siege weapons have a -4 penalty on attack rolls. Notice checks to listen are at a -8 penalty due to the howling wind. Windstorms blow away Small and smaller creatures, knock down Medium ones, and check the forward movement of Large creatures.
- *Hurricane-Force Wind:* All flames are extinguished. Ranged attacks are impossible (except with siege weapons, which have a -8 penalty on attack rolls). Notice checks to listen are impossible; all anyone can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricane-force winds often fell trees. These winds blow away Medium and smaller creatures, knock down Large ones, and check Huge creatures.
- *Tornado:* All flames are extinguished. All ranged attacks are impossible (even with siege weapons), as are Notice checks to hear anything. Instead of being blown away, Large and smaller creatures who fail their Fortitude saves are sucked toward the tornado. Those who come in contact with the actual funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1-10 rounds (d20/2), taking +12 damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage may also apply). Huge creatures are knocked down, and Gargantuan creatures are checked and unable to move forward. While a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 300 miles per hour, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 30 miles per hour (roughly 250 feet per round). A tornado uproots trees, destroys buildings, and causes other similar forms of devastation.

Time: Wind Shaping is a full-round action.

WIND WALK

FATIGUING, MAINTENANCE

PREREQUISITES: WIND SHAPING

You can "walk" on air at a speed of 5 feet times your power rank, with perfect maneuverability. The effect ends when your feet touch the ground. Wind Walk is fatiguing (make the fatigue save when your use of this ability ends). If you stop maintaining the power for any reason, you fall.

CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT

THIS CHAPTER DESCRIBES THE VARIOUS WEAPONS, ARMOR, TOOLS, AND OTHER EQUIPMENT **TRUE20** HEROES USE IN THEIR ADVENTURES.

IT ALSO LOOKS AT HANDLING WEALTH AND SPENDING FOR HEROES, AND AT VARIOUS SORTS OF SUPERNATURAL EQUIPMENT, WHICH WORKS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SUPERNATURAL POWERS FROM CHAPTER 4 AND DEALS WITH SOME CREATURE ABILITIES IN CHAPTER 8.



WEALTH

Heroes have a *Wealth score*, a trait reflecting their buying power, a composite of available cash, credit, and income. The Wealth score serves as the basis for Wealth checks, used to purchase goods and services. Assume a *True20* hero owns at least one outfit of normal clothes, if not several. Other items and equipment are acquired using the character's Wealth score.

A hero's starting Wealth score is +5 plus the hero's Charisma score. The Wealthy feat grants a +4 bonus to Wealth.

Wealth Score = 5 + Charisma (+4 per Wealthy feat)

WEALTH SCORE

Over the course of play, the hero's Wealth score may decrease as the hero purchases expensive items and increase as the hero gains levels. A hero's Wealth score can never fall below +0, but there is no limit to how high the Wealth score can increase.

Since Wealth is an abstract concept, it's sometimes difficult to determine how financially well off a character is. To get a general sense of how wealthy a hero is, check the **Wealth Score** table.

WEALTH SCORE	
Wealth Score	Financial Condition
+0	Impoverished or in debt
+1 to +4	Struggling
+5 to +10	Middle class
+11 to +15	Affluent
+16 to +20	Wealthy
+21 to +30	Rich
+31 or higher	Very rich

MAKING PURCHASES

Wealth bonus reflects your buying power. Every item and service has a cost, which is the Wealth check Difficulty; the higher the cost, the more expensive the item. To purchase something, make a Wealth check against the purchase Difficulty. The Narrator sets the Wealth check Difficulty for any particular purchase.

SAMPLE WEALTH DIFFICULTIES	
Item	Cost
Common household item	4-5
Casual clothing	8
Cell phone	9
Expensive clothing	12-15
Tool kit	13
Plane ticket	14
New computer	22
New car	28
House	30
Mansion	36

THE WEALTH CHECK

A Wealth check is a d20 roll plus your current Wealth bonus. Wealth bonus is fluid; it increases as you gain Wealth and decreases as you make purchases.

If you succeed on the Wealth check, you purchase the item. If you fail, you can't afford the item at this time.

If your current Wealth bonus is equal to or greater than the Difficulty, you automatically succeed.

If you successfully purchase an item with a purchase Difficulty higher than your current Wealth bonus, your Wealth bonus decreases by 1 point for every 5 points the purchase Difficulty is higher than your current Wealth bonus (1 point for 1–5 points higher, 2 points for 6–10 points higher, etc.).

TRY AGAIN

You can try again if you fail a Wealth check, but not until the character has spent an additional number of hours shopping equal to the purchase Difficulty of the object or service.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

You can take 10 or take 20 when making a Wealth check. Taking 20 requires twenty times longer than normal. (You're shopping around for the best price.)

SHOPPING AND TIME

Buying less common items generally takes a number of hours equal to the purchase Difficulty of the item, reflecting the time needed to locate the item and close the deal. Getting a license or buying a legally restricted item also increases the time needed to make purchases.

FINANCIAL AID

You can make an aid attempt (Difficulty 10) to help someone else purchase an item. If the attempt is successful, you provide the purchaser with a +2 bonus on the Wealth check. If you aid a Wealth check for an item with a purchase Difficulty higher than your current Wealth bonus, it decreases as normal.

LOSING WEALTH

Any time you purchase something with a cost greater than your current Wealth score or something with a cost of 15 or higher, your Wealth score decreases. How much the Wealth score is reduced depends on how expensive the item is. Your Wealth score only goes down if you successfully buy something. If you attempt to buy something and fail, your Wealth score is unaffected.

Item Cost	Wealth Score Decrease
15 or higher	-1
1–10 points higher than current Wealth score	-1
11–15 points higher than current Wealth score	-2
16 or more points higher than current Wealth Score	-3

Your Wealth score is always reduced by 1 point when you purchase something with a cost of 15 or higher, regardless of your Wealth score. This decrease is cumulative with any decrease that comes from your Wealth score being lower than an item's cost. For example, if your hero has a Wealth score of +10 and successfully purchases a noble's outfit (cost 16), his Wealth score would be reduced by 1 point for the cost being 15 or higher and by an additional point for the cost being 1–10 points higher than his Wealth score.



GAINING WEALTH

A hero typically gains Wealth when advancing in level, using his professional skill to earn is, or as a reward for accomplishing some task or quest.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Characters use their skills to earn a living. A skill used to earn Wealth is called a *professional skill*. The particular skill depends on the character's trade or profession. For example, a diplomat or courtier uses Diplomacy as a professional skill, while a smith or carpenter uses Craft, a con artist uses Bluff, a minstrel uses Perform, and so forth. Discuss with the Narrator what skill would be appropriate for your hero's profession, which can change, at the Narrator's discretion, as your character moves from one profession to another.

Characters use professional skills to improve their Wealth. You make a professional skill check to improve your Wealth score every time you attain a new level. The Difficulty is your current Wealth score. If you succeed, your Wealth score increases by +1. For every 5 points the check result exceeds the Difficulty, your Wealth score increases by an additional +1. You can't take 10 or 20 when making a professional skill check to improve your Wealth score.

Your rank in your current professional skill also automatically adds to the Wealth score increase you receive upon gaining a new level. See the accompanying table for details. (This bonus is accounted for in a character's starting Wealth score of +5.)

Ranks	Wealth Score Increase
1–5	+1
6–10	+2
11–15	+3
16–20	+4
21–23	+5

Example: Lady Aris is a negotiator (and 3rd-level expert) with Wealth +13 and Diplomacy +6 (her professional skill). When she reaches 4th level, her Diplomacy increases to +7, and she makes a Diplomacy check to see if her Wealth improves from all her careful negotiation. The Difficulty is 13, her current Wealth score. On a result of 13 or more, her Wealth increases to +16 (+1 for succeeding on the check, +2 for having 7 ranks in her professional skill). For every 5 points the check exceeds 13 (at 18, 23, and so forth), her Wealth increases an additional +1.

WEALTH AWARDS

Adventuring may result in characters finding valuable items or receiving financial rewards. In such cases, the benefit translates into a Wealth award determined by the Narrator. Generally, Wealth awards are limited to no more than a +4 increase to Wealth, and are usually less, around +1 or +2.

EQUIPPING YOUR HERO

When buying your hero's starting equipment, you may wish to follow these basic guidelines to simplify matters. List all the equipment you want your hero to have. Purchase all the items that won't reduce your hero's Wealth score. Then purchase the remaining items, starting with the most expensive (highest purchase Difficulty) to the least expensive. This ensures your hero's Wealth will go as far as possible.

SELLING THINGS

To sell something, determine its sale value. Assuming the item is undamaged and in working order, the sale value is equal to the item's purchase cost (as if bought new) minus 3.

Selling something can provide an increase to your Wealth score. The increase is the same amount as the Wealth score loss you would experience if you purchased an object with a cost equal to the sale value.

Regardless of your current Wealth score, your Wealth increases by 1 whenever you sell an object with a sale value of 15 or higher. If you sell something with a sale value less than or equal to your current Wealth

HIGHER LEVEL CHARACTERS AND WEALTH

When creating characters above 1st-level, the Narrator may wish to simply assign the new character the base starting Wealth score with a +1 bonus per additional level to reflect overall skills, success, and accumulation of resources. So a higher-level character's starting Wealth would be 5 + Charisma + level (+4 per Wealthy feat). Once the character enters play, this Wealth score increases or decreases normally.

score, and the sale value is 14 or lower, you gain nothing (the income from the sale is negligible).

Selling objects illegally usually requires contacts in the black market and reduces the sale value by an additional 3. This takes a number of hours equal to the normal cost of the item.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

The Narrator may rule some items are simply not available to characters or they must pay more (increasing the Wealth check Difficulty). This may include certain kinds of weapons, vehicles, and anything else the Narrator feels should be limited in the campaign.

MASTERWORK ITEMS

Some items are especially well-made, custom-built, or otherwise superior to normal equipment. These masterwork items grant a bonus greater than a normal item, usually a +1 with an attack roll or +2 with a check made with the item. Masterwork quality adds +5 to the item's cost. At the Narrator's discretion, superior masterwork items may grant higher bonuses, with a correspondingly greater cost.

CONCEALED ITEMS

Characters may attempt to conceal items on their person. It's assumed the character is wearing clothing offering places to conceal things. To conceal a weapon or other object, make a Sleight of Hand check. If you conceal an object before heading out into public you can usually take 10 unless you are rushed, trying to conceal it when others might see, or under other unusual constraints. Sleight of Hand can be used untrained in this instance, but you must take 10 to do so.

SIZE AND CONCEALMENT

The object's size affects the check result, as shown on the **Concealing Weapons and Objects** table. The type of holster used or clothing

worn, and any attempt to make a weapon easier to draw, can also affect the check.

CONCEALING WEAPONS AND OBJECTS

Condition	Sleight of Hand Modifier
Size of Weapon or Object	
Fine	+12
Diminutive	+8
Tiny	+4
Small	+0
Medium-size	-4
Large	-8
Huge or larger	can't conceal
Clothing is tight or small	-4
Clothing especially loose or bulky	+2
Clothing specifically modified for concealing object	+2
Weapon in a concealed holster	+4
Weapon can be drawn normally	-2
Weapon can be drawn as free action with Quick Draw feat	-4

NOTICING CONCEALED ITEMS

Detecting a concealed weapon or other object requires a Notice check. The Difficulty varies: If the target made a roll when concealing an object, the Difficulty of the check is the target's Sleight of Hand check total. If the target made no effort to conceal the object, then the base Difficulty is 10, modified normally. An observer attempting to Notice a concealed object receives a -1 penalty for every 10 feet distance to the target, and a -5 penalty if distracted.

Patting someone down for a concealed object requires a similar check. However, the skill employed is Search, and the searcher gets a +4 bonus for the hands-on act of frisking the target. Searchers typically take 10 or take 20 for pat-down searches. Some equipment may also offer bonuses under certain circumstances (a metal detector offers a bonus to Search checks to find metal objects, for example).

NOTICING CONCEALED ARMOR

Concealable armor can be worn under clothing if the wearer wants it to go unnoticed. Don't use the modifiers from the **Concealing Weapons and Objects** table when wearing concealable armor. Instead, anyone trying to notice the armor must make a Notice check (Difficulty 20).

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Apart from what an item is actually for, equipment in *True20* is primarily defined by its size and cost, as shown on the **General Equipment** table.

- **Size:** The size of a piece of equipment helps to determine how easy it is to conceal, and also indicates whether using the object requires one hand or two. In general, a character needs only one hand to use any objects of his size category or smaller.
- **Cost:** This is the purchase Difficulty of the Wealth check to acquire the item. Masterwork equipment of the same type has an increased cost (see **Masterwork Equipment** in this chapter).

Some of the equipment found on the **General Equipment** table is described in the following pages, along with any special benefits it confers on the user.

ADVENTURING GEAR

These include items you would use while camping or exploring and are limited to equipment available in a fairly low-tech (i.e., medieval) setting. Modern adventuring gear is made from modern materials (e.g., backpacks and tents made of nylon rather than leather and canvas, lanterns burning kerosene rather than lamp oil, etc.).

CANDLE

A candle dimly illuminates a 5-foot radius and burns for 1 hour.

CROWBAR

A crowbar grants a +2 bonus on Strength checks for tasks using it. If used in combat, treat a crowbar as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals bludgeoning damage like a club.

ADVENTURING GEAR					
Adventuring Gear	Size	Cost	Adventuring Gear	Size	Cost
Backpack (empty)	Med	4	Lantern, hooded	Small	8
Bedroll	Med	1	Rations, trail (per day)	Small	1
Blanket, winter	Small	2	Rope, hempen (50 ft.)	Med	2
Candles, dozen	Diminutive	1	Rope, silk (50 ft.)	Small	9
Canvas (sq. yd.)	Small	1	Spyglass	Diminutive	25
Crowbar	Small	3	Tent	Med	9
Grappling hook	Small	2	Toolkit, basic	Small	7
Hammer	Small	1	Toolkit, masterwork	Small	14
Ladder, 10-foot	Large	1	Torch	Small	0
Lantern, bullseye	Small	10	Waterskin	Small	2
ELECTRONICS			SURVEILLANCE GEAR		
Electronics	Size	Cost	Surveillance Gear	Size	Cost
Camera	Tiny	14	Binoculars	Small	7
Cell Phone	Diminutive	9	Concealable Microphone	Fine	13
Commlink	Fine	7	Mini-Tracer	Fine	11
Computer			Night Vision Goggles	Small	17
Desktop	Large	22	Parabolic Microphone	Small	17
Laptop	Med	23	LODGING		
PDA	Tiny	16	Lodging	Size	Cost
Digital Audio Recorder	Tiny	10	Simple	—	7
Video Camera	Small	16	Moderate	—	9
			Upscale	—	11
SURVIVAL GEAR			TRANSPORTATION		
Survival Gear	Size	Cost	Transportation	Size	Cost
Camo Clothing	Medium	9	Ship's passage	—	3
Flash Goggles	Tiny	15	Airfare	—	14
Flashlight	Tiny	4	Car rental	—	6
Gas Mask	Small	13	MOUNTS AND RELATED GEAR		
GPS Receiver	Tiny	15	Mounts and Related Gear	Size	Cost
Multi-tool	Tiny	9	Barding		
Rebreather	Tiny	13	Medium creature	Med	+2
SCUBA Gear	Large	17	Large creature	Large	+4
CLOTHING			Bit and bridle	Small	4
Clothing	Size	Cost	Dog, guard	Small	13
Casual clothing	Medium	8	Donkey or mule	Large	9
Fine clothing	Medium	12	Feed (per day)	Small	0
Formal clothing	Medium	15	Horses		
MEALS			Horse	Large	20
Meals	Size	Cost	Pony	Med	13
Simple	—	2	Warhorse	Large	22
Restaurant	—	4	Saddle		
Upscale	—	7	Military	Med	12
CRIMINAL GEAR			Pack	Med	7
Criminal Gear	Size	Cost	Riding	Med	10
Caltrops	Small	5	Saddlebags	Med	6
Handcuffs	Tiny	7	Stabling (per day)	—	1
Lock release gun	Tiny	12			

GRAPPLING HOOK

Throwing a grappling hook successfully requires a Climb check or ranged attack roll (Difficulty 10, +2 per 10 feet of distance thrown).

HAMMER

If a hammer is used in combat, treat it as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals bludgeoning damage equal to brass knuckles.

LANTERN, BULLSEYE

A bullseye lantern provides clear illumination in a 60-foot cone and shadowy illumination in a 120-foot cone. A cone emanates from a point to the listed distance, where it is as wide as the cone is long. It burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a bullseye lantern in one hand.

LANTERN, HOODED

A hooded lantern clearly illuminates a 30-foot radius and provides shadowy illumination in a 60-foot radius. A cone emanates from a point to the listed distance, where it is as wide as the cone is long. It burns for 6 hours on a pint of oil. You can carry a hooded lantern in one hand.

ROPE, HEMPEN

This rope has Toughness 3.

ROPE, SILK

This rope has Toughness 4. It is so supple it provides a +2 bonus on checks to use it.

SPYGLASS

Objects viewed through a spyglass are magnified to twice their size.

TORCH

A torch burns for 1 hour, clearly illuminating a 20-foot radius and providing shadowy illumination out to a 40-foot radius. If a torch is used in combat, treat it as a one-handed improvised weapon that deals +0 bludgeoning damage, plus the possibility of setting the target on fire (see **Chapter 6**).

ELECTRONICS

Computers and electronics are common in the modern world. Narrators should note that most of these devices are fairly delicate (Toughness 5 or less) and vulnerable to electricity, radiation, and powerful magnetic fields, which can short them out entirely.

CAMERA

A digital or film camera is used for taking still images. Most cameras have a capacity of 24 or 36 images and you can use one in conjunction with the Craft (visual art) skill.

CELL PHONE

A small handheld or headset unit used for communication. The battery lasts for approximately 24 hours before it needs to be recharged.

COMMLINK

A commlink is a tiny, button-sized device for radio communication with an effective range of about a mile (longer if patched into the cellular network or a similar network). Many hero (and villain) teams use commlinks.

COMPUTER

A computer includes keyboard, mouse, monitor, CD drive, printer, modem, and other standard peripherals, and may include things like a scanner at the Narrator's discretion. You need a computer to make Computers skill checks and do things like searching the Internet (to

take 20 on a Knowledge skill check). Masterwork computers represent upgrade packages with faster processors, better software, and so forth.

DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER

These tiny recorders, about the size of a deck of playing cards, can record up to eight hours of audio and can be connected to a computer to download the digital recording. Digital audio recorders don't have extremely sensitive microphones; they only pick up sounds within 10 feet.

PDA

Personal digital assistants or "palmtops" are handy tools for storing data. They can be linked to a notebook or desktop computer to move files back and forth.

VIDEO CAMERA

This is a hand-held camera that records video and audio on tape or digitally, with a capacity of about 6 hours of footage.

CRIMINAL GEAR

This equipment is most often used by criminals or to catch criminals.

CALTROPS

Caltrops are four-pronged metal spikes designed so one prong points up when the caltrop rests on a surface. You can scatter caltrops on the ground to injure opponents, or at least slow them down. One bag of twenty-five caltrops covers up to a 5-ft.-by-5 ft. area. Each time someone moves through an area containing caltrops at any rate greater than half speed, or each round someone spends fighting in such an area, the caltrops make an attack roll (attack bonus +0). If hit, the character must make a Toughness saving throw (Difficulty 15). Any injury forces the character to move at half speed on foot until the damage is eliminated.

HANDCUFFS

Handcuffs are restraints designed to lock two limbs—normally the wrists—of a prisoner together. They fit any medium or small humanoid. Handcuffs can only be placed on a pinned, helpless, or unresisting target. Steel cuffs have Toughness 10 and require a Disable Device check (Difficulty 25) or Escape Artist check (Difficulty 35) to remove without the key.

LOCK RELEASE GUN

This small, pistol-like device automatically disables cheap and average mechanical locks operated by standard keys (no Disable Device check necessary). It does not affect other locks.

SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Heroes often use surveillance gear to keep tabs on criminals and their activities.

BINOCULARS

Standard binoculars reduce the range penalty for visual Notice checks to -1 for every 50 feet (instead of -1 for every 10 feet). Using binoculars for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.

CONCEALABLE MICROPHONE

This tiny receiver is usable as a listening device. It has a broadcast range of about a mile. It requires a Search check against the results of the Stealth or Sleight of Hand check used to conceal the microphone to find it. Assume character hiding it took 20 on the check under most circumstances.

MINI-TRACER

This tiny radio transmitter has an adhesive backing. It requires a successful attack roll to plant a tracer on a target (or a Sleight of Hand check to plant it without the target's knowledge). Noticing the tracer is a Difficulty 20 Notice check (or the results of the character's Sleight of Hand check, whichever is higher). The tracer has a transmission range of about 2 miles.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

Night vision goggles use passive light gathering to improve vision in near-dark conditions. They grant the user darkvision—but because of the restricted field of view and lack of depth perception these goggles provide, they impose a –4 penalty on all Notice and Search checks made while wearing them.

Night vision goggles must have at least a little light to operate. A cloudy night provides sufficient ambient light, but a pitch-black cave or a sealed room doesn't. For situations of total darkness, the goggles come with an infrared illuminator that, when switched on, operates like a flashlight visible only to the wearer (or anyone else with IR vision).

PARABOLIC MICROPHONE

This apparatus has a gun-like microphone with an attached set of headphones. A parabolic mike reduces the range penalty for Notice checks to –1 for every 50 feet (instead of –1 for every 10 feet). Using a parabolic microphone for Notice checks takes five times as long as making the check unaided.

SURVIVAL GEAR

CAMO CLOTHING

Clothing in the right camouflage pattern for the environment grants a +5 bonus on Stealth checks in that environment. Patterns include foliage, desert, urban, and arctic.

FLASH GOGGLES

These darkly-tinted eye-coverings provide optic protection against blinding light, granting a +5 save bonus against attacks involving bright light.

FLASHLIGHT

Flashlights negate penalties for darkness within their illuminated areas. The standard flashlight projects a beam 30 feet long and 15 feet across at its end.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

This portable apparatus uses a chemical spray to extinguish small fires. The typical fire extinguisher ejects enough extinguishing chemicals to put out a fire in a 10-by-10-foot area as a move action. It contains enough material for two such uses.

GAS MASK

This apparatus covers the face and connects to a chemical air filter canister to protect the lungs and eyes from toxic gases. It provides total immunity to eye and lung irritants. The filter canister lasts for 12 hours of use. Changing the filter is a move action.

GPS RECEIVER

Global positioning system (GPS) receivers use signals from GPS satellites to determine the receiver's location to within a few dozen feet. A GPS receiver grants its user a +5 equipment bonus on Survival checks to navigate, but because the receiver must be able to pick up satellite signals, it only works outdoors.



MULTI-TOOL

This device contains several different screwdrivers, a knife blade or two, can opener, bottle opener, file, short ruler, scissors, tweezers, and wire cutters. The whole thing unfolds into a handy pair of pliers. A multi-tool can lessen the penalty for making Craft (mechanical), Craft (electronic), or Craft (structural) checks without appropriate tools to –2 instead of the normal –4. The tool is useful for certain tasks, as determined by the Narrator, but may not be useful in all situations.

REBREATHER

This is a small cylinder that fits over the mouth and provides two minutes (20 rounds) of oxygen, during which the character does not need to make suffocation checks.

SCUBA GEAR

This is a back-mounted oxygen cylinder and facemask, used for diving. SCUBA (Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus) gear provides two hours of oxygen, and characters using it do not need to make checks for suffocation unless the gear is damaged or disabled.

TOOLKITS

Various skills require tools. Disable Device requires lockpicking and electronics tools, for example, while Medicine requires a medical kit. Characters attempting a task without the proper tools have a –4 penalty on their skill check. Masterwork toolkits cost more but provide a +2 bonus on skill checks using them.

CLOTHING

Generally, you don't have to worry about outfitting your hero with normal, everyday clothing. Fine attire consists of high-quality clothing suitable for business, the sort worn by a higher-class, such as designer attire, or court clothes for a medieval setting. Formal attire is that worn by the wealthy and well-to-do for formal occasions.



MOUNTS AND RELATED GEAR

BARDING, MEDIUM AND LARGE CREATURE

Barding is a type of armor covering the head, neck, chest, body, and possibly legs of a horse or other mount. Barding made of medium or heavy armor provides better protection than light barding, but at the expense of speed. Barding can be made of any of the armor types found on the **Armor and Shields** table.

Armor for a horse has a cost equal to regular armor +10 and weighs twice as much. Medium or heavy barding slows a mount wearing it, as shown on the following table.

A barded animal cannot carry any load other than a rider and normal saddlebags.

Barding	Base Speed		
	(40 ft.)	(50 ft.)	(60 ft.)
Medium	30 ft.	35 ft.	40 ft.
Heavy*	30 ft.	35 ft.	40 ft.

* A mount wearing heavy armor moves at triple its normal speed when running, instead of quadruple.

DONKEY OR MULE

Donkeys and mules are stolid in the face of danger, hardy, surefooted, and capable of carrying heavy loads over vast distances. Unlike a horse, a donkey or a mule is willing (though not eager) to enter dungeons and other strange or threatening places.

FEED

Horses, donkeys, mules, and ponies can graze to sustain themselves, but providing feed for them is much better.

HORSE

A horse is suitable as a mount for a Medium rider. Warhorses can be ridden easily into combat. Other horses are hard to control in combat because they're not trained for it. It requires a move action and a Difficulty 20 Ride check each round to control a horse that's not trained for combat. If the check succeeds, you can take a standard action normally. If it fails, the move action becomes a full-round action and you cannot do anything except keep the horse under control until your next round.

PONY

A pony is suitable as a mount for a Small rider (generally only a child). They're more commonly used as beasts of burden in mountainous regions.

SADDLE, MILITARY

A military saddle braces the rider, providing a +2 bonus on Ride checks related to staying in the saddle. If you're knocked unconscious while in a military saddle, you have a 75 percent chance to stay in the saddle (compared to 50 percent for a riding saddle).

SADDLE, PACK

A pack saddle holds gear and supplies, not a rider. It holds as much gear as the mount can carry.

SADDLE, RIDING

The standard riding saddle supports a rider.

WEAPONS

Heroes often need weapons to get the job done, and warriors, in particular, are masters of various forms of combat. The weapons in this section range from fairly primitive blades and bludgeons found in low-tech settings to firearms, tasers, and futuristic beam weapons. The Narrator should set availability of weapons according to the setting.

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage. Melee weapons have the following traits:

- **Category:** Melee weapons are categorized as simple, martial, and exotic.
- **Damage:** This is the damage dealt by the weapon on a successful hit. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength to this damage.

- **Critical:** The entry in this column notes how the weapon is used with the rules for critical hits. When your character scores a critical hit, increase the damage as indicated.

+3: The weapon deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

+4: The weapon deals +4 damage on a critical hit.

+5: The weapon deals +5 damage on a critical hit.

19–20/+3: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20) and deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

18–20/+3: The weapon scores a threat on a natural roll of 18, 19, or 20 (instead of just 20) and deals +3 damage on a critical hit.

- **Damage Descriptor:** Melee weapon damage is classified as bludgeoning (weapons with a blunt striking surface, like a club), piercing (weapons with a sharp point), and slashing (weapons with a sharp edge). Some foes may be resistant or immune to some types of damage.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Cost
Simple Weapons						
Brass knuckles	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Tiny	5
Club	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	4
Knife	+1	19-20/+3	Piercing	10 ft.	Tiny	7
Pepper spray	—	—	Chemical	—	Tiny	5
Quarterstaff	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	4
Sap	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	2
Stun gun	Stun	—	Electricity	—	Tiny	5
Tonfa	+1	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Med	6
Martial Weapons						
Battleaxe	+3	20/+4	Slashing	—	Med	9
Sword	+3	19-20/+3	Slashing	—	Med	11
Spear	+3	19-20/+4	Piercing	20 ft.	Large	6
Warhammer	+3	20/+4	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Med	6
Exotic Weapons						
Chain	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	10 ft.	Large	5
Chainsaw	+6	20/+4	Slashing	—	Large	9
Nunchaku	+2	20/+3	Bludgeoning	—	Small	3
Whip	+0	20/+3	Bludgeoning	15 ft.	Small	4

- **Range Increment:** Melee weapons designed for throwing can also be used to make ranged attacks. Thrown weapons have a range increment just as other ranged weapons do—but the maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments. Any attack at less than the given range increment is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll.
- **Size:** Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and its wielder's size defines whether it can be used one-handed, if it requires two hands, and if it's a light weapon. A Medium or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands.
- **Cost:** This is the weapon's purchase Difficulty.

SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS

BRASS KNUCKLES

Pieces of molded metal fitting over the fingers, brass knuckles allow you to do +1 damage with your unarmed strikes. They include similar items like armored gauntlets.

CLUB

A number of blunt weapons used to strike, including nightsticks, batons, light maces, and similar bludgeoning weapons are classified as clubs.

KNIFE

A knife is a bladed weapon with a length less than 18 inches or so. This includes daggers, stilettos, sais, switchblades, bowie knives, and hunting knives, among others.

PEPPER SPRAY

This is a liquid sprayed in a target's face at close range to blind them. Pepper spray combines a visual Dazzle effect with a Stun effect. If the attack hits, the target makes a Reflex save (Difficulty 15). Failure means the target is blinded. A blinded target makes a Fortitude save (Difficulty

15) each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per save. A target blinded by pepper spray must also make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15). On a failure, the target is stunned. Characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover from both effects, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

QUARTERSTAFF

This is any fighting staff between four and six feet long, including the bo staff used in martial arts.

SAP

A sap is a bludgeoning weapon intended to knock out targets without permanently injuring them. Saps inflict non-lethal damage.

STUN GUN

A stun gun hits its target with a powerful charge of electricity, requiring a Fortitude save (Difficulty 17) to avoid being stunned. Stunned characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

TONFA

Police officers often carry and use a tonfa to subdue criminals. It's also a common martial arts weapon.

MARTIAL MELEE WEAPONS

BATTLEAXE

This is a heavy-bladed axe that can be wielded with one or two hands.

SWORD

A sword is a blade between 18 and 30 or more inches in length, single or double-edged. It includes longswords, katanas, sabers, scimitars, and similar weapons.

SPEAR

A spear is a bladed pole-arm. Most spears can also be thrown.

WARHAMMER

A warhammer is a heavy hammer or mace that can be wielded with one or two hands. Warhammers can also be thrown.

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

CHAIN

You can wield a weighted chain to strike a target up to 10 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats (and its benefits stack if you already have those feats).

CHAINSAW

A chainsaw is a tool that sometimes sees use as a weapon, particularly against zombies and other slasher-flick monsters. Since the damage is done by the powered chain, you do not add your Strength bonus to a chainsaw's damage.

NUNCHAKU

This is a popular martial arts weapon, made of two wooden shafts connected by a short length of rope or chain.

WHIP

A whip can strike targets up to 15 ft. away. You can use it to make trip attacks and to disarm opponents with a +2 bonus, like the Improved Trip and Improved Disarm feats. Its benefits stack if you already have those feats.

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons include both thrown and projectile weapons. Thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength bonus to their damage. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five increments. Projectile weapons include bows, crossbows, and guns, as well as energy weapons.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Many projectile weapons (machine pistols, submachine guns, and assault rifles in particular) are capable of automatic fire. See **Autofire** in **Chapter 6** for details on how this works in combat.

HOLDOUT PISTOL

This is a low-caliber, easily concealed pistol, typically used as a back-up or secondary weapon.

LIGHT PISTOL

A common handgun, light pistols are found in the hands of police officers and criminals alike.

HEAVY PISTOL

A high-caliber handgun, heavy pistols are usually used by those who want a lot of stopping power.

MACHINE PISTOL

A small automatic weapon, machine pistols are usable in one hand. Machine pistols are autofire weapons.

RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage Bonus	Critical	Damage Descriptor	Range Increment	Size	Cost
Projectile Weapons (Firearms)						
Hold-out pistol	+2	20/+3	Ballistic	20 ft.	Tiny	14
Light pistol	+3	20/+3	Ballistic	30 ft.	Small	16
Heavy pistol	+4	20/+3	Ballistic	40 ft.	Medium	18
Machine pistol	+3	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	30 ft.	Medium	17
Submachine gun	+4	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	40 ft.	Medium	19
Shotgun	+5/+6*	20/+3	Ballistic	40 ft.	Large	15
Assault rifle	+5	20/+3	Ballistic, Autofire	50 ft.	Large	16
Sniper rifle	+5	19-20/+4	Ballistic	250 ft.	Large	22
Energy Weapons (Firearms)						
Blaster pistol	+5	20/+3	Energy	50 ft.	Small	16
Blaster rifle	+8	20/+3	Energy	80 ft.	Large	19
Heavy Weapons (Exotic)						
Flamethrower	+6	—	Fire	—	Large	17
Grenade launcher	+5	—	Explosive	70 ft.	Large	14
Rocket launcher*	+10	—	Explosive	150 ft.	Large	15
Other Ranged Weapons						
Bolo (Exotic)	—	—	—	40 ft.	Small	3
Boomerang (Exotic)	+2	20/+4	Bludgeoning	20 ft.	Small	2
Bow (Martial)	+3*	20/+4	Piercing	40 ft.	Large	10
Crossbow (Simple)	+3	19-20/+3	Piercing	40 ft.	Medium	11
Javelin (Simple)*	+2	20/+3	Piercing	30 ft.	Medium	4
Shuriken (Martial)	+1*	20/+3	Piercing, Autofire	10 ft.	Tiny	3
Taser (Simple)	Stun	—	Electricity	5 ft.	Small	7

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

SUBMACHINE GUN

Compact automatic weapons that fire pistol ammunition, submachine guns are common military weapons, and are also used by criminals with access to more serious firepower. Submachine guns are Autofire weapons.

SHOTGUN

A shotgun can fire shot, which does +5 damage with a +2 bonus to hit due to the spread, but it does only +3 damage against targets with any increase in their natural Toughness save bonus (from worn or natural armor). A shotgun can also load solid slugs, which inflict +6 damage, with no attack bonus.

ASSAULT RIFLE

These rifles are designed for military-use, with both single-fire and autofire options. It is a move action to switch between modes.

SNIPER RIFLE

Sniper rifles are designed for long-range use, typically in conjunction with a powerful scope or targeting system.

ENERGY WEAPONS

Energy weapons are usually found in futuristic settings, although some fantasy settings might have supernatural equivalents such as “blaster wands” or the like.

BLASTER PISTOL

This is a pistol that fires a coherent bolt of energy.

BLASTER RIFLE

This is a larger rifle-sized weapon that fires a more powerful bolt of energy.

HEAVY WEAPONS

FLAME-THROWER

A flame-thrower shoots a stream of fire 5 feet wide and 25 feet long in front of the attacker as an area attack (see **Area Attack** in **Chapter 6** for further information).

GRENADE LAUNCHER

A grenade launcher fires various types of grenades, generally fragmentation grenades.

ROCKET LAUNCHER

A rocket-launcher is generally an anti-tank weapon, although they make useful anti-personnel weapons as well. It is an area attack. Most rocket launchers can fire only one or two shots before they must be reloaded as a full-round action.

OTHER RANGED WEAPONS

BOLO

A bolo is a set of weighted cords intended to entangle an opponent. If the bolo hits, the target makes a Reflex save (Difficulty 14). A failed save means the target is entangled. See the **Condition Summary** in **Chapter 6** for the effects of entanglement.

BOOMERANG

A thrown boomerang that misses returns to the thrower’s hand, ready to be thrown again on the next round. A boomerang that hits does not return. Boomerang wielders with the Exotic Weapon Training feat can throw the weapon so it hits the target on the return arc as a surprise attack (see **Chapter 6**).



BOW

Although archaic, some heroes favor the bow as a weapon even in modern settings, and it can be quite effective in the right hands. Bows add the wielder’s Strength bonus to their damage, although most bows are only designed to add up to a +5 Str bonus at best.

CROSSBOW

A crossbow is similar to a bow, and used for the same reasons. A crossbow does not add the user’s Strength bonus to its damage.

JAVELIN

This is a light, flexible spear intended to be thrown. Javelins can also be used in melee combat.

SHURIKEN

These are flat metal stars or spikes for throwing. Shuriken can be thrown in groups (making them autofire weapons). Although they are thrown weapons, shuriken do not add the thrower’s Strength bonus to damage due to their lightness.

MASTERWORK WEAPONS

A masterwork weapon is a finely crafted version of a normal weapon. Wielding it provides a +1 bonus on attack rolls.

You can’t add the masterwork quality to a weapon after it is created; it must be crafted as a masterwork weapon. The masterwork quality increases the cost of a normal weapon by +5.

Masterwork ammunition is damaged (effectively destroyed) when used. The masterwork bonus of masterwork ammunition does not stack with any bonus from the weapon firing it.

Even though some types of armor and shields can be used as weapons, you can’t create a masterwork version of such an item conferring a bonus on attack rolls. Instead, masterwork armor and shields have lessened armor check penalties.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Item	Cost
Laser Sight	15
Ammo (clip)	4
Silvered	+6
Stun ammo (clip)	4
Suppressor	12
Targeting scope	11

TASER

This is a compressed-air weapon that fires a pair of darts. On impact, they release a powerful electrical charge, requiring a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) to avoid being stunned. Stunned characters get a new Fortitude save each round to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

The following accessories can be added to the weapons in this section.

LASER SIGHT

A laser sight projects a non-damaging laser beam showing where the weapon is aimed. This grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls with that weapon.

SILVERED

A weapon (or its ammunition) can be coated with silver to overcome the damage reduction of some supernatural creatures (see **Chapter 8**). A silvered weapon has a +6 modifier to its cost.

STUN AMMO

Ballistic weapons can fire rubber bullets while bows can fire blunt-tipped arrows or quarrels. This ammunition is intended to inflict non-lethal rather than lethal damage. Switching between ammo types is a move action (or a free action for a character with the Quick Draw feat).

SUPPRESSOR

A suppressor muffles the noise of a ballistic weapon, making it Difficulty 10 for normal hearing to detect it. Normally, hearing a firearm is Difficulty 0, modified by distance.

TARGETING SCOPE

When you take a full action to aim a ranged weapon with a targeting scope, double the normal benefits of aiming: a +4 attack bonus, or +8, if you're aiming at a stationary object.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Most grenades and explosives are area attacks, affecting all targets in a given area. See **Area Attacks** in **Chapter 6** for details.

Grenades are generally high-tech items, but some settings may have supernatural equivalents that work the same way: "thunderstones" in place of flash-bangs, "bags of noxious mist" in place of tear gas, and so forth.

FRAGMENTATION GRENADE

This is a common military grenade that sprays shrapnel in all directions.

SMOKE GRENADE

A smoke grenade fills an area with thick smoke (colored as desired) providing total concealment (see **Concealment** in **Chapter 6**).

FLASH-BANG GRENADE

A flash-bang grenade gives off a bright flash and a loud bang that can render targets temporarily blind and deaf (targets save separately against each effect, Reflex Difficulty 14). Affected targets receive a Fortitude save each round against the same Difficulty to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

SLEEP GAS GRENADE

This grenade fills a 40-ft. area with a fatigue-inducing gas (Fortitude save, Difficulty 14). Targets save each round they are in the gas cloud (which lasts for 10 rounds) and recover normally from any fatigue suffered.

TEAR GAS GRENADE

This type of grenade releases a cloud of gas that irritates the eyes and lungs, causing temporarily blindness and nausea (targets save separately against each effect, Fortitude Difficulty 14). Affected targets get a Fortitude save each round against the same Difficulty to recover, with a +1 bonus per previous save.

DYNAMITE

This is a common explosive. The damage on the table is for a single stick of dynamite. Each doubling of the amount of explosive increases damage by +1.

PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE

Another common explosive, this type can be worked into different shapes. The damage listed is for a 1-lb. block. Each doubling of the amount of explosive increases damage by +1.

GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Item	Effect	Radius	Reflex Save	Size	Cost
Grenades					
Fragmentation	+5 damage explosion	50 ft.	15	Tiny	15
Smoke	visual cover	10 ft.	—	Small	4
Flash-bang	blinding/deafening	20 ft.	14	Tiny	16
Sleep gas	fatigue	40 ft.	14	Tiny	12
Tear gas	blinding/nauseating	40 ft.	14	Small	18
Explosives					
Dynamite	+5 damage explosion	50 ft.	15	Tiny	15
Plastic explosive	+10 damage explosion	100 ft.	20	Small	30

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

ARMOR

With so many weapons around, characters may need armor to protect them. Some heroes are innately tough enough to stand up to a lot of punishment, while others rely on their high Defense. Others choose to wear armor, ranging from ancient metal armors to modern composites. Armor provides a bonus on Toughness saving throws.

ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

Heavy or bulky armor (which is also the most protective) can slow or hinder the wearer. This is reflected by an *armor check penalty* that applies to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Stealth, and Sleight of Hand checks. Double the normal armor check penalty also applies to Swim checks.

The armor check penalty is equal to the armor's Toughness bonus, unless its description specifies otherwise. Modern armor has an armor check penalty one lower than usual, as does masterwork armor. Supernatural armor has an armor check penalty two lower than usual (which includes the masterwork bonus). These modifiers all stack, so modern supernatural armor has an armor check penalty three lower than normal.

Wearers lacking the necessary Armor Training feat (see **Chapter 3**) suffer an additional penalty: they apply the armor check penalty to all Strength- and Dexterity-based checks as well as attack rolls.

ARCHAIC ARMOR

Heroes in low-tech settings still wear armor of leather or metal to protect them, and may carry wooden or metal shields.

LEATHER

This armor is made of heavy leather plates covering the torso and other vital areas.

STUDDED LEATHER

This is leather armor augmented with metal studs and rivets.

CHAINMAIL

This is a shirt of heavy metal chain, often with a hauberk (hood) to cover the wearer's head.

ARCHAIC ARMOR			
Armor	Toughness Bonus	Cost	
Leather (light)	+1	12	
Studded leather (light)	+2	13	
Chainmail (medium)	+3	18	
Breastplate (medium)	+4	19	
Plate-mail (heavy)	+5	21	
Full plate (heavy)	+6	23	

MODERN ARMOR			
Armor	Toughness Bonus	Other Traits	Cost
Leather jacket (light)	+1	—	10
Undercover shirt (light)	+2	Subtle	13
Undercover vest (medium)	+3	Subtle	14
Tactical vest (medium)	+4	—	17
Armored jumpsuit (medium)	+3	—	15

BREASTPLATE

This armor includes chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate.

PLATE-MAIL

This is chainmail augmented with a metal breastplate, greaves (leg-guards) and arm-guards.

FULL PLATE

This is a full (and heavy!) suit of articulated metal plates, like that worn by medieval knights.

MODERN ARMOR

Modern body armor is generally only worn by people like police officers, soldiers, criminal agents, and so forth, except for the most concealable and subtle types of armor.

LEATHER JACKET

A heavy leather jacket (like that worn by motorcyclists) provides a measure of protection.

UNDERCOVER SHIRT

A thin shirt of ballistic armor that can be worn under street clothes.

UNDERCOVER VEST

This is a somewhat heavier vest worn by undercover police officers and others in need of discrete protection.

TACTICAL VEST

This heavy bulletproof vest is worn by police officers and soldiers.

ARMORED JUMPSUIT

This is a full-body suit of ballistic cloth and padded armor.



MASTERWORK ARMOR

Just as with weapons, you can purchase or craft masterwork armor and shields. Such a well-made item functions like the normal version, except that its armor check penalty is 1 less than normal.

A masterwork suit of armor or shield increases the item's cost by +3.

The masterwork quality of a suit of armor or shield does not provide a bonus on attack or damage, even if the armor or shield is used as a weapon.

You can't add the masterwork quality to armor or a shield after it is created; it must be made as a masterwork item.

SHIELDS			
Shield	Dodge Bonus	Blocking	Cost
Small	+1	+1 on block rolls	5
Medium	+2	+2 on block rolls	8
Large	+3	+4 on block rolls	12
Wooden or metal	—	slow projectiles	—
Composite	—	fast projectiles	+4

SHIELDS

Shields provide a dodge bonus to Defense, much like the bonus provided by cover, since shields are basically a form of mobile cover. Additionally, shields provide a bonus to attack rolls to block attacks (see **Chapter 6** for more on cover and blocking). The dodge bonus is based on the size of the shield, while the shield's composition determines the types of attacks it can block. Wooden or metal shields can block melee weapons and slow projectiles like arrows and thrown weapons. Modern composite shields can also block fast projectiles like bullets and—at the Narrator's discretion—futuristic shields can block even energy weapons.

VEHICLES

Sometimes heroes make use of various vehicles to get around. Vehicles are used primarily for transportation, although they may come with additional capabilities—including weapons—making them useful in other situations as well.

- **Strength:** A vehicle's Strength, much like a character's, determines its carrying capacity. Vehicles have a base Strength of 10. Each increase in size category increases a vehicle's base Strength by +10. A vehicle can move at normal speed carrying up to its medium load, 2/3 speed with a heavy load. It can also pull up to five times its heavy load at 1/2 speed (up to ten times, if equipped with the proper hauling equipment and given an unobstructed area in which to move).
- **Speed:** This is the vehicle's (approximate) top movement speed.
- **Defense:** A vehicle's Defense is 10 + its size modifier.
- **Toughness:** This is the vehicle's Toughness rating, which starts out at 5. Each increase in size category also increases a vehicle's Toughness by +2.
- **Size:** A vehicle's size is measured like that of a character, as shown on the **Vehicle Size Categories Table**.
- **Cost:** Each vehicle has a purchase Difficulty for Wealth checks to acquire that vehicle. Large (and therefore expensive) vehicles more often belong to governments, corporations, or similar organizations, provided to people who work for them, from soldiers to ship captains. Individual ownership is rare (and may be restricted). Such vehicles have an asterisk (*) listed for their cost, which is left to the discretion of the Narrator, since owning or using such a vehicle is more of a plot device than a use of character Wealth.

GROUND VEHICLES

Most cars include such standard features as air conditioning, air bags, antilock brakes, cruise control, keyless entry, and an AM/FM radio with CD player. Luxury (masterwork) vehicles often also include extras such as power seats, leather upholstery, and a sunroof. Such amenities depend greatly on the setting and time period.

WAGON

This is a four-wheeled, open vehicle for transporting heavy loads. In general, two horses (or other beasts of burden) draw it, and it moves at their speed. A wagon comes with the harness needed to pull it.

TANK

This is a heavily armed and armored vehicle. The standard tank comes equipped with a cannon (+10 explosion damage) and a heavy machine gun (+6 autofire damage). It takes a full-round action to get into or out of a tank, and another full-round action to start it up.

APCs

Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs), are designed for carrying troops. They come with a smaller cannon (+6 explosion damage), and are set up so soldiers on board can fire their personal weapons from behind the cover of the APC's armor.

WATER VEHICLES

Water vehicles range from small boats and outboards to massive sea-going ships.

ROWBOAT

This 8- to 12-foot-long boat holds two or three Medium passengers. It moves about 1-1/2 miles per hour.

GALLEON

This larger, seaworthy ship is 75 to 90 feet long and 20 feet wide, and has a crew of 20. It can carry 150 tons of cargo. It has square sails on its two masts and can make sea voyages. It moves about 2 miles per hour.

GALLEY

This three-masted ship has seventy oars on either side and requires a total crew of 200. A galleon is 130 feet long and 20 feet wide, and it can carry 150 tons of cargo or 250 soldiers. This ship cannot make sea voyages and sticks to the coast. It moves about 4 miles per hour when being rowed or under sail.

VEHICLE SIZE CATEGORIES

Vehicle Size	Modifier	Size	Examples	Str	Toughness	Defense
Awesome	-12	128—250 ft.	Space transport	60	15	-2
Colossal	-8	64—128 ft.	Passenger jet	50	13	2
Gargantuan	-4	32—64 ft.	Semi, yacht, fighter jet	40	11	6
Huge	-2	16—32 ft.	Stretch limo, SUV, tank	30	9	8
Large	-1	8—16 ft.	Car, truck	20	7	9
Medium	+0	4—8 ft.	Motorcycle	10	5	10

GROUND VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Wagon	20	—	9	8	Large	5
Motorcycle	15	150 MPH	10	8	Medium	23
Compact Car	30	150 MPH	9	8	Large	26
Midsize Car	30	150 MPH	8	9	Huge	32
Full-size Car	35	135 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Sports Car	25	180 MPH	9	8	Large	34
Limousine	35	135 MPH	8	9	Huge	36
Pickup Truck	40	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
SUV	35	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	38
Van	35	120 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Small Truck	40	100 MPH	8	9	Huge	34
Bus	45	100 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	48
Semi	45	100 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	34
Armored Car	35	120 MPH	8	12	Huge	34
Police Cruiser	30	180 MPH	8	9	Huge	32
Tank*	50	80 MPH	8	12	Huge	*
APC*	45	100 MPH	8	12	Huge	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

WATER VEHICLES

Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Rowboat	20	1.5 MPH	9	7	Large	7
Jet-Ski	15	80 MPH	10	5	Medium	24
Speedboat	35	80 MPH	8	9	Huge	28
Yacht	50	25 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	32
Galleon	75	2 MPH	2	13	Colossal	32
Galley	100	4 MPH	-2	15	Awesome	35
Cutter*	60	50 MPH	6	12	Gargantuan	*
Destroyer*	75	50 MPH	2	15	Colossal	*
Battleship*	100	50 MPH	-2	18	Awesome	*
Submarine*	70	30 MPH	2	13	Colossal	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

CUTTERS

These are used by the Coast Guard and the Navy. They're often equipped with light machine guns (+6 autofire damage).

DESTROYERS

These are main naval ships, carrying heavy guns (+10 explosion damage).

BATTLESIPS

These ships have massive gun batteries (+13 explosion damage) and heavy armor.

SUBMARINES

These are equipped with torpedoes (+8 explosion damage) and often ballistic missiles (+15 explosion damage, higher if the missile has a nuclear warhead).

AIR VEHICLES						
Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Helicopter	30	100 MPH	6	9	Huge	39
Military helicopter*	40	125 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Private Jet	40	400 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	40
Jumbo-jet	55	500 MPH	5	13	Colossal	*
Fighter Jet*	50	1500 MPH+	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Bomber*	65	1000 MPH+	5	13	Colossal	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

SPACE VEHICLES						
Name	Strength	Speed	Defense	Toughness	Size	Cost
Space Shuttle	70	10,000 MPH	5	13	Colossal	*
Space Fighter*	50	50,000 MPH	6	11	Gargantuan	*
Space Cruiser*	100	50,000 MPH	5	15	Colossal	*
Space Battleship*	150	250,000 MPH	3	18	Awesome	*

* = See individual descriptions for more information.

AIR VEHICLES

Air vehicles are all capable of flight, some of them at very high speeds.

MILITARY HELICOPTERS

These are equipped with machine guns (+6 autofire damage) and rockets (+9 explosion damage).

FIGHTER JETS

These planes have machine guns (+6 autofire damage) and air-to-air missiles (+11 explosion damage).

BOMBERS

These planes may have machine guns and missiles, but they also have powerful bombs (+12 or higher explosion damage) that they can drop on targets. Bombers are also capable of carrying nuclear weapons and similar payloads.

SPACE VEHICLES

Space vehicles are intended for use outside the atmosphere, some of them for interplanetary or even interstellar travel, with some sort of faster-than-light (FTL) drive. Generally space vehicles are found in futuristic settings or in the possession of alien civilizations.

SPACE FIGHTERS

These are armed with blasters (+10 damage).

SPACE CRUISERS

These have larger beam weapons (+12 damage) and often energy torpedoes (+12 explosion damage).

SPACE BATTLESHIPS

These have the most massive weapons: blaster cannons (+15 damage) and high-powered energy torpedoes (+15 explosion damage).

SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

In addition to the mundane equipment that characters can get, there are various items with supernatural properties. Such equipment is rare and usually expensive, but sometimes found in the hands of heroes and villains. Creating supernatural items requires the Imbue Item feat.

SUPERNATURAL WEAPONS

A masterwork weapon can be imbued with supernatural power, making it a supernatural weapon. Supernatural weapons have the usual properties of masterwork weapons, plus they can overcome the damage reduction of certain creatures. Since supernatural trumps all other means of overcoming damage reduction, if a creature's damage reduction can be overcome at all, a supernatural weapon will do so. See **Chapter 8** for details on damage reduction.

The supernatural property increases a weapon's cost by +10. This includes the masterwork quality of the weapon.

SUPERNATURAL ARMOR

Masterwork armor can be imbued with supernatural power, making it extraordinarily light and comfortable. Supernatural armor has its armor check penalty reduced by 2 (including the benefits of being masterwork).

The supernatural property increases the armor's cost by +6, which includes the masterwork quality.

CHARMS

A *charm* is a small item containing a single use of a supernatural power. Common charms include potions, candles, small pouches of herbs, crystals, and similar items. In high tech settings, they may also include computer programs, slap-patches, plastic pouches, and whatever other items the Narrator sees fit. When a charm is activated (a standard action), it discharges the power it contains and then is rendered useless.

Creating a charm requires the Imbue Item feat as well as the power the charm will contain. It has a cost of 10 + the charm's bonus with the power, which cannot exceed its maker's bonus.

OTHER SUPERNATURAL ITEMS

The Narrator should feel free to introduce other supernatural or unusual items in the game as desired. It is left up to the Narrator to decide what any such items can do, using the supernatural powers in **Chapter 4** as guidelines.

CHAPTER SIX:

PLAYING THE GAME

IN TRUE20, HEROES ATTEMPT MANY DEEDS, FROM WOING HEARTS TO FELLING MONSTERS. THIS CHAPTER—JOINED WITH THE CHAPTERS ON SKILLS, FEATS, AND POWERS—GIVES RULES FOR DOING THINGS, WHETHER MUNDANE OR HEROIC, IN THE GAME.

THE CHAPTER FOCUSES ON KINDS OF ACTION: PHYSICAL ACTIONS, SOCIAL ACTIONS, AND FIGHTING. THE CHAPTER CLOSSES WITH AN OVERVIEW OF VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS HEROES MAY ENCOUNTER.



PHYSICAL ACTIONS

Ability scores, skills, and feats define characters' physical capabilities in *True20*. They affect the ability to move, carry loads, and throw things, three topics discussed in this section. Heroes can also push past their physical limitations using *extra effort*.

MOVING

Heroes move around a lot, especially when the action gets going. The Narrator moderates the pace of a game session, and so determines when movement is important enough to be worth measuring. During casual scenes, you usually won't have to worry about movement rates. If a character arrives somewhere and takes a stroll around, there's no need to know exactly how fast the character goes; it just happens. During action scenes, however, it may be important to have an idea how fast and how far a hero can move.

MOVEMENT PACE

Characters generally move at a normal, accelerated, or all-out pace. Most characters' base speed is 30 feet, meaning a character can walk 30 feet as a move action every round. The following movement paces modify base speed:

NORMAL

A normal pace represents unhurried but purposeful movement at the character's normal speed, which is usually 30 feet per round (about 3 miles per hour). This is the equivalent of walking for a normal unencumbered human.

ACCELERATED

An accelerated pace, sometimes called a hustle or double move, is twice the character's normal speed, usually 60 feet per round (about

6 miles per hour). This is the equivalent of jogging for a normal unencumbered human. Taking two move actions in a round is accelerated movement.

ALL OUT

Moving four times your base speed is an all-out pace, the equivalent of running or sprinting, usually 120 feet per round (about 12 miles per hour). All-out movement is a full-round action, and you lose any dodge bonus to Defense, since you're not easily able to avoid attacks.

You can move all out for 10 rounds, plus twice your Constitution score (so 8 rounds for Constitution –1, 16 rounds for Constitution +3, and so forth). After that you must succeed at a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to continue moving at this pace. You must check again each round you continue to move all out, and the Difficulty of this check increases by 1 for each check you have made. When you fail a check, you become fatigued and must drop to an accelerated or normal pace.

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Obstructions, bad surface conditions, and poor visibility can hamper movement. The Narrator determines the category into which a specific condition falls (see the **Hampered Movement** table). When movement is hampered, multiply the standard distance by the movement penalty (a fraction) to determine the distance covered. For example, a character who can normally cover 60 feet with a double move can cover only 30 feet if moving through thick undergrowth.

If more than one condition applies, multiply the normal distance covered by *all* movement penalty fractions that apply. For instance, a character who normally could cover 60 feet with a double move could cover only 15 feet moving through thick undergrowth in heavy fog (one-quarter his double move).



HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Condition	Examples	Movement Penalty
Obstruction		
Moderate	Undergrowth	x3/4
Heavy	Thick undergrowth	x1/2
Surface		
Bad	Steep slope, mud	x1/2
Very bad	Deep snow, slick ice	x1/4
Poor visibility	Darkness, heavy fog	x1/2

CARRYING

Strength determines how much weight heroes can lift and how much any additional encumbrance slows them down. See the Carrying Capacity table for how much characters can lift based on their Strength score. (The figures in the Carrying Capacity table are for medium creatures. Larger and smaller creatures can carry more or less depending on their size category. See Size in Chapter 8 for details.)

Carrying more than a light load imposes penalties to Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Swim checks. The penalty is doubled for Swim checks.

LIGHT LOAD

Characters can lift and carry up to a light load without any penalties or difficulties.

MEDIUM LOAD

Characters carrying a medium load have a maximum dodge bonus of +3 and a -3 check penalty. They move at 2/3 normal speed.

HEAVY LOAD

Characters can lift up to a heavy load overhead. They have a maximum dodge bonus of +1 and a -6 check penalty. They move at 2/3 normal speed.

MAXIMUM LOAD

Characters can lift up to the maximum load off the ground, but can only stagger around with it. While overloaded in this way, characters lose any dodge bonus to Defense and can move only 5 feet per round as a full-round action. You cannot take any other actions while supporting a maximum load.

PUSH/DRAG

Characters can push or drag up to five times their heavy load weight, moving at 1/2 normal speed. Favorable conditions (smooth ground, dragging a slick object) double these numbers, and bad circumstances (broken ground, pushing an object that snags) can reduce them to one-half or less.

THROWING

Characters can throw any object they can lift, up to a heavy load. (You cannot throw your maximum load; only drop it adjacent to you.) Picking up an object is a move action, while throwing something is a standard action, so it's possible to pick up and throw an object in one round.

The distance you can throw an object is based on its weight and your Strength. You can throw your heavy load 5 feet. For every 2 points of Strength you have over the minimum required to lift an object as a heavy load, double the distance you can throw it. This means a Strength +5 character has 5 points more Strength than needed to lift 100 pounds as a heavy load and can therefore throw a 100-pound object up to 20 feet (5 feet x 2 x 2).

CARRYING CAPACITY

Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load	Maximum Load	Push/ Drag
-5	3 lb.	6 lb.	10 lb.	20 lb.	50 lb.
-4	6 lb.	13 lb.	20 lb.	40 lb.	100 lb.
-3	13 lb.	26 lb.	40 lb.	80 lb.	200 lb.
-2	20 lb.	40 lb.	60 lb.	120 lb.	300 lb.
-1	26 lb.	53 lb.	80 lb.	160 lb.	400 lb.
+0	33 lb.	66 lb.	100 lb.	200 lb.	500 lb.
+1	43 lb.	86 lb.	130 lb.	260 lb.	650 lb.
+2	58 lb.	116 lb.	175 lb.	350 lb.	875 lb.
+3	76 lb.	153 lb.	230 lb.	460 lb.	1,150 lb.
+4	100 lb.	200 lb.	300 lb.	600 lb.	1,500 lb.
+5	133 lb.	266 lb.	400 lb.	800 lb.	2,000 lb.
+6	173 lb.	346 lb.	520 lb.	1,040 lb.	2,600 lb.
+7	233 lb.	466 lb.	700 lb.	1,400 lb.	3,500 lb.
+8	306 lb.	613 lb.	920 lb.	1,840 lb.	4,600 lb.
+9	400 lb.	800 lb.	1,200 lb.	2,400 lb.	6,000 lb.
+10	532 lb.	1,064 lb.	1,600 lb.	3,200 lb.	8,000 lb.

CARRYING LOADS

Load	Max Dex	Check Penalty	Speed	All-out Move
Light	None	0	Normal	Normal
Medium	+3	-3	2/3	Normal
Heavy	+1	-6	2/3	-1 multiple
Maximum	+0	—	5 ft.	—

EXTRA EFFORT

Heroes are often called upon to perform feats beyond their normal limits. This calls for extra effort. Players can use extra effort to improve a hero's abilities in exchange for the hero suffering some fatigue from the effort.

Extra effort is a free action and can be performed at any time during a hero's turn, but is limited to once per round. A hero using extra effort can gain one of the following benefits:

- **Check bonus:** +2 bonus on a single check.
- **Increase carrying capacity:** The hero's carrying capacity doubles for one round.
- **Increase movement:** The hero's movement speed doubles for one round (this includes jumping distances).
- **Willpower:** Gain an additional Will saving throw against an ongoing effect that allows for Will saves, including various supernatural powers.

At the beginning of the round immediately after extra effort, the hero suffers a level of fatigue (see **Fatigue** later in this chapter). A fatigued hero becomes exhausted, and an exhausted hero becomes unconscious, the round after using extra effort. If you spend a Conviction point at the start of the round following extra effort to shake off the fatigue, the hero suffers no adverse effects.

Other specific uses of extra effort (usually involving supernatural powers) are specified in the text.

SOCIAL ACTIONS

There's more to adventures than just fighting and feats of daring. Characters also interact in various ways. Heroes try to negotiate agreements between disputing parties or go on diplomatic missions. Villains taunt and threaten or even try to sway heroes to their side. People get into disagreements or debates. Whole adventures may hinge on convincing the right person of the right thing at the right time.

INFLUENCING ATTITUDES

The Narrator determines the starting attitude of any character that the heroes encounter during the game. The heroes can then try to influence the character's attitude using Charisma and various interaction skills, such as Diplomacy and Intimidate. The Influence table shows the effects of character attitudes and the Difficulty of attempting to change someone's attitude with a check. Note that a particularly bad influence check can actually make a character's attitude worse. For example, getting less than 5 on a Diplomacy check makes an unfriendly character turn hostile. In general, a hero can attempt to influence another character only once in any given scene.

Example: Detective Carlson is questioning a local shopkeeper about a suspect. The Narrator decides the shopkeeper's attitude toward the detective is Indifferent and that Carlson needs to make him Friendly in order to get any real cooperation out of him. Carlson's player decides to make nice, using Diplomacy to find out what he wants to know (rather than trying to Intimidate the shopkeeper), so the player acts out the detective asking questions and makes a Diplomacy check, using Carlson's +8 bonus. He needs a total of 15 to equal the Difficulty of getting a Friendly attitude, or a roll of 7 or better. He rolls a 9 and succeeds, and the shopkeeper tells the detective he has seen the suspect around a neighboring apartment building.

Note in the previous circumstances, since Carlson's Diplomacy bonus was within 10 of the Difficulty, and there was no real pressure on him, the Narrator could have just decided the detective would automatically succeed by taking 10 and forgone the check, helping speed along play.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

The various social actions heroes may wish to accomplish are governed by interaction skills. Note that these skills are all usable untrained, so anyone can attempt these actions. Naturally charismatic people tend to be good at them, but those with real talent or training (reflected by ranks in the appropriate interaction skills) are the best.

BLUFF

Bluff is ultimately the skill of getting what you want by misleading, or at least exaggerating. Completely honest social interactions should use another skill (usually Diplomacy). Bluff is opposed by itself or Sense Motive; it's difficult to trick an expert liar, and some people just have a sense of when someone is trying to pull the wool over their eyes.

FAST-TALK

The basic use of Bluff is lying and getting away with it. Make opposed Bluff checks, or Bluff versus Sense Motive, to see if someone gets caught in a lie. If the liar wins, then the story is believable. Heroes or Narrator characters who successfully fast-talk other Narrator characters can convince them to do things based on the success of the Bluff check, and the believability of their story.

HAGGLING

Haggling for a price or a similar deal is likewise an opposed check to see who bluffs best. The seller uses Bluff, while the buyer uses Bluff or Sense Motive, whichever is better. If the seller wins, the sale is made, with a +1 increase in cost per 5 points the check exceeds the opposing result. If the buyer wins, then the price doesn't go above market value (the price listed in **Chapter 5**) and is negotiated -1 cost per 5 points the check exceeds the opposing result. However, the buyer still has the option to say no if the final price is too much.

SEDUCTION

The subtle dance of seduction involves using Bluff to get someone to do what you want with promises (implied or explicit) of sexual favors. The seducer makes a Bluff check, while the prey makes a Bluff or Sense Motive check, whichever is better. The seducer's Difficulty increases if his suggestions go against the target's personality in some way. Use the modifiers in the Bluff skill description in **Chapter 2** as a guideline. For example, attempting to seduce someone in a monogamous relationship entails a risk to the target, for a +5 to +10 bonus on the target's check. Trying to seduce a target with a different sexual orientation gives them a +20 bonus on their Bluff or Sense Motive check.

DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is the gentle art of persuasion, debate, discussion, and etiquette. It is the premier interaction skill for those interested in dealing with others in social situations.

INFLUENCE

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to oppose you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't care either way	Socially acceptable interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to aid you	Protect, back up, heal, aid, support

Starting Attitude	New Attitude Result				
	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	less than 1	1	20

HERO ATTITUDES

While heroes can influence the attitudes of Narrator characters, note that heroes and Narrator characters generally cannot use interaction skills to change the attitudes of the heroes themselves. Players choose the attitudes of their heroes and when they change. Only things like supernatural powers can directly influence a hero's overall attitude. Heroes are affected by applications of some interaction checks, such as attempts to deceive them using Bluff or shaking their confidence with Intimidate, but their overall attitudes remains under the control of the players.

The Narrator may wish to *suggest* changes in attitude toward a particularly charming or influential supporting character, but shouldn't take control of the heroes' attitudes and behavior away from the players without some sort of supernatural force being involved.

NEGOTIATION

Negotiating an agreement with another party is a Diplomacy check, with the Difficulty based on the other party's attitude. The outcome of the negotiation is based on the other party's final attitude. An indifferent war chief may become a friendly ally, while a potential ally could become unfriendly or even hostile if negotiations don't go well.

PERSUASION

Convincing someone of the rightness of your view is a Diplomacy check. The Narrator evaluates the subject's attitude toward your viewpoint or the subject at hand (rather than you personally), and your check can improve that attitude.

MAKING FRIENDS

Make Diplomacy checks to favorably dispose someone toward you. A friendly or helpful result means you have a potential new friend, if you choose to maintain the relationship over time.

FOREIGN CUSTOMS

When your hero is dealing with unusual or foreign customs, the Narrator may ask for a Diplomacy check for you to avoid making any faux pas. The Difficulty is based on how obscure the custom is: Difficulty 10 for slightly obscure customs, Difficulty 15 for moderately obscure ones, and Difficulty 20 to 30 for very obscure ones. A failed check means a potentially embarrassing social blunder, which may worsen the attitude of your hosts, apply a penalty to further interaction checks, or both.

GATHER INFORMATION

Of all the interaction skills, Gather Information deals most with social groups, whether it's finding things out or spreading rumors through certain social circles.

ASSESSING SOCIAL SITUATIONS

You can make a Gather Information check to get a feel for any social situation. It's Difficulty 15 to get a general idea of the mood of a situation, as well as the prevailing attitude (so you have an idea of the Difficulty of using other interaction skills). Picking up on subtle undercurrents may require a higher check result, at the Narrator's discretion.

BUREAUCRACY

Gather Information can help cut through red tape and navigate through bureaucracies. The Difficulty of the Gather Information check depends on the challenge, from 10, for navigating simple bureaucratic procedures, to 20 or more, for dealing with particularly complex or hidebound bureaucracies.

SPREADING RUMORS

You can also use Gather Information to put information out where others will find or hear of it. The trick is to ensure the rumors are not traced back to you. This is an opposed check of Gather Information. If you win, then you successfully pass on whatever information you want. If you lose, then the other party traces the rumors back to you, and reacts accordingly.

INTIMIDATE

Although intimidation is not the approach for polite society, sometimes a forceful approach is called for, and the Intimidate skill covers all sorts of forceful social interactions, not just threats.

COMMAND

Make an Intimidate check when you bark a command or issue an order to someone and want it obeyed *now*. The Narrator can grant bonuses for circumstances; a noble issuing a command to a commoner has a clear advantage, while a king making the same command has a major one! A check is only necessary in cases where there's some question about whether or not the subject will obey the order. A loyal subject or retainer, for example, will carry out routine orders without need for a check, but a command to leave a comrade behind on the battlefield may require one, for example.

INTERROGATION

To get information out of someone by exerting pressure, make an Intimidate check against the result of the subject's Sense Motive check or Will saving throw, whichever has the greater bonus. The Narrator can modify the check using the modifiers for the Bluff skill (see **Chapter 2: Skills**), so it's harder to get subjects to give up information that compromises them or their allies. A successful Intimidate check gets the information. Modifiers may apply for the use of interrogation techniques ranging from sleep deprivation to torture, and a successful Intimidate check for interrogation can provide a +2 bonus on a Mind Probe check.



PERFORM

Perform is an interaction skill aimed at an audience rather than an individual, but it can still influence the audience's attitude overall, so long as the Narrator feels the performance is appropriate and the performer is trying to shift everyone's attitude in the same way. A character might use Perform specialties, like comedy or stringed instruments, to warm up an audience and improve their attitude before attempting skills like Diplomacy and Gather Information.

SENSE MOTIVE

Sense Motive is the catchall skill for resisting social interactions. While each interaction skill typically opposes itself (it's harder to trick someone

who's skilled in Bluff, for example), Sense Motive covers a general social shrewdness and awareness of the ins and outs of interaction.

Sense Motive checks are passive, in that they're only made to resist other interactions. At the Narrator's discretion, someone who makes a successful Sense Motive check to avoid a particular interaction can make another check with a Difficulty 10 as an aid action. The character must be able to communicate with the subjects and point out the flaws in the interaction to give them the aid bonus to resist it. This can range from an expert debater poking holes in someone's argument to an impassioned plea to a crowd not to listen to a rabble-rouser. Note that this is only to aid others against particular interaction checks. If the character is also trying to sway them to his point of view, then it's more likely an opposed interaction check between the two parties.

FIGHTING

Sometimes heroes must fight to achieve their goals. This section details the rules for fights, starting with the basics and then looking at some of the more unusual strategies heroes can employ.

COMBAT SEQUENCE

Combat in True20 is cyclical. Everybody acts in turn in a regular cycle called a round. Generally, combat runs in the following way:

1. Each combatant starts the battle flat-footed. Once a combatant acts, she is no longer flat-footed.
2. The Narrator determines which characters are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle. If some but not all combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard action or move action—not both—during the surprise round. Unaware combatants do not get to act in the surprise round. If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round.
3. Any remaining combatants roll initiative. All combatants are now ready to begin their first regular round.
4. Combatants act in initiative order.
5. When everyone has had a turn, the combatant with the highest initiative total acts again, and steps 4 and 5 repeat until combat ends.

COMBAT STATISTICS

Several traits determine how well you do in combat: your attack bonus, defense bonus, damage bonus, and saving throws. This section summarizes these traits and how to use them.

ATTACK BONUS

An *attack* represents the attempt to strike a target with an attack. When you make an attack, roll d20 and add your total attack bonus. If your result equals or exceeds the target's Defense, you hit and may deal damage. Your attack bonus is equal to the following:

$$\text{Attack Bonus} = \text{Combat Bonus} + \text{Dexterity} + \text{Size Modifier} + \text{Miscellaneous Modifiers} - \text{Range Penalty}$$

COMBAT BONUS

Your skill in combat, based on your role(s) and level, determines your basic ability to successfully strike a target.

DEXTERITY

Speed, agility, and accuracy make it easier to hit the target. You add your character's Dexterity score to your combat bonus to reflect this.

SIZE MODIFIER

Smaller targets are harder to hit, while larger targets are easier. A modifier to combat bonus is used to reflect this. See the table **Size Modifier to Combat Bonus**. Since the same size modifier applies to two opponents of the same size, they strike each other normally.

SIZE MODIFIER TO COMBAT BONUS

Size	Modifier
Colossal	–8
Gargantuan	–4
Huge	–2
Large	–1
Medium	0
Small	+1
Tiny	+2
Diminutive	+4
Fine	+8

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances of your attack may involve a modifier to your attack bonus. Attacking while prone, for example, imposes a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls. See **Combat Modifiers**, later in this chapter, for a detailed list of modifiers.

RANGE PENALTY

The range penalty with a ranged attack depends on the attack you're using and the distance to the target. All ranged attacks have a range increment. Any attack at a distance of one range increment or less carries no penalty for range, so an attack with a range increment of 50 feet can strike at enemies up to 50 feet away with no penalty. However, each full range increment thereafter causes a cumulative –2 penalty to the attack roll. For example, a character firing the same attack at a target 120 feet away suffers a –4 attack penalty (because 120 feet is over two range increments, but not three increments). Generally, projectile weapons have a maximum range of 10 increments. Thrown weapons have a maximum range of 5 increments.

AUTOMATIC MISSES AND HITS

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on the attack roll is *always* a miss. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is *always* a hit, regardless of the opponent's Defense. A natural 20 is also a *threat*, a possible critical hit.

DEFENSE BONUS

Your *Defense* represents how hard it is for opponents to hit you, the Difficulty for an opponent's attack roll. Your Defense is equal to the following:

$$\text{Defense Bonus} = 10 + \text{Combat Bonus} + \text{Dodge or Parry Bonus} + \text{Size Modifier} + \text{Miscellaneous Modifiers}$$

COMBAT BONUS

Your skill in combat allows you to avoid attacks, so you add your combat bonus to your defense. If you can't move, you can't use your combat bonus. For example, you lose your bonus if you're bound or unable to move.

DODGE BONUS

Your *dodge bonus* represents your ability to actively dodge attacks. It's equal to your Dexterity score, and may be modified by feats and circumstances. If you can't react to an attack, you can't use your dodge bonus. For example, you lose your dodge bonus if you're bound or when you're caught flat-footed at the beginning of combat. Most situational bonuses to Defense are dodge bonuses.

PARRY BONUS

Your *parry bonus* represents your ability to deflect attacks. It's equal to your Strength score, and may be modified by feats and circumstances. You can only use parry bonus against melee attacks, and only if you are armed (having the Improved Strike feat counts as being armed) or have a shield. If you can't react to an attack, you can't use your parry bonus.

SIZE MODIFIER

Smaller targets are harder to hit, while larger targets are easier. See the table **Size Modifiers to Combat Bonus**. Since the same size modifier applies to opponents of the same size, they strike each other normally.

MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIERS

The circumstances may also apply miscellaneous modifiers to your dodge bonus or Defense.

DAMAGE BONUS

When you hit with an attack, you may deal damage. Each attack has a *damage bonus*. This is typically a weapon's damage modified by your Strength. However, some attacks have a fixed damage.

$$\text{Damage Bonus} = \text{Weapon Damage} + \text{Strength}$$

WEAPON DAMAGE

Weapons have a damage modifier, showing how much damage they inflict. Most projectile weapons inflict a fixed damage bonus. Melee and thrown weapons add the wielder's Strength score to their damage.

STRENGTH

Your Strength measures how hard you can hit, so your Strength score applies to damage when you attack unarmed or with a melee or thrown weapon.

LETHAL AND NON-LETHAL DAMAGE

Damage comes in two types: lethal and non-lethal. Lethal damage does lasting injury and can kill. Non-lethal damage can stun and cause unconsciousness, but causes no serious injury.

CRITICAL HITS

When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 (the d20 actually shows 20), you have scored a *threat*. The hit might be a critical hit



(sometimes called a crit). To find out whether it's a critical hit, make another attack roll, using the same attack bonus. If this second roll equals or exceeds the target's Defense, the attack is a critical hit. If not, the attack still hits, but as a normal attack, not a critical hit. A critical hit increases the attack's damage according to the type of weapon or attack. If unspecified, a critical hit increases damage by +3.

INCREASED THREAT RANGE

Characters with the Improved Critical feat can score a threat on a natural result less than 20. Some weapons have higher multipliers or threat ranges; see **Chapter 5**. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit is not a threat. Only natural 20s always hit.

SAVING THROWS

When you're subjected to a potentially harmful effect, you get a *saving throw* to avoid or reduce it. Like an attack roll or check, a saving throw is a d20 roll plus a bonus based on an ability score and other modifiers. Your saving throw is equal to the following:

$$\text{Saving Throw} = \text{Dd20} + \text{Base Save Bonus} + \text{Ability Score} + \text{Miscellaneous Modifiers}$$

The Difficulty for a save is based on the attack itself.

The four different kinds of saving throws are the following:

TOUGHNESS

Toughness is your ability to resist physical punishment and direct damage. Your Toughness saving throw equals your Constitution score, modified by feats like Defensive Roll and Tough, plus any armor you are wearing.

FORTITUDE

Your ability to resist attacks against your vitality and health, such as poison and disease is your Fortitude. You apply your Constitution score to your Fortitude saving throws.

REFLEX

This is your ability to avoid harm through reaction time and agility, including dodging explosions and crashes. You apply your Dexterity score to Reflex saving throws.

WILL

Will is your resistance to mental influence and domination as well as certain powers. You apply your Wisdom score to your Will saving throws.

INITIATIVE

Every round, each combatant gets to do something. The combatants' initiative checks determine the order in which they act, from highest to lowest. At the start of a battle, each combatant makes an initiative check. The players each roll for their heroes while the Narrator rolls for everyone else. An initiative check is a Dexterity check.

Initiative Check = d20 + Dexterity + Miscellaneous Modifiers

The Narrator finds out in what order heroes act, counting down from highest total to lowest. Each character acts in turn, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat. Usually, the Narrator writes the names of the characters down in initiative order to move quickly from one character to the next each round. If two combatants have the same initiative check result, they act in order of highest Dexterity first. If there is still a tie, roll a die, with the highest roll going first.

FLAT-FOOTED

At the start of a battle, before you have had a chance to act (specifically, before your first regular turn in the initiative order), you are flat-footed. You can't use your dodge or parry bonus, if any, while flat-footed. The Uncanny Dodge feat allows you to retain your dodge and parry bonus to Defense while flat-footed.

OPPONENT INITIATIVE

Typically, the Narrator makes a single initiative check for opponents. That way, each player gets a turn each round and the Narrator also gets one turn. At the Narrator's option, however, he can make separate initiative checks for different groups of opponents or even for individual foes. For instance, the Narrator may make one initiative check for a villain and another for all of his minions.

JOINING A FIGHT

If characters enter a fight after it's begun, they roll initiative and act whenever their turn comes up in the existing order.

SURPRISE

When a combat starts, if you are not aware of your enemies but they are aware of you, you're surprised. If you know about your opponents but they don't know about you, you surprise them.

DETERMINING AWARENESS

Sometimes all combatants on a side are aware of their enemies, sometimes none are, and sometimes only some of them are. Sometimes a few combatants on each side are aware and other combatants on each side are unaware.

The Narrator determines who is aware of whom at the start of a battle. The Narrator may call for Notice checks or other checks to see how aware the characters are of their opponents. Some examples:

- The heroes enter a seedy tavern and immediately spot members of a notorious gang. The gang members notice the heroes at the same

time. Both sides are aware; neither is surprised. The heroes and the gang members make initiative checks, and the battle begins.

- The heroes are tracking an assassin who flees down a dark alley. They follow, unaware the assassin is hidden in the shadows. When the assassin springs out to attack, the heroes are surprised and do not get to act in the surprise round.
- The heroes infiltrate a sorcerer's stronghold wearing the uniforms of his guards. When they reveal themselves and attack, they surprise their opponents. The heroes act during the surprise round, but the villains do not.

THE SURPRISE ROUND

If some, but not all, of the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a standard or move action, not both. If no one or everyone is surprised, a surprise round doesn't occur.

UNAWARE COMBATANTS

Combatants unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the surprise round. Unaware combatants are flat-footed because they have not acted yet. Because of this, they lose any dodge bonus to Defense.

ACTIONS

The things characters can do during combat are broken down into actions, described in this section.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Each round represents about 6 seconds of time in the game world. In the real world, a round is an opportunity for each character to take an action. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, your hero can do in 1 round.

Each round begins with the character with the highest initiative result and then proceeds, in descending order, from there. Each round uses the same initiative order. When a character's turn comes up in the initiative order, that character performs his entire round's worth of actions.

For almost all purposes, there is no relevance to the end of a round or the beginning of a round. The term "round" works like the word "week." A week can mean either a calendar week or a span of time from a day in one week to the same day the next week. In the same way, a round can be a segment of game time starting with the first character to act and ending with the last, but it usually means a span of time from one round to the same initiative number (initiative count) in the next round. Effects lasting a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative number where they began.

One Round = Span of time from one initiative count to the same initiative count in the next round

ACTION TYPES

The five types of actions are standard, move, full, free, and reaction. In a normal round, you can perform a standard action and a move action (or two move actions; you can always take a move action in place of a standard action), or you can perform a full action. You can also perform as many free and reaction actions as your Narrator allows.

In some situations (such as in the surprise round), you may be limited to taking only a standard or move action, not both.

STANDARD ACTION

A standard action allows you to do something. You can make an attack, use a skill, feat, or power (unless it requires a full action to perform; see below), or perform other similar actions. During a combat round, you can take a standard action and a move action. You can take the move action before or after, but not during, the standard action.

MOVE ACTION

A move action allows you to move your speed or perform an action taking a similar amount of time, such as climb one-quarter of your speed, draw or stow a weapon or other object, stand up, pick up an object, or perform some equivalent action (see the **Actions in Combat** table).

You can take a move action in place of a standard action. For example, rather than moving your speed and attacking you can stand up and move your speed (two move actions), draw a weapon and climb one-quarter your speed (two move actions), or pick up an object and stow it in a backpack (two move actions).

If you move no actual distance in a round (usually because you have traded a move action for an equivalent action like standing up), you can take a 5-foot “step” before, during, or after the action. For example, you can stand up (a move action), take a 5-foot step, and attack (a standard action).

FULL ACTION

A full action requires all your attention during a round. The only movement you can take during a full action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions do not allow you to take a 5-foot step. You can also perform free actions (see below) as the Narrator allows.

FREE ACTION

Free actions consume very little time and, over the span of the round, their impact is so minor they are considered to take no real time at all. You can perform one or more free actions while taking another action. However, the Narrator puts reasonable limits on what you can do for free. A good rule of thumb is your Dexterity or Intelligence bonus +1 in free actions per round, with a minimum of one. For instance, dropping an object, dropping to a prone position, speaking a sentence or two, and ceasing to concentrate on maintaining a power are all free actions.

REACTION

A reaction is something that happens in response to something else, like a reflex. Like free actions, reactions take so little time they're considered free. The difference between the two is a free action is a conscious choice made on the character's turn to act. A reaction is a reflex or automatic response that can occur even when it's not your turn to act. Characters can react even while unable to take normal actions, such as while stunned. A saving throw is an example of a reaction, something you instinctively do to avoid danger. Some powers and other traits are usable as reactions.

ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

The most common actions and their game effects are described here.

AID (STANDARD ACTION)

If you are in position to attack an opponent, you can attempt to aid a friend engaged in melee with that opponent as a standard action. Make an attack roll against Defense 10. If you succeed, you don't actually damage the opponent—but your friend gains either a +2 bonus on an attack roll against that opponent or a +2 bonus to Defense against that opponent (your choice) on the friend's next turn. Multiple aid bonuses stack.



AIM (FULL ACTION)

By taking a full action to aim and line up an attack, you get a bonus to hit when you make the attack. If you're making a melee or unarmed attack, or a ranged attack at melee range, you get a +5 bonus on your attack roll. If you're making a ranged attack from a greater distance, you get a +2 bonus on your attack roll. If you aim to hit an immobile object, you hit automatically with a melee attack and get a +4 bonus on a ranged attack.

However, while aiming you lose your dodge bonus, and if you are struck or distracted in any way before your attack, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain your aim. This tends to make aiming melee attacks—or ranged attacks while adjacent to an enemy—extremely unwise.

Once you aim, your next action must be to make the attack. Taking another standard or move action spoils your aim and you lose the aiming bonus.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Free Actions

Delay, Drop an Item, Drop Prone, Speak

Move Actions

Command, Manipulate an Object, Move, Stand Up

Standard Actions

Aid, Attack, Begin/Complete Full Action, Combined Attack, Concentrate, Demoralize, Disarm, Feint, Grapple, Mental Grapple, Overrun, Ready, Rush, Startle, Taunt, Total Defense, Trip

Full Actions

Aim, Charge, Move All Out, Recover

ATTACK (STANDARD ACTION)

With a standard action, you can make an attack against any opponent within the attack's range.

Example: *Indrus the archer draws a bead on the evil Lord Grasin across a battlefield. Indrus is Combat +4 and his Dexterity +3. He and Grasin are the same size, so no size modifier applies, but he is between one and two range increments away for his bow, which is a -2 modifier. Since Grasin is in melee with Indrus' ally Maygold, a -4 penalty would normally apply. However, Indrus has the Precise Shot feat, which negates this penalty. His total attack bonus is therefore (4 + 3 - 2) or +5. Lord Grasin is Combat +5 but Dexterity +0, so Indrus needs an attack roll of (10 + 5) or 15 or better to hit. His player rolls an 11, for a 16 total, success!*

SHOOTING OR THROWING INTO MELEE

If you make a ranged attack against an opponent engaged in melee with an ally, you take a -4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to aim carefully to avoid hitting your ally. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are opponents and adjacent to one another. (An unconscious or otherwise immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he or she is actually being attacked.)

If the target is two or more size categories larger than any allies in melee, you ignore the -4 penalty. If you have the Precise Shot feat, you also ignore the penalty for shooting or throwing into melee.

ATTACKING OBJECTS

Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors:

- **Held Objects:** An object held by a character has a base Defense equal to the holder's Defense + 5 + the object's size modifier.
- **Carried or Worn Objects:** Objects carried or worn by a character have a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + the object's size modifier.
- **Immobile Objects:** Immobile objects have a Defense of 5 + the object's size modifier. Adjacent attacks get a +4 bonus to hit immobile objects. (If you take a full action to aim, you get an automatic hit with an adjacent attack, or a +5 bonus with a ranged attack.)

BEGIN/COMPLETE FULL ACTION (STANDARD ACTION)

This action lets you start a full action (such as those listed on the **Actions in Combat** table) at the end of your turn, or complete a full action by using a standard action at the beginning of your turn the round after starting the action.

If you start a full action at the end of your turn, the next action you take *must* be to complete it.

CHARGE (FULL ACTION)

Charging allows you to move more than your speed and attack as a full action. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to twice your speed. You must stop as soon as you are within striking range of your target (you can't run past the target and attack from another direction).

During the surprise round, you can use the charge action, but you are only allowed to move up to your speed (instead of up to twice your speed). This is also true in other cases where you are limited to a single attack or move action per round.

After moving, you may make a single melee attack. You get a +2 bonus on the attack roll and also take a -2 penalty to your Defense for 1 round (until the beginning of your action the following round).



COMBINED ATTACK (STANDARD ACTION)

Multiple attackers can attempt to combine their attacks to overwhelm an opponent's defenses. The attackers must all delay to the same point in the initiative order (that of the slowest character). Each attacker makes a normal attack roll against the target. Take the largest damage bonus of the attacks that hit, and for each other attack within 5 points of that attack's bonus that hits, add +2.

Although a combined attack is similar to aiding someone, it is not the same, and bonuses applying to aid do not apply to combined attacks.

Example: *Having determined that the alien predator stalking them is too tough for simple sidearms, the Imperial Marines decide to concentrate their fire the next time they get a shot at it. During the next encounter, the marines delay their actions to the initiative of the slowest member of their squad, then let loose on the alien with all they've got.*

The alien has a defense modifier of +6, making the Difficulty of the attack 16. The marines are using assault rifles doing +5 damage. Three out of the five in the squad hit the target. The Narrator adds +4 to the weapons' base damage (for the two extra hits) and makes a Toughness save for the alien against +9 damage (+5 base, +4 for combined attacks). The creature disappears into the shadows, leaving behind spatters of hissing acidic blood; it can be hurt!

COMMAND (MOVE ACTION)

Issuing a command to a minion or a character under the effects of a power like Dominate requires a move action. If you want to issue different commands to different groups of minions, each one requires a move action (so you can issue two commands per round as a full action).

CONCENTRATE (STANDARD ACTION)

Concentrating to maintain a particular effect, or focusing intently on a task, counts as a standard action, meaning you cannot attack while concentrating, although you can still take move actions and free actions. If anything happens that may disrupt your concentration, you have to make a Concentration check to maintain it. See the **Concentration** skill in **Chapter 2** for details.

DELAY (FREE ACTION)

By choosing to delay, you act at a later point in the initiative order than your rolled initiative. When you delay, you voluntarily reduce your initiative for the rest of the combat. When your new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, you can act normally. You can specify this new initiative total or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, fixing your new initiative at that point.

Delaying is useful if you need to see what your friends or enemies are going to do before deciding what to do yourself. The price you pay is lost initiative. You never get back the time you spent waiting to see what was going to happen.

DELAYING LIMITS

The lowest you can voluntarily lower your initiative is -10 minus your initiative bonus. When the initiative count reaches that point, you must act or forfeit any action for the round. For instance, a character with an initiative bonus of 3 could wait until the initiative count reached 0, then wait for it to reach -10, but would have to act on -13 or forfeit any action for the round. This is primarily an issue when multiple characters delay.

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS DELAYING

If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative bonus (or higher Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two

or more delaying characters want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest bonus goes first. If two or more delaying characters are trying to go after each other, the one with the highest initiative bonus gets to go *last*.

DEMORALIZE (STANDARD ACTION)

You can make an Intimidate check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. See **Intimidate** in **Chapter 2** for details.

DISARM (STANDARD ACTION)

As a standard action, you may attempt to knock an item such as a weapon or device out of an opponent's hand. Make an attack roll against the defender. If you attempt to disarm with a ranged attack, you are at -4 on your attack roll. If your attack succeeds, make an opposed roll of your attack's damage against the defender's Strength. If you win, the defender is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm action as an unarmed attack, you now have the weapon. Otherwise, the defender drops it. If you make a disarm attempt with a melee weapon and lose, the defender may immediately make an attempt to disarm you as a reaction, without an attack roll.

DROP AN ITEM (FREE ACTION)

Dropping a held item is a free action, although dropping or throwing an item with the intention of accurately hitting something is a standard action.

DROP PRONE (FREE ACTION)

Dropping to a prone position is a free action, although getting up requires a move action unless you are trained in Acrobatics and make a successful check to Instant Up.

FEINT (STANDARD ACTION)

You can make a Bluff check to feint as a standard action. See **Bluff** in **Chapter 2** for details.

GRAPPLE (STANDARD ACTION)

Grappling is wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. It's tricky, but it can be useful to pin a foe rather than simply pummel him unconscious.

GRAPPLE CHECKS

In a grapple, you need to repeatedly make an opposed grapple check against an opponent. A grapple check is like a melee attack roll. Your attack bonus on a grapple check is:

$$\text{Grapple Check Attack Bonus} = \text{Combat Bonus} + \text{Strength modifier} + \text{Size Modifier.}$$

SIZE MODIFIER

Your size modifier for a grapple check is +4 for every size category you are above Medium-size or -4 for every size category you are below Medium-size. Like all size modifiers, this one cancels out so opponents of the same size grapple each other normally.

To start a grapple, you first need to grab and hold your target. Make a melee attack to grab the target. If you don't hit the target, you fail to start the grapple. Once you hit, you have grabbed your opponent. Make an opposed grapple check. If you lose, the target is not grappled. If you succeed, you can apply one of the following effects:

- **Damage:** You deal damage like an unarmed strike.
- **Throw:** You can pick up and throw your opponent like an inanimate object. The throw occurs as a move action as part of the grapple (making grabbing, grappling, and throwing an opponent a full-round action). The distance you can throw an opponent is based on weight like any other object, and a throw automatically ends the grapple.

- **Pin:** You hold your opponent immobile for one round. When an opponent has pinned you, you are immobile (but not helpless) for one round. You have a -4 Defense modifier and lose your dodge bonus against attacks while pinned.
- **Break:** You can break the hold an opponent has over an ally.
- **Escape:** You can escape the grapple or a pin. If you are grappled and escape, you are no longer grappling and can take whatever movement you get as your move action. If you're pinned and escape, you are still grappling, but no longer pinned. If more than one opponent is grappling or pinning you, your grapple check result has to beat *all* of their checks to escape. You also can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by your opponent's grapple check) to escape.

While you're grappling, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited. You lose your dodge bonus to Defense against opponents you aren't grappling. You can still use it against opponents you are grappling.

You can use powers while grappling, subject to the requirements of the grapple. If you use a power requiring a standard action, you forfeit your grapple check that round, meaning you automatically lose the opposed grapple check. This may be worth it if the power helps you get out of the grapple or otherwise deals with your opponent. The Narrator may require a Concentration check to use some powers while grappled.

Example: *Belanna the Pirate Queen grapples with the Thing From the Deep, a tentacled horror intent on dragging her down to a watery grave. Belanna has Combat +5 and Strength +2, giving her a Grapple bonus of +7. Unfortunately, the Thing has Combat +4, Strength +8, and a size modifier of +8, for a Grapple bonus of +20; Belanna is outmatched.*

The Thing makes a melee attack against Belanna's Defense of 16 and hits, initiating the grapple. The Narrator rolls its check and gets a 27. Belanna's player rolls a 13 and gets a 20, still not enough. The Thing has grappled the Pirate Queen and squeezes her in its tentacle, inflicting damage.

Deciding there's no way she'll break free using sheer strength, Belanna's player asks to attack the tentacle holding her with her cutlass. The Narrator agrees and, on her next action, the Pirate Queen strikes, hoping to inflict enough damage to get free, or at least make the Thing think twice.

MULTIPLE GRAPPLERS

Several combatants can be in a single grapple. Up to four can grapple a single opponent of the same size. Opponents one size category smaller than you count for half, opponents one size category larger than you count double, and opponents two or more size categories larger count quadruple. So if you're medium-sized, eight small, four medium, two large, or a single huge opponent can grapple you. In the same way, four small opponents (counting as two opponents) plus one large opponent (counting as two opponents) can grapple you. Additional grapplers can aid their friends with the aid action, granting a +2 bonus to that character's grapple checks for the round.

MANIPULATE OBJECT (MOVE ACTION)

In most cases, moving or manipulating an object is a move action. This includes drawing or holstering a weapon, retrieving or putting away a stored object, picking up an object, moving a heavy object, and opening a door.

MENTAL GRAPPLE (STANDARD ACTION)

Characters with the Mind Touch power can grapple an opponent *mentally* rather than physically, a struggle of mind against mind. Mental grappling uses the same system as physical grappling, with the following differences:

- A mental grapple requires a successful use of Mind Touch to establish mental contact. Mental grapples do not require physical contact, but do require a standard action each round, as usual. If the attacker stops maintaining Mind Touch at any time, the mental grapple ends.
- Mental grapple checks are d20 + the character's Will save or the character's Mind Touch or Psychic Shield bonus (whichever is greater). Size and Strength modifiers do not apply.
- You cannot throw an opponent using a mental grapple.
- Damage inflicted by a mental grapple is based on the attacker's Wisdom bonus rather than Strength bonus.
- Anyone in a mental grapple loses their dodge bonus against all opponents, even the one they are mentally grappling, due to the distraction.
- Anyone involved in a mental grapple must make a Concentration check (Difficulty 20) to do anything else without first escaping the mental grapple. A character can take a different standard action by forgoing the mental grapple check for that round, but then automatically loses the opposed mental grapple check for the round.
- The winner of a mental grapple can choose to break off mental contact, even if another character established it.

MOVE (MOVE ACTION)

The simplest move action is moving your speed. Many nonstandard modes of movement are also covered under this category, including climbing and swimming (up to one-quarter the character's speed), and crawling (up to 5 feet).

MOVE ALL OUT (FULL ACTION)

You can move all out as a full action. When you do so, you move up to four times your speed in a fairly straight line.

You can move all out for a number of rounds equal to 10 plus double your Constitution. After that, you must succeed at a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to continue moving all out. You must check again each round, and the Difficulty increases by +1 for each check. When you fail a check, you become fatigued and must drop to an accelerated or normal pace.

OVERRUN (STANDARD ACTION)

You can attempt an overrun as a standard action following a move action or as part of a charge. With an overrun, you plow past, or over, your opponent as you move, moving through his area. You can only make one overrun attempt per action.

First, you must move at least 10 feet in a straight line toward your target. The target chooses to avoid or block you. If he avoids you, you keep moving, since you can always move through an area occupied by someone who lets you pass. If he blocks you, make a trip attack against him (see **Trip**, later in this section). If you succeed in tripping your opponent, you can continue your movement as normal.

If you fail and are tripped in return, you fall prone. If you fail but are not tripped, you have to move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there, essentially stopping directly in front of your opponent. If that space is occupied, you fall prone as well.

READY (STANDARD ACTION)

Readying lets you prepare to take an action later, after you would normally act on your initiative, but before your initiative on your next turn. Readying is a standard action, so you can move as well.

You can ready a single standard or move action. To do so, specify the action you will take and the circumstances under which you will take it. Then, any time before your next action, you may take the readied

action as a reaction to those circumstances. For the rest of the fight, your initiative result is the count on which you took the readied action.

Your initiative result becomes the count on which you took the readied action. If you come to your next action and have not yet performed your readied action, you don't get to take the readied action (though you can ready the same action again).

RECOVER (FULL ACTION)

You can spend Conviction to use a full action to recover from damage in combat. One point of Conviction allows you to make an immediate recovery check as a full-round action. See **Recovery** later in this chapter for more information.

RUSH (STANDARD ACTION)

You can attempt a rush as a standard action made after a move action, or as part of a charge. (You normally can't make a standard action during a move action; this is an exception.) When you rush, you attempt to push an opponent straight back instead of damaging them.

First, you move adjacent to your target. You and the target make opposed Strength checks. If you and the target are different sizes, the larger one gets a +4 bonus per difference in size category. The target gets a +4 bonus for having more than two legs or being otherwise exceptionally stable.

If you win the opposed Strength check, you push the opponent back 5 feet per point your result exceeds your opponent's. You can't, however, exceed your normal movement speed, so any additional distance is ignored.

If you lose, you move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there (essentially, you stop directly in front of your opponent). If that space is occupied, you also fall prone.

SPEAK (FREE ACTION)

In general, speaking is a free action. Some Narrators may limit the amount you can say during your turn, although characters can generally say quite a bit in the midst of combat. Issuing orders to followers in combat is a move action.

STAND UP (MOVE ACTION)

Standing up from a prone position requires a move action.

STARTLE (STANDARD ACTION)

With the Startle feat (see **Chapter 3**), you can make an Intimidate check to startle an opponent as a standard action.

TAUNT (STANDARD ACTION)

With the Taunt feat (see **Chapter 3**), you can make a Bluff check to demoralize an opponent as a standard action. By taking a -5 penalty on the check, you can attempt to taunt as a move action.

TOTAL DEFENSE (STANDARD ACTION)

Instead of attacking, you can use your standard action to avoid attacks that round. You don't get to attack or perform any other standard action, but you get a +4 to your dodge bonus for the round.

TRIP (STANDARD ACTION)

You can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. Make a melee attack roll. If the attack succeeds, make a Strength or Dexterity check opposed by the defender's Strength, Dexterity, or Acrobatics check (use whichever ability has the higher modifier in each case). A combatant gets a +4 bonus for each size category exceeding medium or a -4 penalty for each size category smaller than medium (these size modifiers cancel



out for opponents of the same size). The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on the check if he has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid. If you win, you trip the defender. If you lose, the defender may react immediately by trying to trip you with no need for an attack roll. If you have the Improved Trip feat, the defender doesn't get an opportunity to trip you.

A tripped character is prone, suffering a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Prone characters have -4 Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents and +4 Defense against ranged attacks. Standing up from a prone position is a move action. A trip attack may have other effects depending on the situation; for example, tripping an opponent on a narrow ledge or the edge of a cliff may cause the opponent to fall (the Narrator can allow a Difficulty 15 Reflex save to grab the edge of the precipice at the last moment).

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

For actions not covered in any of this material, the Narrator determines how long the action takes.

SKILLS

Most uses of skills in a combat situation are standard actions, but some might be move or full actions. The description of a skill provides the time required to use it. See **Chapter 2**.

FEATS

Certain feats allow you to take special actions in combat. Other feats are not actions in themselves, but grant a bonus when attempting something you can already do. Some feats aren't meant for use within the framework of combat. The individual feat descriptions tell you what you need to know about them. See **Chapter 3**.

COMBAT MODIFIERS

This section covers various maneuvers and situations affecting combat and how it plays out.

AGGRESSIVE STANCE

You can improve your chances of hitting with an attack by sacrificing your defense. Take up to a –4 penalty on your Defense to gain half that amount (up to +2) on your attack rolls for that round.

AREA ATTACK

Some attacks consist of powerful explosions, bursts of energy, or simply chucking really big things at opponents. These *area attacks* cover a larger area than a normal attack, so they're much harder to avoid.

An area attack automatically hits an area the attacker can accurately target, filling the area with its effect. Targets in the area get a Reflex saving throw against a Difficulty of (10 + attack's bonus or rank). If the save is successful, halve the area attack's rank or bonus (rounding any fractions down) before applying it to the target, which then makes the normal saving throw against the attack. Targets with the Evasion feat suffer *no* effect if they make their Reflex save. Targets with Improved Evasion suffer only half effect even if they *fail* the save, and no effect if they succeed.

If you delay or ready a move action, you can try to avoid an area effect entirely. If you move before the attack and have sufficient movement to get out of the area, then you're safe. You must choose how far you move *before* the Narrator tells you the result of the area attack, so be sure you move far enough!

COMBAT MODIFIERS			
ATTACK MODIFIER			
Attacker is...	Melee	Ranged	
Dazzled	–1	–1	
Entangled	–2	–2	
On higher ground	+1	+0	
Prone	–4	+0	
Shaken	–2	–2	
Sickened	–2	–2	
DEFENSE MODIFIER			
Defender is...	Melee	Ranged	Dodge Bonus?
Behind cover	+4	+4	Yes
Blinded	–2	–2	No
Concealed	Special	Special	Yes
Dodging	+4	+4	Yes
Entangled	–2	–2	No
Flat-footed	+0	+0	No
Grappling	+0	+0	No
Helpless	–9	–4	No
Kneeling or sitting	–2	+2	Yes
Moving all out	+0	+0	No
Pinned	–4	–4	No
Prone	–4	+4	Yes
Stunned	–2	–2	No
Surprised	–2	–2	No

You can also spend a Conviction point to emulate the Evasion feat for one round, allowing you to suffer no effect from an area attack if you succeed on your Reflex saving throw.

Example: *Boom! A grenade goes off perilously close to Agent O'Connor, who dives to avoid the blast in time. The explosion is an area attack, with +5 damage and a Reflex save Difficulty of 15. Agent O'Connor has a +7 Reflex save, and his player rolls a 9, giving him a 16, enough for a successful save. So the Narrator halves the grenade's damage to +2 (rounding down) and has O'Connor's player make a Toughness save for the agent, who may yet avoid harm. Meanwhile, O'Connor's ever-alert partner Agent Black has the Evasion feat, so when she also succeeds on her Reflex save, she takes no damage from the explosion, not even needing a Toughness saving throw.*

AUTOFIRE ATTACK

An *autofire* attack is a volley of multiple shots with a single standard action. To use an autofire attack against a single target, make your attack roll normally. The amount by which your attack roll succeeds applies a bonus to the attack's saving throw Difficulty: +1 per 2 points the attack roll exceeds the target's Defense.

If a target's defense (involving special resistance or immunity) would normally ignore the attack before any increase in the save Difficulty, then the autofire attack has no effect as usual; a volley of multiple shots is no more likely to penetrate than just one.

MULTIPLE TARGETS

You can use autofire to attack multiple targets at once as a full action by "walking" the autofire attack from target to target. Choose a line of 5-foot squares no greater in number than your attack bonus. You may make attack rolls to hit targets, one target at a time, starting at one end of the line and continuing to the other end. You suffer a penalty to each of your attack rolls equal to the total number of squares. If you miss one target, you may still attempt to hit the others.

COVERING FIRE

An autofire attack can provide cover for an ally. Take a full action and choose an ally in your line of sight, who receives a +4 dodge bonus against enemies in your line of sight and in range of your autofire attack. (You have to be able to shoot at them to get them to keep their heads down or this maneuver won't work.) You cannot lay down covering fire for an ally in melee. Each character after the first who lays down covering fire for the same individual grants an additional +1 dodge bonus. All covering fire attackers receive a free attack if an opponent chooses to ignore the dodge bonus granted to the protected target.

SUPPRESSION FIRE

An autofire attack can lay down a volley to force opponents to seek cover. Take a full-round action and choose an opponent, who receives a –4 penalty to attack rolls and checks for one round while in your line of sight and in range of your attack. An opponent who chooses not to seek cover ignores the attack modifier from suppression fire, but is automatically attacked (a free action for you). You cannot lay down suppression fire on an opponent in melee. Each character after the first who lays down suppression fire for the same target imposes an additional –1 penalty. All suppression fire attackers receive a free attack if the target fails to take cover or otherwise get out of their sight.

CONDITIONS

Generally speaking, any situational modifier created by the attacker's position or tactics applies to the attack roll, while any situational modifier created by the defender's position, state, or tactics applies to the defender's Defense. The Narrator judges what bonuses and penalties apply, using the **Combat Modifiers** table as a guideline.

COVER

Taking cover behind a wall, tree, or other obstacle provides a +4 bonus to Defense. Cover is measured relative to the attacker. For example, hiding behind a low wall provides no cover against an opponent hovering above you, but does provide cover against an opponent on the other side of the wall.

COVER AND REFLEX SAVES

Cover grants you a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks originating from a point on the other side of the cover from you.

COVER AND STEALTH CHECKS

You can use cover to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without cover, you need concealment (see Concealment later in this chapter) to make a Stealth check.

TOTAL COVER

If you cannot draw a line between you and a target without intersecting cover, the target has total cover. You can't make an attack against a target with total cover.

VARYING DEGREES OF COVER

In some cases, cover may provide a greater bonus to Defense and Reflex saves. In such situations, the normal cover bonuses to Defense and Reflex saves can be doubled (to +8 and +4, respectively). A creature with this improved cover gains a +10 bonus on Stealth checks.

STRIKING COVER

If it ever becomes important to know whether the cover was actually hit by an incoming attack, the Narrator should determine if the attack roll would have hit the protected target without the cover. If the attack roll falls within a range low enough to miss the target with cover but high enough to hit the target if there had been no cover, the cover is hit. This can be particularly important to know in cases when a character uses another character as cover.

In such a case, if the cover is struck *and* the attack roll exceeds the Defense of the covering character, the covering character takes the damage intended for the target. If the attack roll is lower than the Defense of the covering character, but higher than the Defense of the covered character, the original target is hit instead. The covering character avoided the attack and didn't provide cover after all! Covering characters can voluntarily lower defense bonus to ensure they provide cover.

CONCEALMENT

Concealment includes circumstances where nothing physically blocks an attack, but something interferes with the attacker's accuracy. Typically, concealment is provided by things like fog, smoke, shadows, darkness, foliage, and so forth.

CONCEALMENT MISS CHANCE

Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a 20% chance (a roll of 17 or higher on d20) that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attack roll hits, the defender makes a miss chance roll to avoid being struck. Multiple concealment conditions do not stack.

CONCEALMENT AND STEALTH CHECKS

You can use concealment to make a Stealth check to avoid being seen. Without concealment, you usually need cover to make a Stealth check.

TOTAL CONCEALMENT

A target you cannot perceive with any of your accurate senses has total concealment from you. You can't directly attack an opponent with total concealment, though you can attack into the area you think he

occupies. A successful attack into an area occupied by a target with total concealment has a 50% miss chance (a d20 roll of 11 or higher).

IGNORING CONCEALMENT

Concealment isn't always effective. Characters with Night Vision can see clearly for a greater distance with the same light source than other characters, for example.

CONCEALMENT		
Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
Partial	Fog; moderate darkness; foliage; precipitation	17 or higher
Total	Total darkness; invisibility; attacker blind; dense fog	11 or higher

DEFENSIVE STANCE

You improve your defense by sacrificing accuracy. Take a penalty of up to -4 on your attack rolls to gain half that amount (up to +2) as a dodge bonus for that round.

FINESSE ATTACK

Most attacks rely on sheer power to overcome the Toughness of a target's armor. Finesse attacks target the weak points of an opponent's defenses. Characters can normally make finesse attacks with melee weapons. Characters with the Improved Precise Shot feat can also make finesse attacks with ranged weapons, so long as they are within one range increment of their target.

To make a finesse attack, increase the Difficulty of your attack roll by an amount equal to the Toughness bonus of your opponent's armor. If your attack hits, the target does not get the armor's bonus on the Toughness save; the attack bypasses it altogether. If your attack roll fails, however, your attack glances harmlessly off the target's armor or, if you would have missed the target's normal Defense, misses entirely.



Creatures immune to critical hits are also immune to finesse attacks; their Toughness doesn't have any significant weak points to exploit. Also note that finesse attacks only affect the Toughness bonuses from armor and similar defenses. The natural Toughness bonuses from Constitution, size, and creature type are unaffected.

Example: *Having determined from his first shot that Lord Grasin's armor is too tough, Indrus the archer closes the distance, moving behind cover, to get a better shot at the evil overlord. Since he has the Improved Precise Shot feat, Indrus can make a finesse attack using his bow. Grasin has Defense 15 and is wearing plate-mail (a +5 Toughness bonus). So Indrus increases the Difficulty of his attack from 15 to 20 (adding Lord Grasin's armor bonus). His player rolls: a 14, which adds to Indrus' attack bonus of +7 for a total of 21, a hit! Since he made a finesse attack this time, Indrus' arrow damage ignores Grasin's armor and the villain makes his Toughness saving throw using just his Constitution bonus as the arrow lodges in a vulnerable joint or opening in his armor.*

GANGING UP

Typically, up to eight attackers can gang up on an individual target, provided they have room to maneuver. If the defender can fight side by side with allies, back into a corner, fight through a doorway, and so forth, attackers can't gang up as easily.

Picture the eight attackers as evenly spaced out surrounding the defender. The defender can reduce the opportunity for attackers to gang up based on how much of the area around himself he can block off. Backed against a wall, a character only allows five attackers to get at him. Backed into a corner, only three attackers can get at him at a time. If the defender is standing in a doorway, the opponent in front of him can attack normally and one opponent on either side can attack as well, but the defender benefits from cover. If the defender is fighting in a 5-foot-wide corridor, only one attacker can get at him (unless attackers are coming at him from both directions).

The above rules are for medium and small characters. Larger characters present room for more attackers to get at them and combatants with ranged weapons can get at defenders more easily.

HELPLESS DEFENDERS

A *helpless* foe—bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise at your mercy—is an easy target. You sometimes can approach a target unawares and treat the opponent as helpless if the Narrator allows.

REGULAR ATTACK

A helpless character loses any dodge bonus and takes a –9 penalty to Defense against attacks from adjacent opponents, and a –5 penalty to Defense against ranged attacks.

COUP DE GRACE

As a full-round action, you can deliver a *coup de grace* to a helpless opponent adjacent to you. You automatically hit and score a critical hit. If the defender takes damage but is not knocked out or dying, he must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + damage bonus) or be knocked out (for a non-lethal attack) or dying (for a lethal attack). You can't deliver a coup de grace against a target immune to critical hits. You can deliver a coup de grace against a target with total concealment, but doing this requires two consecutive full-round actions (one to feel around and accurately perceive the target and another to deliver the coup de grace).

MINIONS

Minions are minor characters subject to special rules in combat, and generally easier to defeat than normal characters. The following rules apply to minions:

- Minions cannot score critical hits against non-minions.
- Non-minions can take 10 on attack rolls against minions (attackers normally cannot take 10 on attack rolls).
- If a minion fails a Toughness saving throw, the minion is knocked unconscious (non-lethal damage) or dying (lethal damage). Attackers can choose a lesser effect, if desired.
- The Impossible Toughness Save rule (See Damage and Recovery) does *not* apply to minions.



MOUNTED COMBAT

Your mount acts on your initiative as you direct it. You move at its speed, but the mount uses its action to move. (You can take move actions, like drawing your weapon, normally.) Without you to guide it, your mount avoids combat.

COMBAT WHILE MOUNTED

With a Difficulty 5 Ride check, you can guide your mount with your knees so as to use both hands to attack or defend yourself. This is a free action. When you attack a creature that is smaller than your mount and is on foot, you get the +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher ground.

If your mount charges you also take the –2 Defense penalty associated with a charge. If you make an attack at the end of the charge, you receive the bonus gained from the charge. When charging mounted, you deal +3 damage with a lance.

You can use ranged weapons while your mount is taking a double move, but at a –4 penalty on the attack roll. You can use ranged weapons while your mount is moving all out as well, but at a –8 penalty. In either case, you make the attack roll when your mount has completed half its movement.

USING POWERS WHILE MOUNTED

You can use powers normally if your mount moves up to a normal move (its speed) either before or after you use the power. If you have your mount move both before and after you use a power, then you have to make a Concentration check due to the vigorous motion (Difficulty 10) to successfully use the power. If the mount is moving all out, you can use powers when the mount has moved up to twice its speed, but your Concentration check is Difficulty 15.

IF YOUR MOUNT FALLS IN BATTLE

If your mount falls, you have to succeed on a Difficulty 15 Ride check to make a soft fall and take no damage. If the check fails, you take +2 lethal damage.

IF YOU ARE DROPPED

If you are knocked unconscious, you have a 50 percent chance (a roll of 11 or better) to stay in the saddle (6 or better if you're in a military saddle). Otherwise you fall and take +2 lethal damage.

SUNDERING

Sometimes you need to attack or break an object, such as when you want to strike an opponent's weapon or break down a door.

STRIKING AN OBJECT

Objects are easier to hit than characters because they usually don't move, but many are tough enough to shrug off damage.

OBJECT DEFENSE AND BONUSES TO ATTACK

Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors.

- **Held Objects:** An object held by a character has a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + 5 + the object's size modifier. Objects use the same size modifiers as creatures (see **Size** in **Chapter 8**).
- **Carried or Worn Objects:** Objects carried or worn by a character have a base Defense equal to the character's Defense + the object's size modifier.
- **Immobile Objects:** Immobile objects have a Defense of 5 + the object's size modifier. Adjacent attacks get a +4 bonus to hit immobile objects. (If you take a full-round action to aim, you get an

automatic hit with an adjacent attack or a +5 bonus with a ranged attack.)

INEFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The Narrator may determine certain attacks just can't effectively damage certain objects. For example, you will have a hard time breaking open an iron door with a knife, or cutting a rope with a club. In these cases, the Narrator may rule that you inflict no damage to the object at all.

EFFECTIVE ATTACKS

The Narrator may rule certain attacks are especially effective against some objects. For example, it's easy to light a curtain on fire or rip a piece of cloth. In these cases, the Narrator may increase your damage bonus against the object (or apply a penalty to its Toughness save) or simply say the object is automatically destroyed by a successful attack.

TOUGHNESS

Each object has a Toughness score representing how well it resists damage. An object's Toughness works like a character's Toughness. To determine how much damage an object takes from an attack, roll d20 + Toughness against a Difficulty of 10 + the attack's damage bonus. The Toughness scores given on the **Substance Toughness** table are for approximately 1 inch of the material. Heavier objects increase their Toughness by +1 per doubling in thickness, so a foot-thick stone wall has a Toughness of 12 (base Toughness 8, +4 for approximately four doubling of thickness). Characters can attempt to break through heavier objects a little at a time, rather than all at once, such as chipping away at a stone wall inch by inch.

DAMAGE TO OBJECTS

Objects suffer both non-lethal and lethal damage as lethal, but ignore non-lethal damage with a bonus less than their Toughness. A "wounded" object is damaged and suffers a 1 point reduction in Toughness. A "disabled" object is badly damaged. Disabled equipment and devices no longer function, while disabled barriers have holes punched through them. A "dying" object is destroyed. Damaged and disabled objects can be repaired. It's up to the Narrator whether or not a destroyed object is repairable; if it is, the Difficulty of the Craft check is the same as for creating an entirely new item.

SUBSTANCE TOUGHNESS

Substance	Toughness
Paper	–10
Glass	0
Ice	0
Paper	0
Rope	0
Soil	2
Wood	5
Stone	8
Iron	10
Steel	15

BREAKING ITEMS

In the case of a character trying to break something outright, such as smashing down a door or snapping bonds, make a Strength check with a Difficulty of 20 + the object's Toughness. Success destroys the object, while failure does no damage. The only difference between this and attacking an object is the character can't slowly wear down an object's Toughness in this way.

SURPRISE ATTACKS

An attack may come from an unexpected quarter. An attack that catches the target off-guard in some way is called a *surprise attack*.

To make a surprise attack, you must catch your target unawares. You can make a surprise attack in the following situations:

- When you have total concealment from your target or the target otherwise hasn't noticed your presence.
- When you use an interaction skill to throw your target off-balance, such as making a feint using Bluff.
- When your target is stunned.
- When you surprise a target at the beginning of combat.
- When you do something unexpected (in the Narrator's judgment).

Characters with the Uncanny Dodge feat cannot be surprise-attacked so long as they are capable of taking free actions (not stunned or helpless).

The target of a surprise attack loses any dodge bonus to Defense against the attack and suffers an additional -2 Defense penalty.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

If you wield a second weapon in your off hand, you can get one extra attack per round with that weapon. You suffer a -6 penalty with your regular attack or attacks with your primary hand and a -10 penalty to the attack with your off hand when you fight this way. You can reduce these penalties in two ways:

- If your off-hand weapon is light, penalties are reduced by 2 each. (An unarmed strike is always considered a light weapon.)
- The Two-Weapon Fighting feat lessens the primary hand penalty by 2, and the off-hand penalty by 6 (to -2 and -4, or -2 and -2 if the off-hand weapon is light).

If you attack the same target with both attacks and both hit, increase the damage of the attack with the higher damage bonus by +2, much like a use of combined attack.

The same rules apply for throwing two weapons (one with either hand) or wielding two ranged weapons, one in each hand.

OPTION: ESCALATING TOUGHNESS

Toughness generally does not improve as characters gain levels, with the exception of feats like Defensive Roll and Tough, which provide Toughness save bonuses, but at the expense of not being able to take other feats. More experienced (high-level) heroes generally avoid harm more through Defense bonuses (the ability to dodge or parry attacks), improvements in their Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws (which ward off many other forms of harm), and the ability to spend more Conviction on poor Toughness saves.

This creates a scenario where even experienced characters may fall victim to a bad Toughness save against an attack. If you want higher-level characters to be literally tougher, you can assign a Toughness save bonus based on role and level equal to the character's base Combat bonus. So a warrior, for example, gets a +1 Toughness bonus per level (the same as the warrior's Combat bonus).

This option helps with character longevity, but may produce less realistic results as high-level heroes become nigh-invulnerable to smaller attacks, so it depends on the style of game you want to have. The default rule is a largely fixed Toughness bonus based solely on Constitution and any modifying feats or worn armor.

DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

Anyone hit with a damaging attack makes a Toughness saving throw. This is a roll of d20 plus Toughness, which measures the ability to avoid or shrug off damage. Resisting damage has a base Difficulty of 15 plus a modifier equal to the attack's damage bonus. For unarmed attacks, this is the attacker's Strength score. For weapons, this is the weapon's damage plus the attacker's Strength score. For example, an attacker with Strength +1, wielding a short sword (damage modifier +2) has a total damage modifier of +3. So, resisting this damage is Difficulty 18 (15 + 3).

**Toughness Saving Throw =
d20 + Constitution score + Feats +
Armor + Attack's Damage Bonus**

If the Toughness saving throw succeeds, the target suffers no significant damage, nothing more than a slight scratch, bruise, or torn clothing. If the Toughness save fails, the target suffers damage. How much damage depends on the type of attack (lethal or non-lethal) and the amount the Toughness save result is below the Difficulty.

Example: Captain Evard is in a bar-brawl with three ruffians and holding his own when a right cross connects with his chin. Evard's player rolls a Toughness save using his +2 bonus against a Difficulty of 16 (15 + the thug's Strength of +1). The roll is a 12 for a total of 14. Since this misses the Difficulty, but not by 5 or more, Evard is bruised, and his player marks off a bruised condition.

A couple rounds later, Evard has taken two of the thugs out of the fight when the third connects again, bam! His player makes another Toughness save (Difficulty 16) but with only a +1 bonus now, because Evard's one bruised condition imposes a -1 penalty. He doesn't roll as well this time and gets a 9, for a 10 total. That's six less than the Difficulty, so Evard is dazed: he takes another -1 penalty on Toughness saves and loses his next action.

While Evard is dazed, an ally of the thugs sneaks up behind him and stabs him. The Narrator has Evard's player make another Toughness save, Difficulty 17 this time (for the attacker's Strength and knife) but at no penalty, since Evard's bruise and daze conditions don't affect saves against lethal damage. The die comes up 10 for a 12, which fails by five. Evard is wounded. He's also dazed again (the collateral damage from his wound), giving him a total penalty of -3 on saves vs. nonlethal damage and -1 vs. lethal, plus he's stunned for one round. Things aren't looking good for Captain Evard . . .

DAMAGE TRACK

0	5+	10+	15+	
Bruised	Dazed	Staggered	Unconscious	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hurt	Wounded	Disabled	Dying	Dead

NON LETHAL DAMAGE

Non-lethal Damage comes from unarmed attacks (punches and kicks), as well as specific non-lethal weapons, like saps.

A failed Toughness save against a non-lethal attack means the target is *bruised*. Each bruised result imposes a -1 penalty on further saves against non-lethal damage, but does not affect saves against lethal damage. If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *dazed*; mark down a dazed condition on the Damage Track. A dazed condition also imposes a -1 modifier on further saves against non-lethal damage.

If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *staggered*; check off the staggered box on the Damage Track. If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *unconscious*; check off the unconscious box on the Damage Track. If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result. So, if a target is already staggered and suffers another staggered result, check off the unconscious box. If the unconscious box is checked and the character suffers more non-lethal damage, check off the first available lethal box (so go to wounded, disabled, and so forth).

LETHAL DAMAGE

Lethal Damage is inflicted by weapons, from cutting and piercing weapons like swords and spears to heavy bludgeoning weapons like hammers and maces.

A failed Toughness save against a lethal attack means the target is *hurt*. Each hurt result imposes a -1 penalty on further Toughness saves. If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *wounded*; mark down a wounded condition on the Damage Track. A wounded result also imposes a -1 modifier on further Toughness saves. If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *disabled*; check off the disabled box on the Damage Track. If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *dying*; check off the dying box on the Damage Track. If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result, so if a target is already wounded and suffers another wounded result, check off the disabled box. If that's already checked off, check off the dying box.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Lethal damage inflicts non-lethal damage as well. Whenever your hero suffers lethal damage, check off the corresponding non-lethal damage, so a hero who is wounded is also dazed, a hero who is hurt is also bruised. The effects of the damage conditions are cumulative, except for bruised and hurt conditions, where only the highest value applies.

IMPOSSIBLE TOUGHNESS SAVES

If the Difficulty of a Toughness save is so high the hero cannot possibly succeed, even with a 20 on the die roll, the Toughness save is still rolled to determine the effect (the amount by which the character misses the Difficulty). A natural 20 means the character is only bruised or hurt, regardless of the Difficulty. Fate intervenes to spare the character from otherwise certain doom. Narrators interested in realistic consequences for damage should ignore this rule.

CRITICAL HITS

A critical hit increases an attack's damage bonus, meaning critical hits can inflict serious damage.

DAMAGE CONDITIONS

Damaged characters can suffer from any of seven conditions, given on the Damage Track and described here.

DAZED

Dazed characters lose one full-round action after suffering a dazed result; they can take no actions, but retain their normal Defense. The following round, they can act normally.

STAGGERED

Staggered characters lose one full-round action after suffering a staggered result. They can take no actions, lose their dodge and parry bonuses to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense. In the following rounds, staggered characters can only take a standard or a move action, not both.

UNCONCIOUS

Unconscious characters pass out and are helpless, unable to do anything until they awaken.

WOUNDED

Wounded characters are shaken, suffering a -2 penalty on all checks, including attack rolls and Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws, but *not* including Toughness saves or Constitution checks. This persists until all wounded conditions are eliminated. Additionally, a wounded character is stunned for one round after being wounded. They can take no actions, lose their dodge bonus to Defense, and have a -2 penalty to Defense.

DISABLED

Disabled characters are badly injured. If a disabled character takes a standard action, he falls unconscious and begins dying on the following round.

DYING

Dying characters have to make a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (Difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

DEAD

Dead characters are, well, dead. This usually means the end for the character, although some powerful healers can restore life to the recently deceased.

RECOVERY

Recovering from damage requires a Constitution check (Difficulty 10). A successful check erases the damage condition, while an unsuccessful check means there is no significant improvement for that time period.



You can make a recovery check once per minute for staggered and unconscious, once per hour for wounded, and once per day for disabled. Dying has its own particular check; once you are stable, dying becomes unconscious and disabled, which you recover from normally (one minute for unconscious, one day for disabled).

You can spend a Conviction point to get an immediate recovery check from non-lethal damage, rather than having to wait a minute. You can also spend Conviction on your recovery check.

Bruised and dazed conditions fade automatically at a rate of one per minute. Hurt conditions do the same at a rate of one per hour. You can spend a Conviction point to immediately erase all bruised, dazed, and hurt conditions after, not during, a conflict. Warriors can use their role's core ability to spend a Conviction point to erase all bruised and hurt conditions at any time, even during combat.

FATIGUE

Characters can suffer from *fatigue* as well as damage. This usually results from tasks requiring great effort, such as moving all out, exertion in difficult environments, and using powers. There are three fatigue levels: winded, fatigued, and exhausted.

WINDED

The character suffers a –1 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity, and cannot move all out or charge. A winded character who suffers an additional fatigue result becomes fatigued.

FATIGUED

The character cannot move all out or charge, and suffers a –2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character who suffers an additional fatigue result becomes exhausted.

EXHAUSTED

The character is near collapse. Exhausted characters move at half normal speed and suffer a –3 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. An exhausted character who suffers an additional fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally before recovering from fatigue; see **Damage Conditions**).

RECOVERY

Every hour of rest, a hero makes a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to recover from fatigue. Success reduces the character's fatigue condition by one level (from exhausted to fatigued, from fatigued to winded, winded to normal). A full ten hours of rest allows any character to completely recover from all fatigue conditions.

CONDITION SUMMARY

This section describes the different adverse conditions that can affect characters. If multiple conditions apply to a character, apply all of their effects. If effects conflict, apply the most severe.

ABILITY DAMAGED

The character has temporarily lost 1 or more ability score points. Lost ability score points return at a rate of 1 per day.

ABILITY DRAINED

The character has permanently lost 1 or more ability score points. Points lost to ability drain do not recover.

BLINDED

The character cannot see at all, and thus everything has total visual concealment from him. He has a 50% chance to miss in combat, loses

his dodge bonus to Defense, and suffers an additional –2 modifier to Defense. He moves at half speed and suffers a –4 penalty on most Strength and Dexterity-based skill checks. He cannot make Notice (spot) skill checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) requiring vision.

BRUISED

The character has suffered some minor damage. Each bruised condition imposes a –1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further non-lethal damage.

DAZED

A dazed character can take no actions, but retains dodge bonus to Defense.

DEAD

The character is dead. A dead body generally starts to decay, but effects allowing a character to come back from death restore the body to full health or to its condition immediately prior to death. Either way, characters that have come back from the dead needn't worry about rigor mortis, decomposition, and other similar sorts of unpleasantness.

DEAFENED

A deafened character cannot hear and suffers a –4 penalty to initiative checks. He cannot make Notice (listen) checks.

DEBILITATED

The character has one or more ability scores lowered below –5. A character with debilitated Strength falls prone and is helpless. A character with debilitated Dexterity is paralyzed. A character with debilitated Constitution is dying. A character with debilitated Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma is unconscious.

DISABLED

A disabled character is conscious and able to act, but is badly injured. He can take only a single attack or move action each round, and if he performs any strenuous action, his condition changes to dying after the completing the action. Strenuous actions include moving all out, attacking, or using any ability requiring physical exertion or mental concentration.

DYING

A dying character is unconscious and near death. Upon gaining this condition, the character must immediately make a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (Difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

ENTANGLED

An entangled character suffers a –2 penalty to effective Dexterity. If the bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't move all out or charge. An already entangled character that is entangled again becomes helpless.

EXHAUSTED

Exhausted characters are near collapse. They move at half normal speed and suffer a –3 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. An exhausted character suffering another fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally).

FASCINATED

A fascinated character has been entranced by an effect. They stand or sit, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the fascinating effect, for as long as the effect lasts. The character takes a -4 penalty on checks made as reactions, such as Notice checks. Any potential threat allows the fascinated character a new saving throw or resistance check to overcome the fascination. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon or aiming an attack at the fascinated character, automatically breaks the fascination. An ally can shake a fascinated character free of the effect with an aid action.

FATIGUED

Fatigued characters cannot move all out or charge and suffer a -2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character who does something else that would normally cause fatigue becomes exhausted.

FLAT-FOOTED

A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his dodge bonus to Defense.

FRIGHTENED

A frightened character tries to flee from the source of the fear as quickly as possible. If unable to flee, the character is shaken.

GRAPPLED

A grappled character is engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. They cannot move or take any action more complicated than making a barehanded attack, using a small weapon, or attempting to break free from the grapple. In addition, grappled characters lose any dodge bonus against opponents they aren't grappling.

HELPLESS

Sleeping, bound, paralyzed or unconscious characters are helpless. Enemies can make advantageous attacks against helpless characters, or even deliver a coup de grace. A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A ranged attack gets no special bonus. A helpless character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.

HURT

The character has suffered minor damage. Each injured condition imposes a -1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further lethal damage.

INCORPOREAL

An incorporeal character has no physical body. Incorporeal characters are immune to attacks from corporeal sources. They can be harmed only by other incorporeal beings or supernatural attacks.

INVISIBLE

An invisible character is virtually undetectable. Invisible characters gain a +2 bonus to hit defenders unaware of them, and such defenders lose their dodge bonus to Defense. Attacks against invisible characters have a 50% miss chance.

NAUSEATED

Nauseated characters can only take a single move action each round, meaning they are unable to attack (or take other standard actions) or move all out (or take other full-round actions).



NORMAL

The character is unharmed and unaffected by other conditions, acting normally.

PANICKED

A panicked character flees as fast as possible or cowers, dazed, if unable to get away. A panicked character defends normally but cannot attack.

PARALYZED

A paralyzed character stands rigid and helpless, unable to move or act physically. Strength and Dexterity are debilitated, but the character may take purely mental actions. A paralyzed character's Defense score is 5, the same as an inanimate object.

PINNED

A pinned character is held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple. Pinned characters lose their dodge bonus and suffer a -4 penalty to Defense.

PRONE

The character is lying on the ground. He suffers a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls. Opponents receive a +4 bonus on melee attacks against him but a -4 penalty on ranged attacks. Standing up is a move action.

SHAKEN

A shaken character has a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and checks.

SICKENED

A sickened character has a -2 penalty on attack rolls and checks.

SLOWED

A slowed character can only take a standard or move action each round (not both). The character takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls, Defense, and Reflex saves. A slowed character moves at half normal speed. A slowed character can move at full speed and attack only by charging (see **Charge** in this chapter).

STABLE

A stable character is no longer dying, but is still unconscious and disabled and must recover from those conditions normally.

STAGGERED

A staggered character can take a single move or standard action each round, not both. Any further damage to a staggered character shifts the character's condition to unconscious.

STUNNED

The character loses any dodge bonus to Defense, takes a -2 modifier to Defense, and cannot take actions other than reactions.

UNCONSCIOUS

An unconscious character has been knocked out and is helpless.

WINDED

A winded character suffers a -1 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity and cannot move all out or charge. A winded character suffering an additional fatigue result becomes fatigued.

WOUNDED

The character has suffered damage. Each wounded condition imposes a -1 penalty on Toughness saves to resist further damage.

HAZARDS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Heroes may encounter any number of dangerous environments and hazards in their travels. This section looks at these hazards and how to handle them in game terms.

ACID

Corrosive acids deal +4 damage per round of exposure, except in the case of total immersion (such as into a vat of acid), which deals +20 damage per round. An attack with acid, such as from a hurled vial or a monster's acidic spittle, counts as a round of exposure.

The fumes from most acids are poisonous. Those who come close enough to a large body of acid to dunk a creature in it must make a Difficulty 13 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Constitution damage. All such characters must make a second save 1 minute later or take another 1 point of Constitution damage.

Creatures immune to acid's caustic properties might still drown in it if they are totally immersed and need to breathe (see **Suffocation**).

COLD

An unprotected character in cold weather must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, + 1 per previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Additional failed saves cause further levels of fatigue. Once a character is unconscious, failed saves cause the character to become disabled, then dying.

Characters may make Survival checks to receive a bonus on this saving throw (see the skill's description for further information). Characters

in cold weather (below 40° F) make a Fortitude save each hour. In conditions of severe cold or exposure (below 0° F), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes. Characters in severe cold conditions wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold damage.

Extreme cold (below -20° F) deals +2 lethal damage per minute in addition to requiring a Fortitude save every minute. Winter clothing makes the damage non-lethal and reduces the Fortitude save to every 10 minutes.

ICE

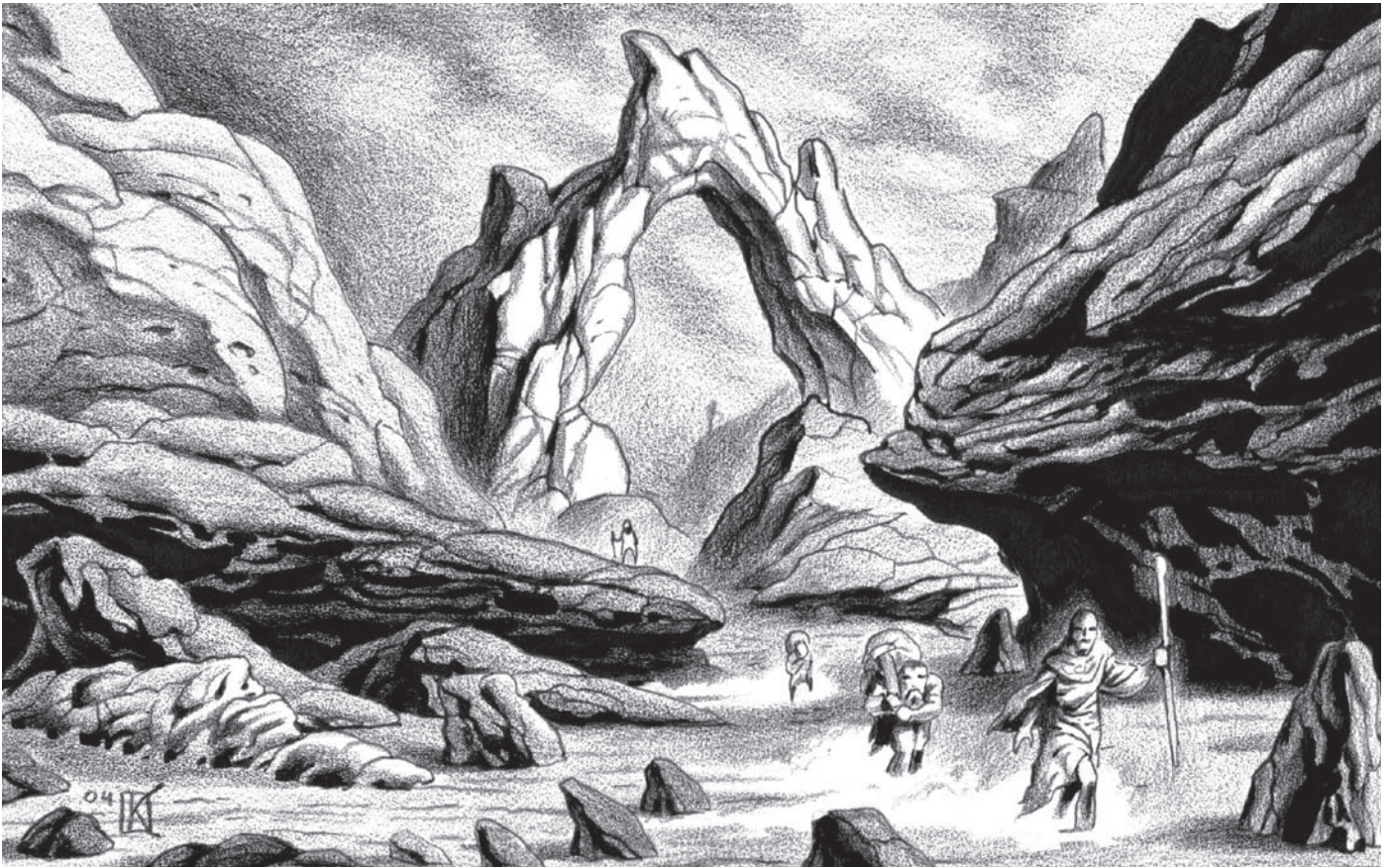
Characters walking on ice move slower (see **Hampered Movement** earlier in this chapter) and the Difficulties for Acrobatics and Climb checks increase by +5. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of taking damage from the cold.

DARKNESS

Characters with normal vision or the Night Vision feat can be rendered completely blind by putting out the lights. Torches or lanterns can be blown out by sudden gusts of wind. Even supernatural light sources can be dispelled or countered.

For purposes of the following points, a blinded creature is one who simply can't see through the surrounding darkness.

- Creatures blinded by darkness lose the ability to deal extra damage due to precision (for example, a surprise attack).



- Blinded creatures are hampered in their movement (see **Hampered Movement** earlier in this chapter). Blinded creatures can't move all out or charge.
- All opponents have total concealment from a blinded creature, so the blinded creature has a 50 percent miss chance in combat. A blinded creature must first pinpoint the location of an opponent in order to attack the right area; if the blinded creature launches an attack without pinpointing its foe, it attacks a random area within range.
- A blinded creature loses its dodge bonus to Defense and takes a -2 penalty to Defense.
- A blinded creature takes a -4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks, including any with an armor check penalty. A creature blinded by darkness automatically fails any skill check relying on vision.
- A creature blinded by darkness can make a Notice check as a free action each round in order to locate foes by hearing (Difficulty equal to opponents' Stealth checks). A successful check lets a blinded character hear an unseen creature "over there somewhere." It's almost impossible to pinpoint the exact location of an unseen creature. A Notice check that beats the Difficulty by 20 reveals the unseen creature's location (but the creature still has total concealment from the blinded character).
- If a blinded creature is struck by an unseen foe, the blinded character pinpoints the location of the attacker (until the unseen creature moves, of course).
- A creature with the scent ability automatically pinpoints unseen creatures within 5 feet of its location.

FALLING

The basic rule for falling damaging is simple: +2 damage per 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of +40 (at 200 feet).

If a character deliberately jumps instead of merely slipping or falling, the damage is the same but with a +2 bonus on the Toughness save. A Difficulty 15 Acrobatics or Jump check grants an additional +2 bonus.

Falls onto yielding surfaces (soft ground, mud) do 2 points less damage. This reduction is cumulative with Toughness save bonuses from deliberate falls and skill checks. Falls into water do 4 points less damage.

Characters who deliberately dive into water take no damage on a successful Difficulty 15 Acrobatics or Swim check, so long as the water is at least 10 feet deep for every 30 feet fallen. However, the Difficulty of the check increases by 5 for every 50 feet of the dive. A failed check results in normal falling damage.

FALLING OBJECTS

Just as characters take damage when they fall more than 10 feet, they also take damage when hit by falling objects. Objects that fall upon characters deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

For each 100 pounds of an object's weight, the object deals +1 damage, provided it falls at least 10 feet. Distance also comes into play, adding an additional +2 damage for every 10-foot increment it falls beyond the first (to a maximum of +40 damage).

Objects smaller than 100 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage as larger ones. For every halving of weight, the object must fall for an additional 10 feet to cause +1 damage. So a 25 lb. object must fall 30 feet to inflict damage.

Objects weighing less than 1 pound do not deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they have fallen.

HEAT

An unprotected character in hot weather must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, +1 per previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Additional failed saves cause further levels of fatigue. Once a character is unconscious, failed saves cause the character to become disabled, then dying. Characters may make Survival checks to receive a bonus on this saving throw (see the skill's description).

In very hot conditions (above 90° F), the save is once per hour. In severe heat (above 110° F), a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes. Extreme heat (air temperature over 140° F, fire, boiling water, lava) deals lethal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals +2 lethal damage per minute. In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save against heat exposure every 5 minutes.

Boiling water deals +2 scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals +20 damage per round.

CATCHING ON FIRE

Characters touching a fire source might find their clothes, hair, or equipment on fire. Those at risk of catching fire are allowed a Difficulty 15 Reflex save to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he takes +2 damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning character must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means he takes another +2 damage that round. Success means the fire has gone out.

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse himself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire with cloaks or the like permits the character another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make Difficulty 15 Reflex saves for each item, using the character's Reflex save bonus. Failing the save means the item takes the same amount of damage as the character.

SMOKE

A character breathing heavy smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (Difficulty 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds is winded. If accumulated fatigue renders the character unconscious, he may suffocate (see Suffocation).

Smoke obscures vision, giving concealment (20 percent miss chance) to characters within it.

STARVATION AND DEHYDRATION

Characters might find themselves without food or water and with no means to obtain them. In normal climates, Medium characters need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of food per day to avoid starvation. (Small characters need half as much.) In very hot climates, characters need two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for 36 hours plus twice his Constitution score. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (Difficulty 10, +1 for each previous check) or receive a level of fatigue. Once unconscious from fatigue, the character is disabled if he fails another Constitution check, then dying.

A character can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each day (Difficulty 10, +1 for each previous check) or become fatigued. Once unconscious from fatigue, the character is disabled if he fails another Constitution check, then dying.

Fatigue from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water.

SUFFOCATION

A character with no air to breathe can hold her breath for 2 minutes (20 rounds), plus or minus a number of rounds equal to her Constitution score times 4. So a Constitution +2 character can hold her breath for 28 rounds, while a Constitution -2 character can only hold her breath for 12 rounds. After this period of time, the character must make a Difficulty 10 Constitution check in order to continue holding her breath. The check must be repeated each round, with the Difficulty increasing by +1 for each previous success.

When the character fails one of these Constitution checks, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious. In the following round, she is dying. In the third round, she suffocates and dies.

SLOW SUFFOCATION

A Medium character can breathe easily for 6 hours in a sealed chamber measuring 10 feet on a side. After that time, the character suffers a level of fatigue every 15 minutes. Once unconscious, the character suffocates and dies. Each additional Medium character or significant fire source (a torch, for example) proportionally reduces the time the air will last. Small characters consume half as much air as Medium characters. A larger volume of air, of course, lasts for a longer time.

WATER

Any character can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over his head, no check required. Swimming in calm water only requires skill checks with a Difficulty of 10. Trained swimmers can just take 10. (Remember, however, that armor or heavy gear makes any attempt at swimming much more difficult.)

By contrast, fast-moving water is much more dangerous. On a successful Difficulty 15 Swim check, it deals +0 non-lethal damage per round. On a failed check, the character must make another check that round to avoid going under.

Very deep water is not only generally pitch black, posing a navigational hazard, but worse, it deals +2 water pressure damage per minute for every 100 feet the character is below the surface. A successful Fortitude save (Difficulty 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage in that minute. Very cold water deals also deals cold damage (see **Cold**).

DROWNING

Air-breathers under water must hold their breath to avoid suffocation (see **Suffocation**).

CHAPTER SEVEN: NARRATING THE GAME

THE NARRATOR IS THE PLAYER WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUNNING A **TRUE20** GAME. THE NARRATOR CREATES THE ADVENTURE, RUNS THE PLAYERS THROUGH IT, TAKES ON THE ROLES OF THE VARIOUS CHARACTERS THE HEROES MEET, AND HANDLES ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RULES. WHILE RUNNING THE GAME IS A BIG RESPONSIBILITY, IT'S NOT AS HARD AS IT MIGHT SEEM, AND PROVIDING A FUN AND ENTERTAINING GAME FOR YOUR FRIENDS CAN BE QUITE REWARDING.

THIS CHAPTER LOOKS AT SOME OF THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NARRATOR: RUNNING THE GAME AND REWARDING THE HEROES.



RUNNING THE GAME

While the players are responsible for keeping track of their own heroes and deciding on their actions, the Narrator is responsible for everything else in the game. A good Narrator tries to make sure that the game runs as smoothly as possible and is enjoyable for all of the players. Many components go into creating a good *True20* series. The following pages give you the basics, but simple experience is the best tool to help you become a better Narrator.

ASSIGNING DIFFICULTIES

True20 adventures can be broken down into a series of tasks heroes must perform, from piecing together clues to navigating the social intricacies of court to dueling a villain atop castle walls. It's up to the Narrator to assign the difficulty of these and numerous other tasks in the game and to determine the outcome of the heroes' efforts. Fighting has detailed rules, while skills, feats, and powers are covered in their respective chapters. This section offers some general guidelines on assigning the Difficulty of a task, based on the information from those chapters.

MODIFYING THE ROLL OR THE DIFFICULTY

There are two ways of making a task easier or harder: modify the character's die roll or modify the task's Difficulty. Generally speaking, circumstances affecting a character's performance, like having just the right tools for the job or being forced to improvise, apply a modifier to the die roll. Circumstances making the task easier or harder to

accomplish, like a favorable or unfavorable environment or a particularly demanding task, modify the Difficulty. If a condition applies to the character—like knowledge, health, equipment, preparedness, and such—it's usually a roll modifier. It doesn't have to be too fine a line, since modifying the die roll or the Difficulty amounts to the same thing in the end: the task being easier or harder to accomplish.

In either case, you don't need to inform the player. In fact, most of the time you shouldn't, since it keeps the hero's chances of success a secret and makes the task that much more dramatic and interesting. If the player asks, you can offer a general idea of how difficult the task is, based on what the character would know. Usually an answer like "it's fairly easy for you" or "you think it will be quite difficult" is sufficient.

CIRCUMSTANCE MODIFIERS

A good rule of thumb is favorable circumstances grant a +2 bonus on a check (or a -2 modifier to the Difficulty), while unfavorable circumstances impose a -2 penalty on the check (or a +2 modifier to the Difficulty). This allows you to quickly assess the conditions in an adventure and assign an appropriate modifier to a hero's check.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

Keep in mind opportunities for characters to take 10 and take 20 on their checks (see **Checks Without Rolls** in the **Introduction**). Characters can take 10 on a roll any time they're not rushed, threatened, or distracted. Characters can take 20 under the same circumstances so long as there's no penalty for failing the roll. This

THE ESSENCE OF *TRUE20*

The essence of the *True20* game is actually quite simple. The vast majority of the rules merely expand upon the core mechanic of the system, providing special-case guidelines or situational modifiers. So long as you understand the essentials, you can handle just about any situation.

Those interested in playing in a much looser and casual style should focus on these fundamentals and not worry about special-case rules or more detailed guidelines. If you come up with an unexpected situation, just choose an appropriate type of check, a Difficulty, and make a roll to see if the character succeeds or not. It's that simple.

MODIFIERS

Everything in *True20*—ability scores, skills, powers, and so forth—has an associated *modifier*, or score, a value telling you how strong or weak it is. Modifiers run from -5 (very weak) all the way up to +30 (incredibly strong) or more. You can rate virtually any ability by its associated modifier.

DIFFICULTY

Every task—from making an attack to avoiding harm to interaction—has a *Difficulty*, a value that tells you how difficult the task is to perform. Difficulties range from 0 (so easy it's not worth rolling) to 40 (nearly impossible).

CHECKS

Actions are resolved through *checks*, a roll of a d20, plus any appropriate modifiers. If the total of the check equals or exceeds the Difficulty, the action is a success. If it doesn't, then it's a failure. The Narrator can easily modify a check by having beneficial conditions apply a +2 bonus on a check and having adverse conditions impose a -2 penalty. This is true whether you're trying to use a skill, make an attack, make a saving throw, or use powers.

SAVES

Trying to avoid an effect is a saving throw. A successful save means you avoid, or diminish, the effect. A failed save means you suffer the results of the effect.

THAT'S IT!

That's the core of *True20*: roll d20 + modifiers versus a Difficulty. If you understand that, you can do pretty much anything in the game. The rest is just details. When in doubt, or whenever you want to speed the game along, just have a player make an appropriate check against a Difficulty based on how difficult the task is, and you really can't go wrong.

means you can dispense with rolls for most routine tasks. If a character wants to disable a device, for example, and his Disable Device bonus + 10 is equal to or greater than the Difficulty, don't bother having the player roll. The character just succeeds, so long as there's no great urgency. If the hero is trying to pick a lock as a horde of skeletons bears down on her, the associated stress means the character can't take 10, however.

When coming up with Difficulties for actions, keep the take 10 and take 20 rules in mind. If the Difficulty is low enough that anyone can take 10 and succeed, then it may be too low, or the action may be too trivial to worry about.

THE 50/50 RULE

Another good guideline to keep in mind is that the chance of an average character (with a modifier of +0) succeeding at an average task (Difficulty 10) is 50 percent. Any time you have an average character do something or want to set a Difficulty that you feel is average for a particular character, aim for about a 50 percent chance of success. If you want to know what bonus is required to have a 50 percent chance of succeeding at a particular task, just subtract 10 from the Difficulty. So a Difficulty 25 action (a formidable task) requires a bonus of +15 in order to have a 50 percent chance of success.

Keep in mind that a 50/50 chance on a task may allow a character to take 10 and automatically succeed at that task under routine conditions. This is an intentional design choice; the average character only really fails at an average task when she is hurried or under stress and can't take 10.

SECRET CHECKS

Sometimes it's a good idea to make checks secretly, so the players don't necessarily know the result. This is usually the case for any sort of check where the heroes don't immediately know whether they've succeeded or failed. For example, Notice checks should be made secretly. If the check succeeds, the character notices something. If it fails, then the player doesn't know whether it's because the hero failed to notice something or there wasn't anything there to notice in the first place. The same is true for checks involving powers, like Mind Reading or Visions, and certain interaction checks, so the player doesn't necessarily know the target's initial attitude or exactly how much it has improved.

ALTERING THE OUTCOME OF DIE ROLLS

On occasion, the outcome of a particular roll may seriously impact the game. For example, the heroes are walking into a trap and none of them make the necessary check to notice the danger in time. Or a hero gets in a lucky shot and the villain rolls a 1 on his Toughness saving throw, resulting in a quick defeat. What do you do?

In some cases, you can just go with the outcome the dice give you. If none of the heroes spot the trap, have it go off, but give the heroes an opportunity to escape later on. Even if the results of the die roll are unexpected, so long as they don't spoil the fun of the adventure, feel free to go with them. Unexpected twists and turns can be fun, not only for the players, but also for you when you run the game.

On the other hand, some die rolls result in anticlimactic or just plain dumb outcomes. In these cases, feel free to change things a little to make the outcome more interesting or more in line with how the game should go. In the above example, you might decide that the villain is only stunned rather than being knocked out, giving the heroes the upper hand, but not ending the climatic encounter prematurely.



USING OPPOSED CHECKS

Opposed checks offer a useful tool for comparing the efforts of two individuals in a quick and easy way. This applies not only to skills, but also to things like powers. If two or more characters compete at a particular task, you can resolve it with an opposed check. The one with the highest check result wins. Of course, you can play things out if you want, but sometimes it's good to be able to resolve things with a quick opposed check and move on.

As Narrator, if you find yourself without a particular rule to resolve a conflict or contest, the opposed check is your friend. Pick the appropriate skill or ability, make checks for all involved, and compare the results to see how they did.

Is this cheating? Well, yes, in a manner of speaking it is, but it's "cheating" in order to make the game more interesting and fun for everyone involved. So long as you don't alter the outcome of die rolls unfairly or maliciously and you do it to help ensure the game is fun, interesting, and challenging, you shouldn't have a problem. Besides, the players don't have to know that you change the occasional die roll. That's one of the reasons it's a good idea for Narrators to roll their dice out of sight of the players and then announce the results.

FAKING IT

Sometimes circumstances will arise in your series that the rules just don't cover, that you're not sure how to handle, or that would just be a waste of time to make a lot of die rolls for. In these cases, feel free to just fake it and make something up. Come up with a roll or rolls you feel suits the situation and go with it, so you can keep the game moving rather than getting bogged down in page flipping and rules arguments. One of the great things about the True20 system is pretty much everything can be resolved with a simple check. So when all else fails, have a player make a check with the most appropriate trait: an ability score, skill, power, or something else. If the check beats your estimation of the Difficulty, it's a success. Otherwise, it's a failure.

You also can fake it when dealing with certain trivial situations in the game. If there's an important piece of information you want the players to know, don't bother seeing if they succeed at a Search check. You can pretend to make the checks, then just ignore the results and tell the players what their heroes find. Likewise, if a 10th-level hero is going to take out a 1st-level nobody, you don't have to make all the rolls. Just ask the player to describe how the hero defeats her hapless foe.

SAYING YES TO YOUR PLAYERS

Players are a cunning lot, so it's a virtual certainty that, sooner or later, they will come up with something for their heroes to do that is not covered in these rules. It may be a particularly innovative maneuver, a new use for a skill or power, using the environment to their advantage in some way, or something you never would have considered. When this happens, take a moment and ask yourself, would it be fun if what the player is proposing happened? A good way to think about it is, if something similar happened in a fantasy novel, would it be cool? If the answer is yes, then you probably should let the player try it.

Narrators have three major tools to help them say yes to their players' innovative ideas, while keeping them (somewhat) under control.

BONUSES AND PENALTIES

Remember the Narrator's rule of thumb: if something aids or makes a task easier for a character, it's worth a +2 bonus. If it makes the task harder or hinders the character, it's worth a -2 penalty. This allows you to assign modifiers for almost any situation on the fly, without having to look things up and slow down the game while puzzling out all the pluses and minuses. Just evaluate the overall situation, decide if the conditions are beneficial, neutral, or detrimental, and assign a +2, +0, or -2.

EXTRA EFFORT

When players want their characters to be able to pull off something outlandish, rather than saying no, let them try, but make them pay for it by saying it counts as extra effort. Extra effort already allows heroes to pull off various stunts, so there's no reason you can't expand the list when players come up with other ones.

CONVICTION

Like extra effort, Conviction points allow heroes to pull off amazing stunts. If a player wants to do something outlandish, require a Conviction point to make the attempt. The Conviction doesn't do anything but let the hero try something unusual, and players won't be able to pull off stunts all the time because their heroes have a limited number of Conviction points to spend. Still, it allows for the occasional one-of-a-kind stunts heroes accomplish in fantasy fiction.

MAKING MISTAKES

Narrators are only human. Sooner or later, you'll make a mistake, whether it's forgetting a particular rule or overlooking something about a character or an element of the story. Don't worry, it happens, and it doesn't mean your game is ruined!

The best way to handle a mistake is to own up to it. Tell your players you made a mistake and need to make a change in order to keep the game balanced, fair, and fun. Be reasonable and straightforward in handling your mistakes, and your players are much more likely to be cooperative and understanding in return.

HEROIC ADVANCEMENT

As heroes go on adventures and overcome challenges, they learn from their mistakes and draw confidence from their successes. Over time, they grow and become more capable. They learn new tricks and refine old skills. True20 reflects this development through the awarding of levels.

Essentially, after an adventure or two, whenever you feel the heroes have reached a point of development in their story, you can award them an additional level. Generally, heroes should earn one level every one or two adventures, meaning they can go from 1st level to 20th level in twenty to forty adventures total. They only earn a level during a single adventure if it is especially long or harrowing, or they achieve a considerable success (in the Narrator's estimation).

Players can choose to apply this new level to one of their hero's existing roles, or they can add a level in a new role (see **Mixed-Role Heroes** in **Chapter 1**). Increasing in level also improves a hero's abilities: attack bonus, Defense, saving throws, and so forth. Each hero also gains a new feat upon attaining a new level. See **Level-Dependent Benefits** in **Chapter 1** for details.

Normally, heroes immediately gain all bonuses from their new level, but the Narrator can require some training time or preparation before the heroes improve in level. This is particularly true for heroes adding a new role. They may need the assistance of a teacher or mentor to attain their 1st level in the role.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ADVERSARIES

TRUE20 HEROES FIGHT ALL SORTS OF ADVERSARIES. VILLAINS ARE OFTEN OTHER CHARACTERS, BUT THEY MAY ALSO BE VARIOUS SORTS OF MONSTERS.

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES SOME SAMPLE CREATURES YOU CAN USE AS ADVERSARIES IN YOUR TRUE20 ADVENTURES.



NARRATOR CHARACTERS

Adversaries are often other characters, portrayed by the Narrator, and ranging from vile master villains and their lieutenants to misunderstood anti-heroes or amoral mercenaries simply out for a tidy profit. Anyone with goals at cross-purposes to the heroes is a potential antagonist, with some more serious than others.

Narrator characters follow all the same rules as heroes, including having and using Conviction, and regaining it according to their natures. Narrator characters have roles and levels just like heroes as well. A good rule of thumb is for a major antagonist to be at least two levels greater than the highest-level hero, with lesser antagonists (lieutenants and henchmen) around the same level as the heroes, or even lower. This helps ensure the adversary is a reasonable challenge for the heroes.

Narrator characters can be any level you see fit, however. Keep in mind that even a high level character usually isn't that much tougher than a low-level one. A high-level foe may have greater skills and resources to draw upon, but can often be taken down by the same attack that would fell a lower-level opponent, provided the characters can get past the high-level character's defense bonus.

With major antagonists, it's often a good idea to reserve a Conviction point or two for recovery checks, re-rolling Toughness saves, and avoiding death. If nothing else, a major antagonist can always *appear* to die (plunging off a cliff, lost in an explosion, etc.), only to reappear in a later adventure, having escaped certain death.

ORDINARIES

While important Narrator characters and antagonists will usually belong to one of the three roles described in **Chapter 1**, the vast majority of

people in the world aren't heroic adventurers or devious villains. They're just ordinary people, going about their daily lives, with very little need for the skills and abilities of adventuring heroes. These characters are called *ordinaries* in True20.

Ordinary is essentially a fourth role, in addition to adept, expert, and warrior, but it is a role inferior to the other three in terms of abilities. Levels in ordinary grant only one thing: 4 starting skills at 1st level and 4 additional skill ranks per level. Ordinaries do not gain combat or saving throw bonuses, nor do they gain any feats (either at 1st level or as they progress in level). The only difference between a 1st-level ordinary and a 20th-level ordinary is the number and rank of the character's skills. This is the case for most ordinary people: they learn and develop skills, but have little or no need to improve their ability to fight, avoid hazards, and so forth. If you can describe a Narrator character as an "ordinary (whatever)," odds are that character has the ordinary role.

Ordinaries also do not have or gain Conviction. They don't have the extraordinary drive and motivation of heroes and villains. They can (and sometimes do) use extra effort, but that is all.

Of course, ordinaries can be mixed-role, as described in **Chapter 1**. They gain all the benefits of their level in any other role(s), including Conviction. A retired soldier turned shopkeeper, for example, might be a 2nd-level warrior from his early military training, but a 5th-level ordinary from his years of minding the store, which developed some of his skills (like Knowledge and Sense Motive) but not his military prowess. Likewise, a wily government functionary might mix levels of expert and ordinary, just as a wise sage might mix levels of adept and ordinary; possessing some skill with the supernatural, but primarily focusing on "book knowledge."



You can generally treat ordinaries as two levels lower than their actual level when comparing them to heroes. Ordinaries lack many of the usual benefits of their level, so they're no match for a character of one of the other three roles at the same level.

You can use the **Quick Narrator Characters** guideline (see the sidebar) for ordinaries: just pick (4 + Intelligence score) skills for them and set their rank at (level +3) and you're ready to go. For truly "ordinary" ordinaries, assume all of the character's ability scores are +0 (strictly average).

MINIONS

While heroes and important Narrator characters use the rules described previously, minor characters in the story are less capable (and durable). These characters and creatures are known as minions, and follow special rules, particularly where damage is concerned.

A minion makes a Toughness save against damage normally; however, if the save fails, the minion suffers the maximum possible result for that attack. Usually this means unconsciousness for a non-lethal attack and

death for a lethal attack. If the attacker wishes, the minion can suffer a lesser damage result. This means minions generally have only three damage conditions: normal, unconscious, and dead. This makes it easier for heroes to dispatch with less important opponents and easier for the Narrator to keep track of them in combat.

Additionally, minions *never* have Conviction, even if they have levels in a heroic role. Their part in the story simply isn't important enough.

Note that the Narrator decides which characters and creatures are minions. In some cases, whether or not opponents count as minions may depend on the importance of the scene in the story. Not all followers are minions! For example, if the heroes are valiantly fighting their way past the undead guards of a sorcerer's citadel, then the Narrator may wish to consider those skeletons and zombies minions. On the other hand, when the heroes fight the sorcerer's ogre lieutenant, the Narrator chooses not to treat it as a minion, even though it is a follower of another Narrator character.

While many ordinaries are also minions, that doesn't have to be the case. Minion is a status apart from role or creature type and is assigned as the Narrator sees fit.

CREATURES

Many of the adversaries that heroes face are not human at all, but various sorts of creatures. A "creature" is simply a way of referring to a character that isn't necessarily human (or even alive, sometimes). Creatures come in many different types, and range from harmless animals to titanic monsters.

Each creature in this chapter is given in the same general format, and includes the following information:

SIZE

While heroes come in all sizes and shapes, most are generally within the human norms of size, between four and eight feet tall or so (medium-sized). Creatures, however, can vary greatly in size, from as small as mice to as large as dinosaurs. A creature's size affects certain traits. Modifications for size are shown on the Size table.

COMBAT MODIFIER

Larger creatures are easier to notice and hit relative to smaller ones, while smaller creatures are harder to notice and hit. Apply the combat modifier for the creature's size to its attack rolls and Defense. These modifiers cancel out for creatures of the same size, who attack and defend normally against each other.

GRAPPLE MODIFIER

Larger creatures have an advantage in trying to grapple smaller opponents. In addition to the modifier to grapple checks, a larger creature can grapple more opponents of a smaller size: double the number of opponents the creature can grapple at once per size category the attacker is larger than the defenders. So a medium attacker can grapple one medium opponent, two small opponents (one under each arm, for example), four tiny opponents, and so forth.

STEALTH MODIFIER

Larger creatures have a harder time sneaking around, while smaller creatures have an easier time remaining unseen and unheard. Apply this modifier to Stealth checks made at this size.

TOUGHNESS MODIFIER

Larger creatures are tougher than smaller creatures with the same Constitution. Apply the Toughness modifier for the creature's size category to its Toughness saving throws.

REACH

A normal (medium-sized) creature has a 5 ft. reach, which means the creature can make a melee attack at any target up to 5 ft. away. Larger

SIZE									
Size	Combat Modifier	Grapple Modifier	Stealth Modifier	Toughness Modifier	Height	Weight	Space	Reach	Carrying Capacity
Colossal	-8	+16	-16	+8	64-128 ft.	250K- 2 mil lbs	30 ft.	15 ft.	x16
Gargantuan	-4	+12	-12	+6	32-64 ft.	32K -250K lbs.	20 ft.	15 ft.	x8
Huge	-2	+8	-8	+4	16-32 ft.	4K -32K lbs.	15 ft.	10 ft.	x4
Large	-1	+4	-4	+2	8-16 ft.	500-4,000 lbs.	10 ft.	10 ft.	x2
Medium	+0	+0	+0	+0	4-8 ft.	60-500 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x1
Small	+1	-4	+4	-1	2 ft.-4 ft.	8-60 lbs.	5 ft.	5 ft.	x3/4
Tiny	+2	-8	+8	-2	1-2 ft.	1-8 lbs.	2.5 ft.	0 ft.	x1/2
Diminutive	+4	-12	+12	-4	6 in-1 ft.	0.25-1 lb.	1 ft.	0 ft.	x1/4
Fine	+8	-16	+16	-8	3 in-6 in.	0.9-0.1 lb.	6 in.	0 ft.	x1/8

QUICK NARRATOR CHARACTERS

A particular trick to use when creating higher-level Narrator characters is to choose the character's starting skills (based on role and Intelligence score), then simply increase those skills to (level +3) rank, assuming the character spent all earned skill ranks at later levels keeping the starting skills at the maximum rank. This saves time in assigning skill ranks and figuring out what the character's proper rank in any given skill should be.

So, for example, an 11th-level expert with Int +2 has ten starting skills (8 + 2 for Int). Choose ten skills and make them all rank 14 (11 + 3 for maximum rank), assuming the expert started with those ten skills and spent his ten earned skill ranks for his ten succeeding levels to keep them at maximum rank.

and smaller creatures have a longer or shorter reach, as shown on the Size table.

SPACE

A normal (medium-sized) creature is assumed to occupy a roughly 5-ft.-by-5-ft. space. Larger and smaller creatures occupy more or less space, as shown on the Size table.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Larger creatures can lift and carry more, while smaller creatures can lift and carry less. Larger creatures gain an increase in effective Strength for carrying capacity: +5 points (a doubling in capacity) per size category. Smaller creatures' carrying capacities are multiplied by the value in this column. So a tiny creature with Strength +0 has a heavy load of (100 x 1/2) or 50 lbs.

LEVEL

Creatures have levels much like heroes and other characters do. However, most creatures do not have roles or, more precisely, "creature" is their role in the story. Creature level can be treated much like role level in most ways, and is used to determine many of the creature's capabilities, just like role level for heroes.

A creature's level also serves as a rough guideline of what sort of challenge it should pose to the heroes. Generally, a creature the same level as the heroes should pose a reasonable challenge, while a lower-level creature is less of a threat and a higher-level creature is a more serious challenge. A creature more than two levels higher than the heroes may be too great of a challenge at the heroes' present level.

ROLE

While most creatures do not have roles (apart from being creatures), some can acquire levels in one of the three heroic roles (adept, expert, warrior) or in the ordinary role. This is particularly the case for intelligent creatures and those able to learn new skills (such as well-trained animals like warhorses).

Role levels apply to creatures the same way they do to others and creatures gain the usual benefits of the role, including combat and saving throw modifiers, skills, and feats. Some capabilities may be of more or less use to certain creatures, and the Narrator decides which skills or feats, for example, a particular creature may acquire and use.

TYPE & SUBTYPE

A creature's type has a significant effect on its capabilities. Type essentially serves as the creature's role. Note that 1st-level creatures with a heroic role determine their combat bonus, saves, skills and feats according to their heroic role alone (as heroes do). Monsters with multiple levels in any given creature type that gain levels in a heroic role do so using the rules for multi-role heroes given in Chapter 1.

CREATURE TYPES

A creature's *type* defines it, much like a character's role. In fact, a creature's type determines many of its traits in the same as heroes' roles do.

ABERRATION

An aberration has a bizarre anatomy, strange abilities, an alien mindset, or any combination of the three. If your creature concept is too strange to fit into another creature type, it is probably an aberration.

Features: An aberration has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Aberrations have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one additional feat at 1st level and an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: An aberration possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Aberrations eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Aberrations with an Intelligence score of -3 or below advance by gaining more levels in aberration. Aberrations with an Intelligence score of -2 or above advance by character role (usually adept).

ANIMAL

An animal is a living, nonhuman creature, usually a vertebrate with no supernatural powers and no innate capacity for language or culture.

Features: An animal has the following features (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Toughness:** Animals have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude and Reflex saves (certain animals have different good saves).
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Animals begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general, warrior and expert categories.

Traits: An animal possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Intelligence of -5 or -4 (a creature with an Intelligence score of -3 or higher cannot be an animal).
- Night Vision as a bonus feat.

- **Training with natural weapons.**
- A non-combative herbivore uses its natural weapons as a secondary attack. Such attacks are made with a –5 penalty on the creature's attack rolls, and the animal receives only 1/2 its Strength as a damage adjustment.
- Animals eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Animals advance by gaining more levels in animal.

CONSTRUCT

A construct is an animated object or artificially constructed creature. Constructs are built rather than being born or raised from the dead.

Features: A construct has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Constructs have a base Toughness of +1, modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** No good saving throws.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level if the construct has an Intelligence score. However, most constructs are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Most constructs are mindless and have no feats. Constructs with an Intelligence score begin with Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general and warrior categories.

Traits: A construct possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- No Constitution score.
- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any supernatural powers requiring mental contact).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease effects, and the Imbue Unlife supernatural power.
- Cannot heal damage on their own, but often can be repaired by exposing them to a certain kind of effect (see the creature's description for details) or through the use of the Imbue Item feat. A construct with the fast healing special quality still benefits from that quality.
- Not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, or exhaustion.
- Immunity to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless).
- Immediately destroyed when reduced to "dying" status on the damage track.
- Since it was never alive, a construct cannot be affected by the Imbue Life power.
- Constructs do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Advancement: Constructs advance by gaining more levels in construct.

DRAGON

A dragon is a reptilian creature, usually winged, with supernatural or unusual abilities.

Features: A dragon has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Dragons have a base Toughness score equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Dragons begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category. Dragons may choose a supernatural power in place of a feat like an adept, and treat their creature level as their adept level for using those powers.

Traits: A dragon possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in the description of a particular kind).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet and night vision.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to supernatural sleep and paralysis effects.
- Dragons eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Dragons advance by gaining more levels in the dragon creature type.

ELEMENTAL

An elemental is a being composed of one of the four classical elements: air, earth, fire, or water.

Features: An elemental has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Elementals have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good saves depend on the element: Fortitude (earth, water) or Reflex (air, fire).
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.



Traits: An elemental possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning.
- Not subject to critical hits.
- Unlike most other living creatures, an elemental does not have a dual nature—its soul and body form one unit. When an elemental is slain, no soul is set loose. Supernatural powers that restore souls to their bodies or restore life to the dead (such as Imbue Life) don't work on elementals.
- Elementals do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Advancement: Elementals with an Intelligence score of –2 or below advance by gaining more levels in the elemental type. Elementals with an Intelligence score of –1 or above advance by character role (usually adept).

FEY

A fey is a creature with supernatural abilities and connections to nature or to a similar force or a magical place. Fey are usually somewhat human-shaped.

Features: A fey has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Fey have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 1/2 their level (as adept).
- **Saves:** Good Reflex and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.



Traits: A fey possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Fey eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Fey advance by character role.

HUMANOID

A humanoid usually has two arms, two legs, and one head, or a humanlike torso, arms, and a head. Humanoids have few or no supernatural or extraordinary abilities, but most can speak and usually have well-developed societies. They usually are small or medium size, unless they belong to the giant subtype (which is at least large size). Every humanoid creature also has a subtype, based on its race (dwarf, elf, giant, gnome, goblin, halfling, human, orc, etc.).

Humanoids with only one level exchange the features of their humanoid level for the features of a heroic role. Humanoids of this sort are presented in this chapter as 1st-level warriors.

Humanoids with more than one racial level are the only humanoids that make use of the features of the humanoid type.

Features: A humanoid has the following features (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Toughness:** Humanoids have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert), or by character role.
- **Saves:** Good Reflex saves (usually; a humanoid's good save varies), or by character role.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, or by character role.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level, or by character role. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A humanoid possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Training with natural weapons.
- Humanoids breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Humanoids advance by character role.

MONSTROUS HUMANOID

Monstrous humanoids are similar to humanoids, but with monstrous or animalistic features. They often have supernatural abilities as well.

Features: A monstrous humanoid has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Monstrous humanoids have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Reflex and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A monstrous humanoid possesses the following traits (unless noted otherwise in a creature's entry).

- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Monstrous humanoids eat, sleep, and breathe.

Advancement: Monstrous humanoids advance by character role.

OOZE

An ooze is an amorphous or mutable creature, usually mindless.

Features: An ooze has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Oozes have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution +1. This value is modified by their size.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** No good saving throws.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1), and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the ooze has an Intelligence score. However, most oozes are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Most oozes are mindless and have no feats. Oozes with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general category.

Traits: An ooze possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Mindless:** No Intelligence score, and immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- **Blind** (but have the blindsight special quality), with immunity to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.
- **Training with natural weapons.**
- **Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and the Flesh Shaping power.**
- **Some oozes have the ability to deal acid damage to objects.** In such a case, the amount of damage is equal to the ooze's Constitution score per full round of contact.
- **Not subject to critical hits.**
- **Oozes eat and breathe, but do not sleep.**

Advancement: Oozes advance by gaining levels in the ooze creature type.

OUTSIDER

An outsider is at least partially composed of the essence (but not necessarily the material) of some other plane of existence. Some creatures start out as some other type and become outsiders when they attain a higher (or lower) state of spiritual existence. Outsiders include such otherworldly creatures as angels, demons and devils.

Features: An outsider has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Outsiders have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (6 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training, and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: An outsider possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Darkvision** out to 60 feet.
- **Training with natural weapons.**
- **Unlike most other living creatures, an outsider does not have a dual nature—its soul and body form one unit.** When an outsider is slain, no soul is set loose. Supernatural powers that restore souls to their bodies (such as Imbue Life) don't work on an outsider. An outsider with the native subtype can be affected by Imbue Life just as other living creatures can be.
- **Ousiders breathe, but do not need to eat or sleep** (although they can if they wish). Native outsiders breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Outsiders with an Intelligence score of –2 or below advance by gaining levels in outsider. Outsiders with an Intelligence score of –1 or above advance by character role.

PLANT

This type comprises vegetable creatures. Note that regular plants, such as one finds growing in gardens and fields, lack Wisdom and Charisma scores and are not creatures, but objects, even though they are alive.

Features: A plant creature has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Plants have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the plant creature has an Intelligence score. However, some plant creatures are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Some plants are mindless and have no feats. Plants with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general category.

Traits: A plant creature possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Night Vision** as a bonus feat.
- **Training with natural weapons.**
- **Immunity to all mind-influencing effects** (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- **Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and the Flesh Shaping power.** Plant creatures are, however, affected by the Plant Shaping power.
- **Not subject to critical hits.**
- **Plants breathe and eat, but do not sleep.**

Advancement: Plants with an Intelligence score of –2 or below advance by gaining levels in the plant creature type. Plants with an Intelligence score of –1 or above advance by character role.

SUPERNATURAL BEAST

Supernatural beasts are similar to animals but can have Intelligence scores higher than –4. Supernatural beasts usually have supernatural or extraordinary abilities, but sometimes are merely bizarre in appearance or habits and have supernatural origins (such as the owl-bear).

Features: A supernatural beast has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Supernatural beasts have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of their level (as warrior).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude and Reflex saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level.
- **Feats:** Supernatural beasts begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category.

Traits: A supernatural beast possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Darkvision** out to 60 feet and night vision.
- **Proficient with its natural weapons.**
- **Supernatural beasts eat, sleep, and breathe.**

Advancement: Supernatural beasts advance by gaining levels in the supernatural beast creature type.

UNDEAD

Undead are once-living creatures animated by spiritual or supernatural forces, such as the Imbue Unlife power.

Features: An undead creature has the following features.

- **Toughness:** Undead have a base Toughness of +0 modified by their size and armor. They also gain a Toughness bonus equal to 1/2 their level (rounded down).
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 1/2 their level (as adept).
- **Saves:** Good Will saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (4 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the undead creature has an Intelligence score. However, many undead are mindless and gain no skills.
- **Feats:** Some undead are mindless and have no feats. Undead with an Intelligence score begin with Light and Heavy Armor Training, Weapon Training and one other feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from any category. In addition, skeletal undead gain Improved Initiative and zombie-like undead gain Tough as a bonus feat regardless of their Intelligence score.

Traits: An undead creature possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- No Constitution score.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Training with natural weapons.
- Immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects.
- Not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, or ability drain. Immune to damage to its physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution), as well as to fatigue and exhaustion effects.
- Cannot heal damage on its own if it has no Intelligence score, although it can be healed. The fast healing special quality works regardless of the creature's Intelligence score.
- The Harm power heals undead creatures (treat this situation as if the Cure power were being used on a living creature).
- The Cure power damages undead creatures as if it were Harm used on a living creature.
- Immunity to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless).
- When reduced to "dying" on the damage track, it is immediately destroyed.
- Not affected by the Imbue Life supernatural power.
- Undead do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Advancement: Undead with an Intelligence score of –2 or less advance by gaining levels in the undead creature type. Undead with an Intelligence of –1 or greater advance by role.

VERMIN

This type includes insects, arachnids, other arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates.

Features: Vermin have the following features.

- **Toughness:** Vermin have a base Toughness equal to their Constitution. This value is modified by their size and armor.
- **Combat:** Base combat bonus of 3/4 their level (as expert).
- **Saves:** Good Fortitude saves.
- **Skills:** Skills equal to (2 + Int, minimum 1) and the same number of skill ranks per additional level, if the vermin has an Intelligence score. However, most vermin are mindless and gain no skills.

- **Feats:** Most vermin are mindless and have no feats. Vermin with an Intelligence score begin with one feat at 1st level and gain an additional feat every third level. These feats may be selected from the general, warrior and expert categories.

Traits: Vermin possess the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- **Mindless:** No Intelligence score, and immunity to all mind-influencing effects (including Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, and any power requiring mental contact).
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Proficient with their natural weapons.
- Vermin breathe, eat, and sleep.

Advancement: Vermin advance by gaining levels in the vermin creature type.

CREATURE SUBTYPES

Subtypes are descriptors added on to a creature type in parentheses. Not all creatures have a subtype, while others have multiple subtypes. Some creature types such as humanoid and outsider always have at least one subtype.

AIR

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Air creatures always have fly speeds and usually have perfect maneuverability.

AQUATIC

These creatures always have swim speeds and thus can move in water without making Swim checks. An aquatic creature can breathe underwater. It cannot also breathe air unless it has the amphibious quality.

COLD

A creature with the cold subtype has immunity to cold. It has vulnerability to fire, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire.

EARTH

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Earth creatures usually have burrow speeds, and most earth creatures can burrow through solid rock.

FIRE

A creature with the fire subtype has immunity to fire and heat. It has vulnerability to cold, which means it takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold.

GIANT

A giant is a humanoid-shaped creature of great strength, usually of at least Large size. Giants tend to have good Fortitude saves rather than good Reflex saves like most other humanoids. Giants also tend to have night vision.

INCORPOREAL

An incorporeal creature has no physical body. Only other incorporeal creatures, supernatural weapons (or creatures that strike as supernatural weapons), and powers can harm it. It is immune to all mundane attack forms. Even when hit by powers or supernatural weapons, it has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source.

An incorporeal creature has no natural armor bonus but has a bonus to its Defense equal to its Charisma score (always at least +1, even if the creature's Charisma score is +0 or less).

An incorporeal creature can pass through solid objects. An incorporeal creature's attacks likewise pass through (ignore) natural armor, armor, and shields. Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as they do in air. Incorporeal creatures cannot fall or take falling damage. Incorporeal creatures cannot make trip or grapple attacks, nor can they be tripped or grappled. In fact, they cannot take any physical action that would move or manipulate an opponent or its equipment, nor are they subject to such actions. Incorporeal creatures have no weight and do not set off traps triggered by weight.

An incorporeal creature moves silently and cannot be heard if it doesn't wish to be. Non-visual senses, such as scent and blindsight, are either ineffective or only partly effective with regard to incorporeal creatures. Incorporeal creatures have an innate sense of direction and can move at full speed even when they cannot see.

NATIVE

A subtype applied only to outsiders. These creatures have mortal ancestors or a strong connection to the Material Plane and can be raised from the dead by the Imbue Life supernatural power just as other living creatures can be. Creatures with this subtype are native to the Material Plane (hence the subtype's name). Unlike true outsiders, native outsiders need to eat and sleep.

REPTILIAN

These creatures are scaly and usually cold-blooded. The reptilian subtype is only used to describe a set of humanoid races, not animals and monsters that are truly reptiles.

SHAPECHANGER

A shapechanger has the supernatural ability to assume one or more alternate forms. Many supernatural effects allow some kind of shape shifting, and not every creature that can change shape has the shapechanger subtype.

SWARM

A swarm is a collection of fine, diminutive, or tiny creatures that acts as a single creature. A swarm has the characteristics of its type, except as noted here. A swarm has a single level and Toughness save, a single initiative modifier, a single speed, and a single Defense bonus. A swarm makes saving throws as a single creature. A single swarm occupies a circle (if it is made up of non-flying creatures) or a sphere (of flying creatures) 10 feet in diameter, but its reach is 0 feet, like its component creatures. In order to attack, it surrounds an opponent. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size, since it crawls all over its prey. A swarm can move through an area occupied by enemies and vice versa without impediment. A swarm can move through cracks or holes large enough for its component creatures.

A swarm of tiny creatures consists of 300 non-flying creatures or 1,000 flying creatures. A swarm of diminutive creatures consists of 1,500 non-flying creatures or 5,000 flying creatures. A swarm of fine creatures consists of 10,000 creatures, whether they are flying or not. Swarms of non-flying creatures include many more creatures than could normally fit in a 10-foot square based on their normal space, because creatures in a swarm are packed tightly together and generally crawl over each other and their prey when moving or attacking. Larger swarms are represented by multiples of single swarms. The area occupied by a large swarm is completely shapeable, though the swarm usually remains in contiguous areas.

Traits: A swarm has no clear front or back and no discernable anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits. A swarm made up of tiny creatures takes half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. A swarm composed of fine or diminutive creatures is immune to weapon damage. Reducing a swarm to "dying" status on the damage track causes it to



break up, though damage taken until that point does not affect its ability to attack or resist attack. Swarms are never staggered. Also, they cannot be tripped, grappled, or rushed, and they cannot grapple an opponent.

A swarm is immune to any power or effect that targets a specific number of creatures (including single-target supernatural powers), with the exception of mind-influencing effects if the swarm has an Intelligence score and a hive mind. A swarm takes half again as much damage (+50%) from powers or effects that affect an area, including widened powers.

Swarms made up of diminutive or fine creatures are susceptible to high winds such as created by the Wind Shaping power. For purposes of determining the effects of wind on a swarm, treat the swarm as a creature of the same size as its constituent creatures. A swarm rendered unconscious by non-lethal damage becomes disorganized and dispersed, and does not reform until it makes a successful recovery roll.

Swarm Attack: Creatures with the swarm subtype don't make standard melee attacks. Instead, they deal automatic damage to any creature whose space they occupy at the end of their move, with no attack roll needed. Swarm attacks are not subject to a miss chance for concealment or cover. A swarm's statistics block has "swarm" in the Combat entry, with no attack bonus given. The amount of damage a swarm deals is based on its level, as shown on the table that follows.

A swarm's attacks are not supernatural, unless the swarm's description states otherwise. Damage reduction sufficient to reduce a swarm attack's damage below 0, being incorporeal, and other special abilities can give a creature immunity (or at least resistance) to damage from a swarm. Some swarms also have acid, poison, blood drain, or other special attacks in addition to normal damage.

Swarm Level	Swarm Base Damage
1–5	+2
6–10	+4
11–15	+6
16–20	+8
21 or more	+10

Distraction: Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn surrounded by a swarm is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 swarm's level + swarm's Constitution score) negates the effect. Using or concentrating on supernatural powers within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (Difficulty 25). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a Difficulty 20 Concentration check.

VICE

A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the vice-aligned planes of existence. Outsiders with the vice subtype are also called fiends. Creatures with this subtype act in accordance with the vice aspect of their nature. A creature with the vice subtype overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were vice-aligned.

VIRTUE

A subtype usually applied only to outsiders native to the virtue-aligned planes of existence. Creatures with this subtype act in accordance with the virtue aspect of their nature. A creature with the virtue subtype overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were virtue-aligned.

WATER

This subtype usually is used for elementals and outsiders. Creatures with the water subtype always have swim speeds and can move in water without making Swim checks. A water creature can breathe underwater and usually can breathe air as well.

MOVEMENT

A creature's movement speed is the amount of distance it can cover in one move action. If a creature wears armor that reduces its speed, this is indicated along with a note specifying the armor type; the creature's base unarmored speed follows.

If the creature has other modes of movement, these are given after the main entry. Unless noted otherwise, such modes of movement are natural, not powers.

BURROW

The creature can tunnel through dirt but not through rock, unless the descriptive text says otherwise.

CLIMB

A creature with a climb speed has a +8 bonus on Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a Difficulty greater than 0, but it can always take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. The creature climbs at the given speed. If it attempts an accelerated climb, it moves at double the given climb speed (or its normal land speed, whichever is less) and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Creatures cannot move all out while climbing. The creature retains its dodge bonus (if any) while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attack rolls against a climbing creature.

FLY

A creature with a fly speed can move through the air at the indicated speed if carrying no more than a light load. (Note that medium armor does not necessarily constitute a medium load.) All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability, as follows:

Perfect: The creature can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes.

Good: The creature is very agile in the air (like a housefly or a hummingbird), but cannot change direction as readily as those with perfect maneuverability.

Average: The creature can fly as adroitly as a small bird.

Poor: The creature flies as well as a very large bird.

Clumsy: The creature can barely maneuver at all.

Flying creatures can make dive attacks. A dive attack works like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet. Creatures can move all out while flying, provided they fly in a relatively straight line.

SWIM

A creature with a swim speed can move through water at the given speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature can always take 10, even if distracted or endangered when swimming. Creatures can move all out while swimming, provided they swim in a straight line.

ABILITIES

Creatures have the same ability scores as heroes: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha), although some creatures lack certain ability scores. See Nonexistent Ability Scores in Chapter 1 for more information.

STRENGTH

Quadrupeds can carry heavier loads than bipedal creatures. Rather than using the carrying capacity multipliers in the **Size** table, quadrupeds use the following multipliers: Colossal x24, Gargantuan x12, Huge x6, Large x3, Medium x1-1/2, Small x1, Tiny x3/4, Diminutive x1/2, and Fine x1/4.

INTELLIGENCE

A creature can speak all the languages mentioned in its descriptive text. Any creature with an Intelligence score of –3 or higher understands at least one language.

SKILLS

This section lists the creature's skills along with skill modifiers, including adjustments for ability scores and any bonuses from feats or other traits.

FEATS

This section lists any feats the creature may have. Creatures may choose from the following feats in addition to those given in Chapter 3, provided the creature meets the feat's prerequisites.

ABILITY FOCUS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: SPECIAL ATTACK.

Choose one of the creature's special attacks. Add +2 to the Difficulty for all saving throws against the special attack on which the creature focuses.

A creature can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time the creature takes the feat it applies to a different special attack.

AWESOME BLOW (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: STR +7, SIZE LARGE OR LARGER.

As a standard action, the creature may choose to subtract 4 from its melee attack roll and deliver an awesome blow. If the creature hits a corporeal opponent smaller than itself with an awesome blow, its opponent must succeed on a Reflex save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 the creature's level + its Strength score) or be knocked 10 feet in a direction of the attacking creature's choice and fall prone. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the opponent's move, the opponent and the obstacle each take +2 damage, and the opponent stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle.

DOUBLE STRIKE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: TWO OR MORE NATURAL WEAPONS.

The creature gains the benefits of Two-Weapon Fighting with its natural weapons (see the Two-Weapon Fighting feat in **Chapter 3**).

HOVER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: FLY SPEED.

When flying, the creature can halt its forward motion and hover in place as a move action. It can then fly in any direction, including straight down or straight up, at half speed, regardless of its maneuverability.

If a creature begins its turn hovering, it can hover in place for the turn. A hovering creature cannot make wing attacks, but it can attack with all other limbs and appendages it could use in an attack. The creature can instead use a breath weapon or a supernatural power instead of making physical attacks, if it could normally do so.

If a creature of Large size or larger hovers within 20 feet of the ground in an area with lots of loose debris, the draft from its wings creates a hemispherical cloud with a radius of 60 feet. The winds so generated can snuff torches, small campfires, exposed lanterns, and other small, open flames of non-supernatural origin. Clear vision within the cloud is limited to 10 feet. Creatures have concealment at 15 to 20 feet (20% miss chance). At 25 feet or more, creatures have total concealment (50% miss chance, and opponents cannot use sight to locate the creature).

Those caught in the cloud must succeed on a Concentration check (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level) to use supernatural powers.

Without this feat, a creature must keep moving while flying unless it has perfect maneuverability.

SNATCH (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: SIZE HUGE OR LARGER.

The creature can choose to start a grapple when it hits with a claw or bite attack, as though it had the Improved Grab feat. If the creature gets a hold on a creature three or more sizes smaller, it squeezes each round for automatic bite or claw damage. A snatched opponent held in the creature's mouth is not allowed a Reflex save against the creature's breath weapon, if it has one.

The creature can drop a creature it has snatched as a free action or use a standard action to fling it aside. A flung creature travels up to 30 feet, and takes +2 damage per 10 feet traveled. If the creature flings a snatched opponent while flying, the opponent takes this amount or the appropriate falling damage, whichever is greater.

WINGOVER (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: FLY SPEED.

A flying creature with this feat can change direction quickly once each round as a free action. This feat allows it to turn up to 180 degrees



regardless of its maneuverability, in addition to any other turns it is normally allowed. A creature cannot gain altitude during a round when it executes a wingover, but it can dive. The change of direction consumes 10 feet of flying movement.

TRAITS

Creatures often have various special traits listed in their statistics and described here.

ABILITY SCORE LOSS

Some attacks reduce the opponent's score in one or more abilities. This loss can be temporary (ability damage) or permanent (ability drain).

Ability Damage: This attack damages an opponent's ability score. The creature's descriptive text gives the ability and the amount of damage. If an attack that causes ability damage scores a critical hit, it deals twice the indicated amount of damage. Ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per day for each affected ability.

Ability Drain: This effect *permanently* reduces an opponent's ability score. The creature's descriptive text gives the ability and the amount drained. If an attack that causes ability drain scores a critical hit, it drains twice the indicated amount. Unless otherwise specified in the creature's description, a draining creature gains an extra recovery check with a +5 bonus whenever it drains an ability score, no matter how many points it drains.

Some ability drain attacks allow a Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). If no saving throw is mentioned, none is allowed.

ALTERNATE FORM

A creature with this trait has the ability to assume one or more specific alternate forms. Assuming an alternate form results in the following changes to the creature:

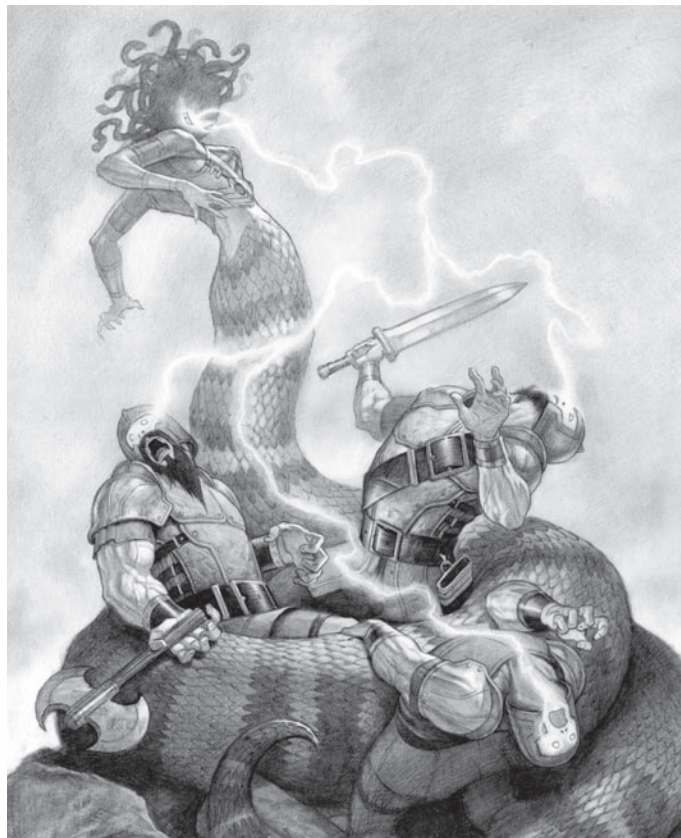
- The creature retains the type and subtype of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.
- The creature loses the physical traits of its original form and gains the physical traits of its new form.
- The creature retains the special traits of its original form. It does not gain any special traits of its new form.
- The creature retains the supernatural powers and attacks of its old form (except for breath weapons and gaze attacks). It does not gain the supernatural powers, special abilities or supernatural attacks of its new form.
- The creature gains the physical ability scores (Str, Dex, Con) of its new form. It retains the mental ability scores (Int, Wis, Cha) of its original form.
- The creature retains its save bonuses, although its save modifiers may change due to a change in ability scores.
- The creature is effectively disguised as a creature of its new form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

AMPHIBIOUS

An amphibious creature is naturally aquatic but can also survive indefinitely on land. It can breathe both air and water without difficulty.

BLINDSENSE

Using non-visual senses, such as acute smell or hearing, a creature with blindsense notices things it cannot see. The creature usually does not need to make Notice checks to pinpoint the location of a creature within range of its blindsense ability, provided the creature does not have total cover. Any opponent the creature cannot see normally still has total concealment, and the creature still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Visibility still affects the movement of a creature with blindsense. A creature with blindsense is



still denied its dodge bonus to Defense against attacks from creatures it cannot see.

BLINDSIGHT

Using non-visual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, scent, acute hearing, or echolocation, the creature maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant to such a creature. The ability's range is specified in the text. The creature does not need to make Notice checks against creatures within range of its blindsight ability; it detects them automatically.

BREATH WEAPON

A breath weapon attack usually deals damage and is often based on some type of energy.

Such breath weapons allow a Reflex save for half damage (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Constitution score). A creature is immune to its own breath weapon unless otherwise noted. Some breath weapons allow a Fortitude save or a Will save instead of a Reflex save.

CHANGE SHAPE

A creature with this special quality has the ability to assume the appearance of a specific creature or type of creature (usually a humanoid) while retaining most of its own physical qualities. A creature cannot change shape to a form more than one size category smaller or larger than its original form. Changing shape results in the following changes to the creature:

- The creature retains the type and subtype of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.
- The creature loses the natural weapons, movement modes, and extraordinary special attacks of its original form.
- The creature gains the natural weapons, movement modes, and extraordinary special attacks of its new form.
- The creature retains all other special attacks and qualities of its original form, except for breath weapons and gaze attacks.
- The creature retains the ability scores of its original form.
- The creature retains its original saving throws.
- The creature retains any supernatural powers it had in its original form.
- The creature is effectively disguised as a creature of its new form, and gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

CONSTRICT

The creature crushes the opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage, after making a successful grapple check. The amount of damage is given in the creature's entry. If the creature also has the Improved Grab feat, it deals constriction damage in addition to damage dealt by the attack used to grab.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

The creature receives a bonus to its Toughness saving throws against certain attacks. The creature takes normal damage from energy attacks (acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic), powers, and supernatural special abilities.

The entry indicates the bonus and the type of attack that negates the ability. A supernatural weapon automatically negates any damage reduction negated by a mundane weapon type. For example, skeletons have damage reduction +2/bludgeoning. This means they get a +2 bonus to their Toughness saves, unless hit by a bludgeoning weapon. They also lose their +2 bonus if hit by a supernatural weapon.

For purposes of harming other creatures with damage reduction, a creature's natural weapons count as the type that ignores its own damage reduction. For example, a vampire has damage reduction +4/silver and supernatural. This means a vampire can bypass the damage reduction of other creatures that are vulnerable to silver or supernatural weapons, including other vampires.

DARKVISION

The creature can see in total darkness, out to the specified range (usually 60 feet). Darkvision is black-and-white only, but is otherwise like normal sight.

DEPENDENT

The creature needs a particular substance to survive, much like humans need food, water, and air. When denied what it needs, the creature suffers the effects of starvation, dehydration, or suffocation (see **Chapter 6**), depending on how dependent it is on the substance.

DISEASE

When heroes come into contact with a disease, they must make a Fortitude saving throw against a Difficulty of 10 + the disease's virulence rank to avoid becoming infected. The method of infection depends on the disease. Some are airborne, while others require physical contact.

If a hero becomes infected, there is a period of anywhere from a few hours to a week or more during which the disease lies dormant. Then the disease takes effect. The initial effect is typically a point or two of ability damage (usually Strength or Constitution or perhaps a point of each).

After that, the victim makes another Fortitude save against the same Difficulty each day to fight off the disease. If that save fails, the character suffers the disease's effects again. If it succeeds, there is no effect that day. Two successful Fortitude saves in a row indicate the character has fought off the disease. Some diseases may have additional effects, such as fatigue, nausea, or even rendering the hero staggered or disabled while fighting off the disease.

FAST HEALING

The creature makes recovery checks at an exceptional rate, perhaps as often as once a minute (10 rounds). Fast healing stops working when a creature is dead. Except for its speed, fast healing works just like natural healing, and doesn't provide any benefit against attacks that don't deal damage. It also doesn't allow a creature to regrow or reattach severed body parts.

FEAR

Fear attacks can have various effects.

Fear Aura: The use of this ability is a free action. The aura can freeze an opponent or function like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power. Other effects are possible. A fear aura is an area effect. The descriptive text gives the size and kind of area.

Fear Cones and Rays: These effects usually work like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power.

If a fear effect allows a saving throw, it is a Will save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). All fear attacks are mind-influencing effects.

FLIGHT

A creature with this ability can cease or resume flight as a free action. If the ability is supernatural, it becomes ineffective under conditions that negate the use of supernatural powers, and the creature loses its ability to fly for as long as the negating effect or conditions persist.

FRIGHTFUL PRESENCE

This special quality makes a creature's very presence unsettling. It takes effect automatically when the creature performs some sort of dramatic action (such as charging, attacking, or snarling). Opponents within range who witness the action may become frightened or shaken. Actions required to trigger the ability are given in the creature's descriptive text. This ability affects only opponents lower in level than the creature. An affected opponent can resist the effects with a successful Will save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). An opponent that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that same creature's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failed save, the effect lasts for two rounds for each point the save failed. Frightful presence is a mind-influencing effect.

GAZE

A gaze attack takes effect when opponents look at the creature's eyes. The attack can have almost any sort of effect: petrification, death, charm, and so on. The typical range is 30 feet, but check the creature's entry for details. The type of saving throw for a gaze attack varies, but it is usually a Will or Fortitude save (Difficulty 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Charisma score). A successful saving throw negates the effect.

A monster's gaze attack is described in abbreviated form in its description. Each opponent within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw each round at the beginning of his or her turn in the initiative order. Only looking directly at a creature with a gaze attack leaves an opponent vulnerable. Opponents can avoid the need to make the saving throw by not looking at the creature, in one of two ways.

Averting Eyes: The opponent avoids looking at the creature's face, instead looking at its body, watching its shadow, tracking it in a reflective surface, and so on. Each round, the opponent has a 50% chance (1-10 on a d20) to not need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack. The creature with the gaze attack, however, gains concealment against that opponent.

Wearing a Blindfold: The opponent cannot see the creature at all (also possible to achieve by turning one's back on the creature or shutting one's eyes). The creature with the gaze attack gains total concealment against the opponent.

A creature with a gaze attack can actively gaze as an attack action by choosing a target within range. That opponent must attempt a saving throw but can try to avoid the creature's gaze as described previously. Thus, it is possible for an opponent to save against a creature's gaze twice during the same round, once before the opponent's action and once during the creature's turn.

Gaze attacks can affect incorporeal opponents. A creature is immune to gaze attacks of others of its kind unless otherwise noted.

Allies of a creature with a gaze attack might be affected. All the creature's allies are considered to be averting their eyes from the creature with the gaze attack, and have a 50% chance to not need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack each round. The creature also can veil its eyes, thus negating its gaze ability.

IMMUNITY

The creature is completely immune to some effect, suffering no harm or other effect from it. Essentially, the creature always succeeds on its saving throws against that effect, regardless of the Difficulty. So a creature immune to cold never suffers damage from cold, for example.

LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Abrupt exposure to bright light (natural or supernatural light equal to full daylight) blinds the creature for a round. On subsequent rounds,

the creature is dazzled (–1 on attack rolls, Notice checks, and Search checks) while operating in bright light.

MIMICRY

The creature can imitate sounds and voices, giving it a +20 bonus on Bluff and Perform checks to fool others into believing its mimicry is real.

PARALYSIS

This special attack renders the victim immobile. Paralyzed creatures cannot move, speak, or take any physical actions. The creature is rooted to the spot, frozen and helpless. Paralysis works on the body, and a character can usually resist it with a Fortitude saving throw (the Difficulty is given in the creature's description). A paralysis effect does not allow a new save each round. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it is paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim and may drown.

PETRIFICATION

A petrification attack turns a creature permanently to stone if they fail their saving throw. The saving throw is usually a Fortitude save (Difficulty of 10 + 1/2 the creature's level + the creature's Constitution). The exact details and difficulty for the saving throw are given in the creature's description. A petrification effect may be reversed with a Difficulty 25 Earth Shaping check followed by a Difficulty 25 Flesh Shaping check.

POISON

Poison attacks deal initial damage—such as temporary ability damage or some other effect—to the victim on a failed Fortitude save. Unless otherwise noted, another saving throw is required 1 minute later (regardless of the first save's result) to avoid secondary damage. The Fortitude save against poison has a Difficulty equal to 10 + half the creature's level + the creature's Constitution score. A successful save negates the damage.

POUNCE

When a creature with this special attack makes a charge, it can attack with both claws and its bite all in the same round, like a use of the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (see **Chapter 3**).

POWERFUL CHARGE

When a creature with this special attack makes a charge, its attack deals extra damage in addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge. The amount of damage from the attack is given in the creature's description.

POWERS

The creature can use various supernatural powers, much like an adept. Unless specified otherwise in its statistics, a creature uses powers like an adept of its level with the normal effects and fatigue (if the power is fatiguing).

RAKE

A creature with this special attack gains an extra natural attack when it grapples its foe, usually due to claws or similar weaponry. Normally, a monster can attack with only one of its natural weapons while grappling, but a monster with the rake ability usually gains an additional rake attack it can use only against a grappled foe. Rake attacks are not subject to the usual –4 penalty for attacking with a natural weapon in a grapple.

A monster with the rake ability must begin its turn grappling to use its rake—it can't begin a grapple and rake in the same turn.

RAY

This form of special attack works like a ranged attack. Hitting with a ray attack requires a successful ranged attack roll, ignoring any defense bonus granted by a shield. Ray attacks have no range increment. The creature's descriptive text specifies the maximum range, effects, and any applicable saving throw.

REGENERATION

A creature with this ability is difficult to kill. Damage dealt to the creature is treated as non-lethal damage. The creature automatically gains an extra recovery check each round, with the bonus given in the entry. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal lethal damage to the creature, which doesn't go away. The creature's descriptive text describes the details. A regenerating creature that has been rendered unconscious through non-lethal damage can be killed with a coup de grace. The attack cannot be of a type that automatically converts to non-lethal damage.

Attack forms that don't deal physical damage (such as ability damage or ability drain) ignore regeneration. Regeneration also does not damage caused by starvation, thirst, or suffocation. Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts; details are in the creature's descriptive text. Severed parts that are not reattached wither and die normally.

A creature must have a Constitution score to have regeneration.

RESISTANCE TO ENERGY

The creature has a bonus to Toughness saving throws against damage of the given energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic) each time the creature is subjected to such damage. The entry indicates the bonus and type of damage affected.

SCENT

This ability allows the creature to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Creatures with the scent ability can identify familiar odors, just as humans do familiar sights.

The creature can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents can be detected at twice these ranges. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple normal range.

When a creature detects a scent, the exact location is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The creature can take a move or standard action to note the direction of the scent. If it moves within 5 feet of the source, the creature can pinpoint that source.

A creature with the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Survival check to find or follow a track. The typical Difficulty for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This Difficulty increases or decreases depending on the strength of the quarry's odor, the number of creatures being tracked, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the Difficulty increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. Creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

SENSITIVITY

The creature is sensitive to a certain substance and must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) when coming in contact with it to avoid suffering a level of fatigue. The creature must repeat the save attempt every 10 minutes it remains in contact with the substance.

SUPERNATURAL IMMUNITY

A creature with supernatural immunity avoids the effects of supernatural powers and supernatural abilities used directly on it. This

works exactly like supernatural resistance, except that it cannot be overcome. Sometimes supernatural immunity is conditional or applies to only supernatural powers of a certain kind or adept level.

SUPERNATURAL RESISTANCE

A creature with supernatural resistance can avoid the effects of supernatural powers and supernatural abilities used directly on it. To determine if a supernatural power or ability works against a creature with supernatural resistance, the user must make an adept level check (1d20 + adept level). If the result equals or exceeds the creature's supernatural resistance, the power works normally, although the creature is still allowed a saving throw.

SUMMON

A creature with the summon ability can summon other creatures of its kind, but it usually has only a limited chance of success (as specified in the creature's entry). Roll a d20: On a failure, no creature answers the summons. Summoned creatures return whence they came after one hour. A creature that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour. Most creatures with the ability to summon do not use it lightly, since it leaves them beholden to the summoned creature. In general, they use it only when necessary to save themselves.

SWALLOW WHOLE

If a creature with this special attack begins its turn with an opponent held in its mouth (see the Improved Grab feat), it can attempt a new grapple check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If it succeeds, it swallows its prey, and the opponent takes bite damage. Unless otherwise noted, the opponent can be up to one size category smaller than the creature. Being swallowed has various consequences, depending on the creature doing the swallowing. A swallowed creature is considered grappled, while the creature that did the swallowing is not.

A swallowed creature can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon by inflicting "wounded" status or worse on the damage track to the swallowing creature, or it can just try to escape the grapple. The defense bonus of the interior of the creature is +0 unless otherwise noted, and modifiers for size or Dexterity do not apply. The Toughness save of the interior of a creature that swallows whole is normally only its Constitution score, with no modifiers for size. If the swallowed creature escapes the grapple, success puts it back in the attacker's mouth, where it may be bitten or swallowed again.

TRAMPLE

As a full-round action, a creature with this special attack can move up to twice its speed and literally run over any opponents at least one size category smaller than itself. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path.

A trample attack deals bludgeoning damage (the creature's slam damage + 1.5 times its Strength score). The creature's descriptive text gives the exact amount.

Trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. This is considered an area attack for purposes of Evasion and similar traits.

The save Difficulty against a creature's trample attack is 10 + 1/2 creature's level + creature's Strength score. A trampling creature can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over a target creature.

TREMORSENSE

A creature with tremorsense is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground. Aquatic creatures with tremorsense can also sense



the location of creatures moving through water. The ability's range is specified in the creature's descriptive text.

VULNERABILITY TO ENERGY

Some creatures have vulnerability to a certain kind of energy effect (typically either cold or fire). Such a creature takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from the effect, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

COMBAT

This section lists the creature's combat, damage, Defense, and initiative bonuses, modified by the creature's other traits, as appropriate.

SAVING THROWS

The creature's Toughness, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws are listed here. The modifiers take into account all of the creature's other traits.

CONVICTION

Creatures generally have no Conviction points, but can gain Conviction by taking levels in a heroic role, in which case the creature acquires the same Conviction as a hero of that level. This is ignored if the Narrator has determined that a particular creature is a minion, since minions don't have Conviction (see Minions at the start of this chapter).

REPUTATION

A creature usually has a Reputation bonus of +0 but may increase the bonus by taking levels in a heroic role. The Narrator may decide certain creatures have a higher Reputation bonus, as suits the story.

A TRUE20 BESTIARY

The following section contains a selection of creatures for use as adversaries (or perhaps even allies) of the heroes in your *True20* game. They range from 1st-level animals to powerful fantastic creatures like mountain dragons and bear-sharks. In addition to using these creatures right out of the book, you can also make them examples for creating your own unique adversaries, following the creature types and guidelines earlier in this chapter.

Some creatures have bonus feats, usually capabilities inherent to their type or species rather than gained due to level, similar to bonus feats granted by backgrounds in Chapter 1. These feats are denoted with a superscript “B”.

BAT

Type: 1st-level animal
Size: Diminutive
Speed: 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)
Abilities: Str –5, Dex +2, Con +0, Int –4, Wis +2, Cha –3
Skills: Notice 0 (+9), Stealth 4 (+18)
Feats: Night Vision^B, Skill Focus (Notice)
Traits: Blindsight (20 ft.)
Combat: Attack –, Damage –, Defense +6 (+2 Dex, +4 size), Initiative +2
Saving Throws: Toughness –4, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +2

Skills: A bat has a +4 bonus on Notice checks. These bonuses are lost if its blindsight is negated

Bats are small nocturnal flying mammals. These statistics describe small bats that eat primarily insects.

BEAR

Type: 6th-level animal
Size: Large
Speed: 40 ft.
Abilities: Str +8, Dex +1, Con +4, Int –4, Wis +1, Cha –2
Skills: Climb 0 (+8), Notice 9 (+10), Swim 0 (+12)
Feats: Double Strike, Endurance, Improved Grab^B, Night Vision^B, Run, Track^B
Traits: Scent
Combat: Attack +4 (+1 Dex, –1 size), Damage +8 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+1 Dex, –1 size), Initiative +1
Saving Throws: Toughness +6, Fortitude +9, Reflex +6, Will +3

Skills: A bear has a +4 bonus on Swim checks.

Bears stand nearly 12 feet tall on their hind legs and weigh in at 1,200 pounds. These statistics suffice for most species of bear.

BEAR-SHARK

Type: 8th-level supernatural beast (aquatic)
Size: Large
Speed: 40 ft., swim 60 ft.
Abilities: Str +7, Dex +2, Con +3, Int –3, Wis +1, Cha –3
Skills: Notice 11 (+12), Swim 0 (+15)
Feats: Double Strike, Improved Grab^B, Improved Initiative, Night Vision^B, Run, Track^B
Traits: Amphibious, Blindsight, Keen Scent
Combat: Attack +9 (+2 Dex, –1 size), Damage +11 (bite) or +10 (claws), Defense +9 (+2 Dex, –1 size), Initiative +6
Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude +9, Reflex +8, Will +3

Blindsight: A bear-shark can locate creatures underwater within a 30-foot radius. This ability works only when the bear-shark is underwater.

Keen Scent: A bear-shark can notice creatures by scent in an 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

This chimerical creature is the result of a twisted magical experiment (or perhaps genetic engineering gone horribly awry). Bear-sharks have the head, dorsal and pectoral fins and tail of a shark, but the body and limbs of a brown bear. The combination of what are arguably the deadliest predators of land and sea is nothing to be trifled with, as it is equally deadly on land or in the water.

BLOOD PUDDING

Type: 10th-level ooze
Size: Large
Speed: 20 ft.
Abilities: Str +4, Dex –5, Con +7, Int —, Wis –5, Cha –5
Skills: —
Feats: Improved Grab^B
Traits: Blindsight (60 ft.), Blood Drain, Constrict, Engulf
Combat: Attack +1 (–5 Dex, –1 size), Damage +7, Defense +1 (–5 Dex, –1 size), Initiative –5
Saving Throws: Toughness +10, Fortitude +10, Reflex –2, Will –2

Blood Drain: A blood pudding can absorb blood directly through the skin of a living victim by making a successful grapple check. If it pins or engulfs its foe, it drains blood, dealing 1 point of Constitution drain each round that the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the blood pudding gains a recovery check with a +5 bonus.

Engulf: Although it moves slowly, a blood pudding can simply mow down medium or smaller creatures as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. Engulf is an area attack; the blood pudding merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Those being engulfed must succeed on a Difficulty 19 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success, they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the blood pudding moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to blood drain, and are considered grappled and trapped within its body. The save Difficulty is Strength-based.

Blood puddings come in a range of reds, though most are the dark red color of dried blood. A blood pudding attacks by slamming into its prey. It is capable of lashing out with a pseudopod, but usually engulfs its foes.

BOAR

Type: 3rd-level animal
Size: Medium
Speed: 40 ft.
Abilities: Str +2, Dex +0, Con +3, Int –4, Wis +1, Cha –3
Skills: Notice 6 (+7)
Feats: Diehard, Tough
Traits: Night Vision, Scent
Combat: Attack +2, Damage +6 (gore), Defense +2, Initiative +0
Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +6, Reflex +3, Will +2

Though not carnivores, wild swine are ill tempered and usually charge anyone who disturbs them. A boar is covered in coarse, gray-black fur. Adult males are about 4 feet long and 3 feet high at the shoulder.

CALIBAN

Type: 1st-level humanoid (caliban) (1st-level warrior)
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft.
Abilities: Str +1, Dex +0, Con +1, Int –1, Wis +0, Cha –1

Skills: Notice +4 (+4), Sense Motive +4 (+4), Stealth +4 (+4)
Feats: All-out Attack, Armor Training, Night Vision^B Skill Training, Weapon Training
Traits: Mutations
Combat: Attack +1, Damage +1 (unarmed), +3 (club), Defense +1, Initiative +0
Saving Throws: Toughness +3 (+2 leather armor), Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will +0

Caliban Background Traits: Caliban have the following background traits.

- **Ability Adjustments:** None, unless their mutations indicate otherwise.
- **Bonus Feats:** Night Vision
- **Favored Feats:** Sneak Attack, Rage
- **Special:** All caliban roll twice for mutations.

Mutations: Each caliban has two or more mutations. Roll 1d20 twice for each caliban and consult the table at right.

Caliban are a cursed and decrepit race that once numbered among humankind. They have been warped by dark powers that have tainted and twisted the fiber of their beings, shaping them into something else entirely. Due to the chaotic nature of the forces that warped their physical forms, no two caliban look alike, nor have the exact same abilities. Since their mutations are not passed between generations, it appears a portion of that supernatural element still runs in their veins.

Caliban are suspicious creatures, often outcasts from society that must live out their lives in hiding to avoid persecution from those who fear them.

CAT

Type: 1st-level animal
Size: Tiny
Speed: 30 ft.
Abilities: Str -4, Dex +2, Con 0, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2
Skills: Acrobatics 0 (+10), Climb 0 (+6), Jump 0 (+6), Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 0 (+10)
Feats: Night Vision^B
Traits: Scent
Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Damage -4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +2
Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Skills: Cats have a +4 bonus on Climb and Stealth checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Jump checks. Cats have a +8 bonus on Acrobatics checks. They use their Dexterity modifier instead of their Strength modifier for Climb and Jump checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Stealth bonus rises to +8.

These statistics are for the common housecat.

COCKROACH, GIANT

Type: 4th-level vermin
Size: Large
Speed: 50 ft.
Abilities: Str +4, Dex +1, Con +3, Int —, Wis +1, Cha -3
Skills: Notice 0 (+5), Stealth 0 (+1)
Feats: Improved Initiative^B
Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Light Sensitivity
Combat: Attack +3 (-1 size, +1 Dex), Damage +6 (bite), Defense +3 (-1 size, +1 Dex), Initiative +5
Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+3 chitin), Fortitude +7, Reflex +2, Will +2

CALIBAN MUTATION TABLE

D20	Mutation	Effect
1	Horrific appearance	+6 bonus to Intimidate checks
2	Predatory claws	Claw attack, (Str +1) damage
3	Enhanced senses	+2 bonus to Notice checks and Scent trait
4	Suction cups on hands and feet	+4 bonus to Climb checks and +1 bonus to grapple checks
5	Slimy	+6 bonus to Acrobatics checks to escape grapples or bindings
6	Thick, warty or scaly hide	+1 Toughness save
7	Supernatural agility	+1 Dexterity
8	Poisoned fangs	Bite Attack, (Str) damage, poison (save Difficulty 10 + Con, primary and secondary damage 1 Con)
9	Hammer-fisted	+1 to unarmed damage
10	Supernatural reflexes	Improved Initiative as a bonus feat
11	Powerful legs	+4 bonus to Jump checks.
12	Enlarged eyes	Night Vision as a bonus feat
13	Spines	Automatically deals +0 damage per round while grappling or being grappled.
14	Multiple rows of teeth	Bite attack, (Str +1) damage
15	Chameleon Skin	+4 bonus to Stealth checks.
16	Swift-footed	+10 ft. speed
17	Unnatural size	Increase one size category
18	Stunted growth	Decrease one size category
19	Acidic blood	When damaged by a slashing or piercing weapon, the attacker suffers +0 acid damage.
20	Hyper-mutant	Roll twice more, re-rolling any 20s.

Skills: A giant cockroach has a +4 bonus on Stealth and Notice checks. The cockroach's Stealth bonus increases to +12 when amidst dark soil, rotting leaves or other decomposing organic matter.

These monstrous scavengers will eat almost anything, and will even attack smaller living creatures when hungry. Otherwise, giant roaches tend to be timid creatures, and often flee when confronted. In larger groups, they may be a bit more belligerent. They particularly dislike bright light and usually run away from it.

CRYPT WIGHT

Type: 4th-level undead (cold)
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft.
Abilities: Str +4, Dex +1, Con —, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha +4
Skills: Notice 7 (+9), Search 7 (+8), Intimidate 7 (+11), Stealth 7 (+8), Knowledge (any) 7 (+8)
Feats: Power (x2), Power^B
Traits: Burned by Daylight, Darkvision 60 ft., Powers (rank 7, Cha, save Difficulty 16; Cold Shaping +11, Heart Shaping +11, Sleep +11).
Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex), Damage +5 (slam, +2 cold aura), Defense +3 (+1 Dex), Initiative +1
Saving Throws: Toughness +7 (+5 natural armor), Fortitude +1, Reflex +2, Will +6

Burned by Sunlight: A crypt wight takes +2 fire damage each round it spends in direct sunlight.

Crypt wights are corpses of the ancient dead animated by malevolent spirits from another plane. Their bodies are shriveled to little more than leathery skin clinging to their bones, shrouded by tattered rags and rusting armor. They are surrounded by an aura of bitter cold, and their icy touch saps the warmth from the living. These fell beings shun sunlight, which sears their unholy flesh. Crypt wights rarely stray far from their burial mounds, and even then only at night.

DEER

Type: 2nd-level animal

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +2, Con +1, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 5 (+9), Stealth 0 (+2), Swim 0 (+6)

Feats: Dodge, Night Vision^B, Run^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +3 (+2 Dex), Damage +4 (gore) or +3 (hooves), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +1, Reflex +5, Will +2

Skills: Deer have a +2 racial bonus on Notice checks, and a +4 racial bonus on Stealth and Swim checks.

These timid herbivores can become aggressive around mating season.

DEER, MAGIC

Type: 10th-level supernatural beast

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +3, Int +2, Wis +5, Cha +4

Skills: Knowledge (supernatural) 13 (+15), Notice 13 (+20), Sense Motive 13 (+18), Stealth 7 (+10), Swim 6 (+13)

Feats: Dodge, Lucky, Night Vision^B, Run, Widen Power

Traits: Powers (Wisdom, rank 13, save Difficulty 20; Body Control, Calm, Cure, Heart Reading, Mind Touch, Plant Shaping, Psychic Shield, Second Sight, Sleep, Supernatural Speed, Truth-Reading, Ward), Scent

Combat: Attack +11 (+2 Dex, -1 size), Damage +5 (gore) or +4 (hooves), Defense +12 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, -1 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +5, Fortitude +14, Reflex +14, Will +12

Skills: Like mundane deer, magic deer have a +2 bonus on Notice checks, and a +4 bonus on Stealth and Swim checks.

Unlike its mundane counterpart, the rare magic deer is an intelligent supernatural being of great wisdom and compassion. They live in (and protect) unspoiled woodland areas. Magic deer have an unfriendly attitude toward anyone bringing fire into their territory; this includes any sort of smoking along with matches, torches, campfires, and so forth. They use their various supernatural powers to drive out intruders without harming them.

DOG

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Small

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +3, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Survival 0 (+1), Swim 0 (+4)

Feats: Night Vision^B, Skill Focus (Swim), Track^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Skills: Dogs have a +2 bonus on Swim checks and a +4 bonus on Jump checks. Dogs have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

The statistics presented here describe a dog of about 20 to 50 pounds in weight. They also can be used for small wild canines such as coyotes and wild dogs.

Dogs generally hunt in packs, chasing and exhausting prey until they can drag it down.

DRAGON, MOUNTAIN

Type: 16th-level dragon (earth)

Size: Large

Speed: 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), climb 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +0, Con +3, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +2

Skills: Climb 19 (+31), Diplomacy 19 (+21), Intimidate 19 (+21), Notice 19 (+26), Search 19 (+21), Sense Motive 19 (+21), Stealth 19 (+17), Survival 19 (+21)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite), Cleave, Double Attack, Improved Initiative, Move-by Action, Skill Focus (Notice)

Traits: Blindsense (60 ft.), Breath Weapon (petrification, save Difficulty 21), Damage Reduction 2/supernatural, Frightful Presence (save Difficulty 20), Freeze, Immunity to sleep, paralysis, and petrification, Power (Earth Shaping +21), Supernatural Resistance 17

Combat: Attack +16 (+1 Attack Focus, -1 size), Damage +8 (bite) or +7 (claw), Defense +15 (-1 size), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +12, Fortitude +13, Reflex +10, Will +12

Breath Weapon: A mountain dragon has one type of breath weapon, a cloud of petrifying gas. Those who fail their saving throw are turned to stone.



Freeze: A mountain dragon can hold so still that it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a Difficulty 20 Notice check to realize that the mountain dragon is really alive.

Skills: Mountain dragons have a +2 racial bonus on Stealth and Notice checks. The Stealth bonus increases by +8 when a mountain dragon is concealed against a background of stone.

Mountain dragons frequent the ruins of ancient mountain fortresses. On hatching, a mountain dragon's pebble-like scales are a dull stony-grey color. As the dragon ages, its scales become larger, thicker, and smoother. Their coloration also shifts to match the color of the stones in the dragon's environment, helping it camouflage itself.

Mountain dragons are obsessed with precious gems, and have been known to go to great lengths to obtain them.

Mountain dragons are very territorial, and prefer to ambush their targets, either posing as a statue, or using their camouflage to sneak up on trespassers. They attempt to observe any intruders to gauge their intentions, their strengths, and their weaknesses before letting their presence be known. If a violent encounter begins to go badly for a mountain dragon, it will employ hit and run tactics.

GHOST

Type: 5th-level undead (incorporeal)

Size: Medium

Speed: fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Abilities: Str —, Dex +0, Con —, Int +0, Wis +1, Cha +3

Skills: Notice 0 (+9), Search 0 (+8), Stealth 0 (+8) plus four skills at 8 ranks each.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Manifestation, Rejuvenation, plus see below

Combat: Attack +3, Damage (by power), Defense +3, Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +5, Fortitude —, Reflex +1, Will +5

Immunities: Ghosts are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save.

Manifestation: Every ghost has this ability. A ghost dwells in the misty border realm between life and death and, as such, cannot affect or be affected by anything in the living world. When a ghost manifests, it partly enters the living world, becoming visible but incorporeal. When a ghost manifests, it can use any powers it possesses on material targets, provided they do not require physical contact. Only other incorporeal creatures, supernatural weapons, or powers can harm a manifested ghost. A manifested ghost can pass through solid objects at will. A manifested ghost always moves silently.

Rejuvenation: It's difficult to destroy a ghost through simple combat. The destroyed spirit restores itself within eight days. A ghost that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its old haunts with a successful level check (1d20 + ghost's Charisma) against Difficulty 16. As a rule, the only way to get rid of a ghost permanently is to determine the reason for its existence and set right whatever prevents it from moving on. The exact means varies with each ghost and may require a good deal of research.

Skills: Ghosts have a +8 bonus on Notice, Search, and Stealth checks.

All ghosts have one to three of the other traits described following. The save Difficulty against a ghost's traits is 12 + the ghost's Charisma score, unless otherwise noted.

Corrupting Touch: The ghost can use the Harm power with its incorporeal touch.



Drain Vitality: The ghost can use the Drain Vitality power with its incorporeal touch.

Frightful Moan: The ghost can emit a frightful moan like the fear effect of the Heart Shaping power. Doing so causes the ghost no fatigue.

Horrific Appearance: Any living creature within 60 feet that sees the ghost must succeed on a Fortitude save or immediately take 1 point of damage to all physical ability scores. A creature successfully saving against this effect is immune to the same ghost's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Malevolence: Once per round, the ghost can merge its incorporeal form with a living creature by touch. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save. A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same ghost's malevolence for 24 hours, and the ghost cannot enter the target's space. If the save fails, the ghost vanishes into the target's body and controls it like a use of the Dominate power.

Move Object: The ghost can use the Move Object power, even while incorporeal.

Ghosts are the undead spirits of intelligent beings who, for one reason or another, cannot move on from their living existence to their next life. A ghost greatly resembles its living form, but in some cases the spiritual form is somewhat altered.

GOBLIN

Type: 1st-level humanoid (1st-level warrior)

Size: Small

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str 0, Dex +1, Con +1, Int 0, Wis -1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Ride 4 (+9), Search 0 (+2), Stealth 4 (+9), Survival 4 (+3)

Feats: Armor Training, Move-by Action, Talented (Notice & Search), Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)



Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex, +1 size), Damage +0 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense +3 (+1 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +3, Reflex +1, Will -1

Skills: Goblins have a +4 racial bonus to Ride checks and often tame wolves as mounts.

Goblins are small humanoids, considered little better than vermin. They are 3 to 3 1/2 feet tall with yellowed skin and large, pointed ears. They live in savage tribal group, often nomadic.

HARPY

Type: 7th-level monstrous humanoid

Size: Medium

Speed: 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +2, Con +0, Int -2, Wis +1, Cha +3

Skills: Bluff 4 (+11), Intimidate 4 (+7), Notice 2 (+7), Perform (sing) 2 (+12)

Feats: Fascinate (Perform), Move-by Action, Skill Focus (Perform), Tough^B, Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)

Combat: Attack +7 (+2 Dex), Damage 0 (claws) or by weapon, Defense +7 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +2, Reflex +7, Will +6

Skills: Harpies have a +4 bonus on Bluff, Notice, and Perform (sing) checks

HIDEOUS hags with bird-like wings and lower bodies, harpies like to entrance hapless travelers and lead them to unspeakable torments. Only when a harpy has finished playing with its new toys will it release them from suffering by killing and consuming them.

Harpies can use the Fascinate feat when they sing. The victims walk toward the harpy, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area (through fire, off a cliff, or the like), the

victim gets a second saving throw. Fascinated creatures take no actions other than to defend themselves.

HAWK

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str -2, Dex +3, Con +0, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+14)

Combat: Attack +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Damage -1 (talons), Defense +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +2

Skills: Hawks have a +8 racial bonus on Notice checks

Hawks are 1 to 2 feet long, with wingspans of 6 feet or less. Hawks have a +8 bonus on Notice checks to see things at a distance. These statistics can describe falcons and similar-sized birds of prey.

HORSE

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +1, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 6 (+7)

Feats: Endurance, Run

Traits: Night Vision

Combat: Attack +3 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +3 (unarmed), Defense +3 (+1 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +6, Reflex +4, Will +2

Horses are widely domesticated for riding and as beasts of burden. The statistics describe large breeds of working horses, such as Clydesdales. These animals are usually ready for heavy work by age three. These horses cannot fight while carrying a rider.

- **Light Horse:** A light horse includes smaller breeds of working horses, such as quarter horses and Arabians, as well as wild horses. These animals are usually ready for useful work by age two. Light horses have +10 ft. speed, but -2 to Strength.
- **Warhorse:** A warhorse is specially trained for combat, giving it a level in the warrior role. It has a +1 to its Attack and Defense, and Notice rank, along with the Tough feat (+1 Toughness save bonus).

KAMODON

Type: 2nd-level monstrous humanoid (reptilian)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +3, Con +1, Int +0, Wis +1, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 5 (+6), Stealth 5 (+8)

Feats: Double Strike, Improved Initiative

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Poison, Scent

Combat: Attack +5 (+3 Dex), Damage +4/18-20 and poison (scimitar), +2 (claws), or +4 and poison (bite), Defense +5 (+3 Dex), Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +1, Reflex +6, Will +4

Poison: Kamodons coat their scimitars with a toxin they secrete from glands in their own mouths (save Difficulty 12, Initial Damage 1 Con, Secondary damage 1 Con). They have been known to brew and harvest other poisons as well.

Kamodons are a nomadic warrior race of desert dwelling reptilian humanoids. They are constantly on the move, and attack small humanoid settlements in the night. They are known and feared for their use of poisons and their tendency to kidnap infants for unknown purposes. Strong and agile, they are a force to be reckoned with.

MOSQUITO, GIANT

Type: 2nd-level vermin

Size: Small

Speed: 10 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +4, Con +1, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 0 (+4)

Feats: —

Traits: Attach, Blood Drain, Darkvision (60 ft.), Disease

Combat: Attack +6 (+1 size, +4 Dex), Damage +1 (bite, plus blood drain), Defense +6 (+1 size, +4 Dex), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +4, Will +0

Attach: If a giant mosquito hits with a bite attack, it latches onto the opponent's body. An attached mosquito is effectively grappling its prey. The giant mosquito loses its Dexterity bonus to defense (giving it Defense +2), but holds on with great tenacity. Giant mosquitoes have a +12 racial bonus on grapple checks. An attached mosquito can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached mosquito through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the mosquito.

Blood Drain: An attached giant mosquito drains blood, dealing 1 point of Constitution damage each round it begins its turn attached to a victim. Once it has dealt 2 points of Constitution damage, it detaches and flies off to digest the meal. If its victim dies before the mosquito's appetite has been sated, the mosquito detaches and seeks new prey.

Disease: There is 10% chance (19-20 on a d20) that any given giant mosquito is carrying a disease of some variety. Anyone bitten by a disease-carrying giant mosquito has a chance of contracting the disease.

Skills: A giant mosquito has a +4 racial bonus on Notice checks.

Giant mosquitoes are nearly a yard long. They are mostly found in swampy areas, and other places with stagnant water.

OGRE

Type: 4th-level humanoid (giant)

Size: Large

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +5, Dex -1, Con +2, Int -2, Wis +0, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 7 (+7)

Feats: Attack Focus (club), Night Vision, Tough 4B

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.)

Combat: Attack +2 (-1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +5 (unarmed), +9 (club), Defense +2 (-1 Dex, -1 size), Initiative -1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+11 with armor), Fortitude +6, Reflex +0, Will +1

Ogres are hideous humanoid giants 9 to 10 feet tall and weighing 600 to 650 pounds. Their skin color ranges from dull yellow to dull brown. Their clothing consists of poorly cured furs and hides, which add to their naturally repellent odor. Ogres are fond of eating humanoid flesh.

Ogres favor overwhelming odds, surprise attacks, and ambushes over a fair fight. They are intelligent enough to use ranged weapons to soften up their foes before closing, but ogre gangs and bands rarely feature any real organization or tactics.

ORC

Type: 1st-level humanoid (1st-level warrior)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex 0, Con +1, Int -1, Wis -2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+2)

Feats: Attack Focus (greataxe), Armor Training, Rage, Weapon Training

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Light Sensitivity

Combat: Attack +1 (+2 with axe), Damage +3 (unarmed), +8 (greataxe), Defense +1, Initiative +0

Saving Throws: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will -2

Orcs are savage humanoids with animalistic features and reddish eyes. When not raiding and pillaging, orcs are usually making weapons or training in using them. They have a hatred for all other creatures, seeing them as nothing more than prey.

RAT

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Abilities: Str -4, Dex +2, Con +0, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Acrobatics 0 (+10), Climb 2 (+12), Stealth 2 (+16), Swim 0 (+10)

Feats: Evasion, Night Vision^B

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Damage -4 (unarmed), Defense +4 (+2 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +4, Will +1

Skills: Rats have a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Acrobatics, Climb, and Swim checks. A rat can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A rat uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. A rat has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.



These omnivorous rodents are one of the hardiest creatures that nature has to offer, and they thrive almost anywhere. Rats usually run away when confronted. They bite only as a last resort.

RAT, DIRE

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Small

Speed: 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Climb 0 (+11), Notice 3 (+4), Stealth 1 (+8), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Evasion, Night Vision^B

Traits: Disease, Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Damage +0 (bite), Defense +4 (+3 Dex, +1 size), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude +3, Reflex +5, Will +3

Disease: There is 10% chance (19-20 on a d20) that any given dire rat is carrying a disease of some variety. Anyone bitten by a disease-carrying dire rat has a chance of contracting the disease.

Skills: Dire rats have a +8 bonus on Swim checks. Dire rats have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Dire rats use their Dexterity modifier for Climb and Swim checks.

Dire rats are hideous creatures up to 4 feet long. Anyone bitten by a dire rat must make a Fortitude save (Difficulty 13) to avoid being infected with a disease doing 1 point of Constitution damage.

SHARK

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: swim 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +2, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Notice 6 (+7), Swim 0 (+9)

Feats: Tough 3

Traits: Blindsight, Keen Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex), Damage +3 (bite), Defense +4 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +4, Fortitude +4, Reflex +5, Will +2

Keen Scent: A shark can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

Sharks are aggressive, carnivorous, fish liable to make unprovoked attacks against anything approaching them. Medium sharks are from 5 to 8 feet long and not usually dangerous to creatures other than their prey (smaller fish and sea mammals).

SKELETON

Type: 1st-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +1, Con —, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -5

Feats: Improved Initiative^B

Traits: Damage Reduction 2/Bludgeoning, Darkvision (60 ft.), Immunities

Combat: Attack +1 (Dex), Damage +1 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense +1 (Dex), Initiative +5

Saving Throws: Toughness +0, Fortitude —, Reflex +1, Will —

Damage Reduction +2/Bludgeoning: Skeletons lack flesh or internal organs, making them resistant to cutting and piercing weapons.

Immunities: Skeletons are immune to cold, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal

damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Skeletons are the bones of the dead turned into supernaturally animated, mindless automatons obeying the commands of their creators. A skeleton is seldom garbed in anything more than the rotting remnants of whatever clothing or armor it wore when it died.

SNAKE, CONSTRICTOR

Type: 3rd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Climb 3 (+14), Notice 0 (+5), Stealth 3 (+10), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Tough 2, Improved Grab

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +3 (+3 Dex), Damage +3 (bite or constriction), Defense +3 (+3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +4, Reflex +6, Will +2

Skills: Snakes have a +4 bonus on Notice and Stealth checks. A snake can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A snake uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks.

Constrictor snakes usually are not aggressive and flee when confronted. They hunt for food but do not attempt to make a meal out of any creature too large to constrict. Constrictor snakes hunt by grabbing prey with their mouths and then squeezing it with their powerful bodies.

SNAKE, VIPER

Type: 1st-level animal

Size: Tiny

Speed: 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Abilities: Str -3, Dex +3, Con +0, Int -5, Wis +1, Cha -4

Skills: Climb 0 (+11), Notice 4 (+9), Stealth 0 (+15), Swim 0 (+11)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite)

Traits: Poison, Scent

Combat: Attack +6 (+1 Attack Focus, +3 Dex, +2 size), Damage -5 (bite, plus poison), Defense +5 (+3 Dex, +2 size), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness -2, Fortitude +2, Reflex +5, Will +1

Poison: A viper's bite requires a Difficulty 10 Fortitude saving throw. The venom deals initial and secondary damage of 2 Constitution.

Skills: Snakes have a +4 bonus on Notice and Stealth checks. A snake can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A snake uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. Vipers have a +8 bonus on Swim checks and can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even while threatened.

Vipers are not particularly aggressive, but will often lash out with a bite attack before attempting to retreat. They rely on their venomous bite to kill prey and to defend themselves.

SWARM, KILLER BEE

Type: 7th-level vermin (swarm)

Size: Diminutive

Speed: 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Abilities: Str -5, Dex +4, Con +0, Int —, Wis +1, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 0 (+5), Survival 0 (+1)

Feats: —

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Distraction, Immune to Weapon Damage, Poison

Combat: Swarm, Damage +4 (sting, plus poison), Defense +13 (+5 base, +4 Dex, +4 size), Initiative +4

Saving Throws: Toughness -3, Fortitude +5, Reflex +6, Will +3

Distraction: Any living creature that begins its turn within a killer bee swarm must succeed on a Difficulty 13 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based.

Poison: Injury, Fortitude Difficulty 13, initial and secondary damage 1 Con. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based.

Skills: Killer bees have a +4 racial bonus on Notice checks. They also have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks to orient themselves.

Killer bees are named for their extremely aggressive nature, and their habit of swarming anything they feel is threatening their hive. Killer bees have a strong aversion to the color black, and will attack anything of that color that approaches within 30 ft. of their hive.

VAMPIRE

Type: 8th-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +6, Dex +3, Con —, Int +1, Wis +3, Cha +1

Skills: Bluff 0 (+9), Diplomacy 11 (+12), Gather Information 11 (+12), Intimidate 11 (+12), Knowledge (supernatural) 11 (+12), Notice 0 (+11), Search 0 (+9), Sense Motive 11 (+14), Stealth 0 (+11)

Feats: Animal Empathy, Fascinate (Diplomacy), Improved Initiative^B, Improved Pin, Lightning Reflexes^B

Traits: Alternate Form, Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Create Spawn, Damage Reduction +4/silver and supernatural, Darkvision (60 ft.), Dominate, Fast Healing (per round), Gaseous Form,

Immunities, Resistance +4 to cold and electricity, Spider Climb, Vampire Weaknesses

Combat: Attack +9, Damage +6 (unarmed), Defense +9, Initiative +7

Saving Throws: Toughness +8, Fortitude —, Reflex +7, Will +9

Alternate Form: A vampire can assume the shape of a bat or wolf as a standard action. The vampire gains the natural weapons and attacks of its new form. It can remain in that form until it assumes another or until the next sunrise.

Blood Drain: A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, draining 1 point of Constitution each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire gains a recovery check with a bonus equal to the Constitution drained.

Children of the Night: Vampires command the lesser creatures of the world, and once per day can call forth swarms of rats or bats or a pack of wolves as a standard action. These creatures arrive within a minute, and serve the vampire for up to an hour.

Create Spawn: If a vampire kills a victim with blood drain, the victim returns as a vampire in three days. The new vampire is under the command of the vampire that created it and remains enslaved until its master's destruction. At any given time, a vampire may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice its own level; any spawn exceeding this limit are created as free-willed vampires. An enslaved vampire may create and enslave spawn of its own, so a master vampire can control a large number of lesser vampires in this fashion. A vampire may voluntarily free enslaved spawn in order to enslave new spawn, but once freed, a vampire cannot be enslaved again.

Damage Reduction: A vampire has damage reduction +4/silver and supernatural. A vampire's natural weapons are supernatural for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Dominate: A vampire can dominate a victim like a use of the power of the same name. The ability has a range of 30 feet.



Fast Healing: A vampire makes a recovery check from damage each round. If dying, a vampire automatically assumes gaseous form and flees. It must reach its coffin within two hours or be destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in two hours.) Any additional damage dealt to a vampire forced into gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in its coffin, a vampire is helpless. It becomes disabled after an hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of one recovery check per round.

Gaseous Form: As a standard action, a vampire can assume gaseous form. It has a fly speed of 20 feet and is immune to physical harm, but unable to make attacks or use any of its other traits.

Immunities: Vampires are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Spider Climb: At a speed of 20 ft., a vampire can climb sheer surfaces with no Climb check and no chance of falling.

Skills: Vampires have a +8 bonus on Bluff, Notice, Search, and Stealth checks.

Vampires are among the most powerful and feared of the undead. They appear much as they did in life, although their features are often hardened and feral, with the predatory look of wolves, and their skin is usually pale (except immediately after feeding).

Vampires often embrace finery and decadence and may assume the guise of nobility (if they were not already in life). Despite their appearance, vampires can be recognized by the fact that they cast no shadows and no reflections in mirrors.

Saves against the vampire's traits have a Difficulty of 14 + the vampire's Charisma score, unless noted otherwise (Difficulty 15 for the sample vampire given here).

WEAKNESSES

For all their power, vampires have a number of weaknesses.

Repelling a Vampire: Vampires cannot tolerate the strong odor of garlic and will not enter an area laced with it. Similarly, they recoil from mirrors or strongly presented holy symbols. These things don't harm vampires, merely keep them at bay. A recoiling vampire must stay at least 5 feet away from the mirror or holy symbol, and cannot touch or make melee attacks against a creature holding the item. Holding a vampire at bay takes a standard action each round.

Limited Movement: Vampires are unable to cross running water, but can be carried over it while resting in their coffins or aboard a ship. They are unable to enter a home or other building unless invited in by someone with the authority to do so. They may freely enter public places, since these are by definition open to all.

Slaying a Vampire: Reducing a vampire's condition to disabled incapacitates it but doesn't destroy it (see the note on fast healing). However, certain attacks can slay vampires. Exposing any vampire to

direct sunlight disorients it; it can take only a single move or standard action and is destroyed utterly the following round if it cannot escape. Similarly, immersing a vampire in running water causes it one level of lethal damage each round until its condition is disabled, then it is destroyed. Driving a wooden stake through a vampire's heart instantly disables it. However, it can recover if the stake is removed. A popular tactic is to cut off the staked vampire's head and fill its mouth with garlic, or to burn the body or expose it to sunlight, any of which will destroy it.

WOLF

Type: 2nd-level animal

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +2, Con +2, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+5), Stealth 1 (+3), Survival 0 (+1)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite), Improved Trip^B, TrackB

Traits: Night Vision, Scent

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 Dex +1 attack focus), Damage +1 (unarmed), Defense +3 (+2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will +1

Skills: Wolves have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Wolves are pack hunters known for their persistence and cunning. A favorite wolf tactic is to send a few individuals against the foe's front while the rest of the pack circles and attacks from the flanks or rear.

ZOMBIE

Type: 1st-level undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex -1, Con —, Int —, Wis +0, Cha -5

Feats: Tough 2^B

Traits: Darkvision (60 ft.), Immunities, Slow

Combat: Attack -1 (-1 Dex), Damage +1 (unarmed) or by weapon, Defense -1 (-1 Dex), Initiative -1

Saving Throws: Toughness +2, Fortitude —, Reflex -1, Will —

Immunities: Zombies are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-influencing effects (including mind-influencing powers). They are not subject to critical hits, non-lethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless it works on inanimate objects.

Slow: Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or standard action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it charges.

Zombies are corpses animated by supernatural forces. Because of their utter lack of intelligence, the instructions given to a newly created zombie must be simple and specific. Zombies do nothing except what they are commanded to do.



WORLDS OF ADVENTURE



The *True20* game was originally associated with a particular world: Aldis, the setting for the *Blue Rose* Roleplaying Game of Romantic Fantasy. Some of the original *True20* rules systems were designed specifically for *Blue Rose*'s genre, style of play, and setting, such as the risk of corruption from misusing arcane power or natures based on the Light and Shadow dichotomy of the world, and associated with the divination cards of the Royal Road.

When Green Ronin decided to publish *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* as a complete, stand-alone game, some of those setting-specific game systems went by the wayside, remaining behind in the world of Aldis, while the bulk of the game continued to evolve to become usable for infinite worlds of adventure. All that remained was to show readers of this book a sample of those worlds.

So a call went out to publishers interested in creating new *True20* settings. Various publishers submitted their ideas for worlds to showcase the *True20* game system, so many, in fact, that Green Ronin decided that in addition to including the four winning settings in this book, to also produce a supplementary book of settings called *True20 Worlds of Adventure* with four runners-up.

Green Ronin staff read and evaluated all the various setting submissions. Originality and a desire to show a wide range of possible settings were factors, but so was the setting's use—and in many cases, customization—of the *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* game. After all, *True20* isn't "one size fits all adventures." No roleplaying game truly is. *True20* is meant to be modified, customized, to suit the style of the people using it, and the best of the settings did just that, offering interesting new ways of playing the game.

WORLDS OF TRUE20

The settings you'll find in the following pages are designed to highlight the strengths of *True20*, but also demonstrate some of the many ways in which the game can "stretch" to accommodate your own ideas for settings, new worlds for you and your players to explore.

CALIPHATE NIGHTS

Caliphate Nights from Paradigm Concepts is a "classic" fantasy setting in the truest sense of the word: based on the fantastic tales of *One Thousand and One Nights*, a mythic world of flying carpets, powerful djinn, and mysterious magic. Although it offers some new feats and particular spins on the heroic roles, *Caliphate Nights* really shines in its options for storytelling, particularly uses of Conviction to "frame" stories that flesh out the adventure and give the players the influence of Shahrazad in the court of the Sultan, spinning out their own unique tales. It can serve as a model for similar "framing" options in other settings and stories.

LUX AETERNUM

Lux Aeternum from BlackWyrn Games takes *True20* into the future and out among the stars, providing a space opera setting with some twists. Players can find new backgrounds for the alien races inhabiting Nexus Sector, along with futuristic equipment and some new feats associated with it. In particular, *Lux Aeternum* makes effective use of *True20*'s system of powers, dividing them up to create a number of distinct disciplines used by different races and cultures within the setting, ranging from primitive shamanism to theological miracles and psionic mastery of the mind. You can use them as models for creating

your own unique power-sets, in addition to sailing the sea of stars to worlds unknown.

MECHA VS. KAIJU

Mecha vs. Kaiju from Big Finger Games puts the *True20* game on a different scale, literally. It features information on running adventures based around giant fighting robots and the gargantuan creatures they battle. In this setting you'll find additional ideas for vehicles (and feats for operating them), guidelines for creating giant monsters, and some applications of the archetypes of Japanese *anime* and *manga* to the heroic roles of *True20*. Some of the setting's concepts can apply to others involving heavy use of vehicles or pitting the heroes against giant monsters.

BORROWED TIME

Borrowed Time from Electric Mulch takes place in the present-day, so rather than explaining a great deal about a world so like our own, it takes the opportunity to present an entirely new set of special feats for people able to manipulate time itself! The time-bending powers of *Borrowed Time* can apply to virtually any setting, including

the other three in this book! The feats also offer inspiration for putting together your own set of specialized feats for the unique powers you want available to heroes in your setting, from reality molding to mastery of the fickle forces of fate.

WIDER VISTAS

The worlds of *True20* don't end with this book, either. Other Green Ronin Publishing products provide whole new settings for *True20* adventures:

BLUE ROSE

Blue Rose, the Roleplaying Game of Romantic Fantasy, is where it all started. Check out the beginnings of the *True20* game system and explore the fantastic world of Aldea in *Blue Rose*. The game offers things like an expanded set of character natures and a system of corruption for misusing supernatural powers (called *arcana* in *Blue Rose*). The *Blue Rose Companion* offers additional rules options that may be of interest to *True20* players, including systems for ritual magic and the creation of magical items. *World of Aldea* fleshes out the *Blue Rose* setting and is useful as a *True20* setting sourcebook as well.

DAMNATION DECADE

Damnation Decade, Green Ronin's *d20 Modern* flashback homage to the science fiction and adventure television of the 1970s, includes a *True20* conversion appendix, allowing you to use its down-and-dirty disco beat as a setting for some *far out* adventures!

TRUE20 WORLDS OF ADVENTURE

True20 Worlds of Adventure offers five new settings: four from the *True20* setting search and one created by award-winning Green Ronin designer and developer Robert J. Schwalb. *Worlds of Adventure* includes worlds of fantasy (*Blood Throne*, *Land of the Crane*, and *Nevermore*), conspiracy (*Agents of Oblivion*), and horror (*The Razor In the Apple*).

Eleven worlds of adventure, and that's just the beginning! The settings in this book, and other *True20* products from Green Ronin and its publishing partners, are yours to explore and make your own. Just turn the page to start your journey into whole new worlds!



CALIPHATE NIGHTS



The stories come from Arabia, Persia, India, even China. They tell not only of fearsome djinni and fantastical palaces, but also of profound spiritual insight and transformation. They reflect the enormous Islamic civilization during the ninth to thirteenth centuries, which stretched from Spain across North Africa to Cairo, across the Arabian peninsula, up to Damascus and Baghdad, further north to Samarkand, across what is now Afghanistan, down into India, and beyond. A traveler could wander across this vast region speaking Arabic, studying and praying in mosques, and trading with fellow Moslems. The stories are erotic, prejudiced, and fantastical, and at the same time redeeming, illuminating, and grounded. The stories are best known as the *Thousand and One Nights*.

THE ARABIAN ADVENTURE

If you are unfamiliar with the *Nights*, the term “Arabian Adventure” should bring to mind devious genies twisting the wording of wishes, cunning damsels quick with sword and spell, mistaken identity in the harem, mad sultans, flying carpet chases, outrageously lucky escapes, assassin plots, heretical cults, nobles hiding among the populace, death-defying horse races, haggling in the bazaar, bluffing with Bedouin, getting cursed, shapeshifting duels, enchanting storytellers, and scimitar-wielding princes swapping witty repartee. Mythic Arabia is a world based on a time that never quite was, during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid, the pious tyrant. While it resembles the Golden Age of Islam circa 800 CE, it mixes fact and fantasy into a unique new landscape. Though it is a land of plentiful sex and violence, it is also filled with mystical quests, redemption, and forgiveness.

The Arabian Adventure is similar to the Oriental Romance of Hollywood, but more true to history and to the *Nights* themselves. Oriental Romance has a long history ever since Western colonialists became fascinated with the Near East. It was introduced into American cinema in 1940 with *The Thief of Baghdad*, and through such films as *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves*, *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*, and more recently, Disney’s animated *Aladdin* and *Sinbad the Sailor*. While these movies are loosely based on the *Nights*, they have reduced it to fairy-tale status. Ultimately they have more in common with Hollywood stereotypes, and always have common plot elements: an evil vizier named Jafar or Kassim, prophecies of a liberating hero who begins as an orphaned prince named Ahmed, and bedazzling princesses named Jasmine. The most undeniable addition to

CALIPHATE NIGHTS

the genre by Hollywood was its fusion with the swashbuckler—the wandering adventurer, the knight errant, the gallant rogue. Ultimately, it may be that the true theme of the *Nights*—the absolute mercy and sovereignty of God—was not attractive to screenwriters and producers. Sadly, their renditions have left us with a colored view of the *Nights*.

Caliphate Nights does not deny the swashbuckling Hollywood tradition, but refines it by staying true to the historical setting and the source material, which includes not only *Alf Layla wa Layla* (the Arabian name for *One Thousand Nights and a Night*) and the body of Arabian folktales, but also stories like the Persian *Shahnameh*, the Epic of Kings, and the Indian *Baital-Pachisi* (also known as *Vikram and the Vampire*). These adventures focus on the art of the narrative, using frame stories in which the storyteller relates to a listener a tale in order to cause a change of heart in the listener. In the *Nights*, the vizier’s daughter Shahrazad intercedes with the mad Caliph Shahrayar who, after being betrayed by his wife, marries a new bride each day only to kill her the next morning, insuring he is never cheated on again. Shahrazad begins spinning story after story, each night leaving her murderous husband a cliffhanger; thus he stays his

hand for three years, at the end of which Shahrazad has cured his madness and the Caliph has learned to love again. This frame story is beautifully depicted in Hallmark Entertainment’s movie *The Arabian Nights* (2000). Stories have the power to heal, to transform, and to redeem—this is the message of the *Nights*.

The heroes of the *Nights* are imperfect but lucky, aided by fate throughout their quests, often certain they will arrive on the other side safe and sound. However, it is up to their cunning and faith to avoid immense suffering along the way, and to do so with style! They engage in *jihad* in the truest sense of the word: an inner struggle to transform themselves and the society they live in for the better. Mohammed, peace be upon him, said: “*The best jihad [struggle] is by the one who strives against his own self for God, the Mighty and Majestic.*” Though they may be called to do this with swords, just as often they will require the sharp edge of cunning wit and poetry, the parry of unshakeable faith, and the riposte of temperance and mercy.

While the heroes and heroines may be flawed, they are ultimately a force of good that fights for the emergence of the Golden Age of Islam.

Caliphate Nights seeks to capture the feel of the *Arabian Nights*, and the detailed historical backdrop is intended to emphasize this feel. Where historical realities limit the playability of the setting, they have been overlooked or modified to create a more entertaining and thought-provoking game.



THE WORLD OF THE CALIPHATE NIGHTS

The world of *Caliphate Nights* is similar in many ways to the Golden Age of Islam in the Middle East. This section describes that world, beginning with its history, then looking at society and culture, religion, and geography.

HISTORY

The history of the *Caliphate Nights* is the history of the Faith, the flowering of which brought about the Golden Age.

Before the coming of Islam, there was a long *jahiliya*, or Age of Ignorance, during which pagan cults prospered. Though it is the last place one would suspect as the cradle of a vastly influential human culture, being a harsh and demanding place to live, it was in the Arabian Peninsula that the Sabeans flourished. The Sabeans, under the reign of their secular monarch, the *malik*, ruled from four city-states in the southwestern peninsula. Their kingdom of Himyar dominated the south. Never was there a wealthier land, blessed with frankincense and other exotic spices and lying upon two major trade routes: the ocean-trading route between Africa and India, and land-trading route along the coast of the peninsula. However, by the seventh century CE, Himyar fell into political disarray. In the shadow of this empire, the Bedouin, Arab tribes of the desert, became a military power, allying themselves with the central Arabian cities. The Bedouin tribe of Quraysh even conquered Mecca, the religious center of the pagan religion. During this time, the Arabs worshipped three goddesses: al-Lat, Uzza, and Manat (known as the three exalted cranes). As Jewish and Christian traditions influenced the pagan faith, the father of these goddesses was identified as Allah. Into the pagan Quraysh tribe, Mohammed, Messenger of Allah, was born.

PEACE BE UPON HIM

Mohammed is considered the last true prophet of God bearing a holy text to humanity; following in the footsteps of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, Mohammed is the *Seal of the Prophets*. A simple tribesman of the Quraysh, the Prophet achieved the greatest unification of Arabian tribes and cities ever seen. Guided by the archangel Gabriel, Mohammed began preaching his message of monotheism to the pagan tribes. The Quraysh opposed Mohammed at every turn, fearing if all tribes accepted Islam, it would mean the Quraysh would lose revenue from pilgrims worshipping the Quraysh idols. The rivalry with his former tribesmen became so intense that Mohammed moved the Moslem community from Mecca to Medina. In the early days of Medina, Moslems feared sleep lest their enemies attacked at night, but gradually their community grew and Mohammed launched the one of the world's most aggressive military campaigns. He led his army on 80 campaigns in 10 years; some of these were reconnaissance, some were missionary, others were minor skirmishes, and others were terrifying battles. Mohammed was both a scholar and a commander; he performed the first sword-point conversion to Islam with an inhabitant of Mecca during his siege. The *Seal of the Prophets* and his companions showed the difficult path a Moslem must walk in order to liberate the world from darkness. The successors of Mohammed were given the title caliph, or "commander of the faithful."

DEATH OF ALI & THE SCHISM

After Mohammed's death, four caliphs ruled. The last of these was Ali, Mohammed's cousin, who was appointed by a cabinet of Mohammed's companions after the former caliph Uthman was assassinated. The faction that assassinated Uthman viewed it as the necessary deposition of an immoral usurper and tyrant. The contrary position saw Uthman's

death as a blasphemous murder. This divergence in opinion over the question of Uthman's death and the succession of Ali to the caliphate came to define the two major branches of Islam. Those who supported Uthman and bemoaned his death became known as the Sunni, while the minority opposition group became known as the Shia. While the Sunni acknowledge the authority of the caliphate, the Shia denounce it as a corrupted institution and instead submit to the authority of a holy teacher and spiritual head of the Islamic community known as the Imam.

THE UMMAYYADS & THE RIDDA WARS

After the murder of Ali by Kharijite fanatics, Uthman's relatives formed the Umayyad caliphate. What came to be known as *Ridda* (or "Apostasy") were a series of Umayyad military campaigns expanding the newly formed Islamic Caliphate to include Persia, Egypt, the Maghreb, and Spain. Despite the fact that the Moslems were outnumbered and had no technological advantage, their conquests were resoundingly successful. Their success was partly due to the depleted condition of their enemies. The Byzantine and Sasanian Empires were exhausted after prolonged warfare, Syria and Iraq were recently occupied, and floods plagued Iraq; indeed, the timing could not have been better.

However, the true advantage of the Moslems lay in their unparalleled ability to organize and integrate tribal warriors into society. Even had their enemies not been reeling from their recent quarrels, it is likely the unified Moslem forces would have succeeded. The integrating power of Islam continued to work on an even more extensive scale after the *Ridda* wars, weaving disparate communities together to form the rich tapestry of medieval Islamic civilization.

THE ABBASIDS

It was a bloody coup and massacre of the old royal house by the Abbasids, the royal family descended from Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib, a young uncle of the Prophet, that ushered in an era of "peace and tolerance." All Moslems are seen as equals in the eyes of God, yet in the Abbasid society, non-Moslems have fewer rights, and heretics have often been violently repressed. However, the Abbasid caliphate tore down the ethnic legal constructs that held Arab apart from non-Arab under Umayyad rule. For the first time, a truly Islamic state existed, where religion was put ahead of blood.

The Abbasids cultivated luxuries, the arts, and an impressive bureaucracy. As the caliphs became increasingly detached from direct involvement in managing the empire, the position of vizier was created to control the bureaucracy. However, Abbasid rule is far from universally accepted. The Emirates of Cordoba, Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt have all established independent kingdoms. Persian magians and Turkish mamluks, along with Ismaili and Kharijite heretics, all conspire against the caliph, hoping to bring about his downfall and implement their own form of government. The current Abbasid Caliph is Harun al-Rashid.

THE PIOUS TYRANT

Perhaps no Caliph is more controversial than Harun al-Rashid, the pious tyrant. The son of al-Khayzuran, a former Yemeni slave girl, and Caliph al-Mahdi, he was raised in Baghdad. While his mother influenced his policies, the vizier Yahya al-Barmakid and his Persian family controlled the administration, the reward of helping Harun obtain the caliphate. Yahya's son Jafar, Harun's sister Abbassa and Harun enjoyed each other's company greatly, but Moslem etiquette forbade Jafar from spending



time with the unwed Abbassa. Thus, Harun arranged a marriage ceremony between Jafar and Abbassa on the understanding that it was strictly a formality.

However, Jafar and Abbassa ended up falling in love and giving birth to a child who was sent to Mecca. Harun, while on pilgrimage in Mecca, heard the story and had Jafar executed, and cut his body in two, impaling it on either side of the bridge into Baghdad. Yahya and his entire family were thrown in prison on charges of conspiracy; whether or not this was true is unknown. Thus began the Caliph's madness.

Today, one can see the bones of Jafar as a warning to those who would betray the Caliph. Since this episode, Harun has become more skeptical of his advisors and concerned about rebels betraying him. Though he has a magnificent palace far grander than that of any Caliph before him, Harun takes to traveling the city streets at night in disguise. During these outings he learns the state of his citizens. Coupled with his adopting the Persian practice of secret plainclothes police, this has caused a fair amount of fear in the people of Baghdad. At the same time, Harun is a great patron of learning and art, himself a scholar and poet, and he invites many to perform in his court. His tyranny is only rivaled by his scholarship.

SOCIETY

Islamic society is made up of a small group of loyal tribesmen allied to the elite, and a large population of recently conquered (or re-conquered) tribesmen beneath them. The ruling elite consists of the descendants of the Quraysh, Ansar, and Thaqif tribes who remained loyal to Islam during the *Ridda* wars.

SOCIAL STATION

Every person in the Islamic Caliphate is aware of where they stand in the social hierarchy. One's station is usually inherited, but there are ample

opportunities for upward mobility, even for beggars, non-Moslems, and slaves. Station is a function not only of birth, but also of wealth, reputation, how one makes a living, and whether one is in a foreign country. A player chooses their hero's starting station.

One's station is apparent unless hidden via Bluff or Disguise. It comes into play when interacting with those of a different station. In general, for every level of difference in station, both sides suffer a -1 penalty to Diplomacy and Gather Information. Those of lower station also gain an equal bonus to Bluff, while those of higher station gain an equal bonus to Intimidate. For example, a *Banu Sasan* conversing with an Amir would suffer -4 on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks, but he would get a +4 on Bluff checks to convince the Amir he knows nothing and is but a poor beggar.

Station	Examples	Starting Wealth
0	Untouchables (gravediggers, dung-shovelers, lepers), criminals, blasphemers	+1
1	<i>Banu Sasan</i> (beggars, urchins, hakawati, slaves), <i>dhimmi</i> (Christians and Jews), mamluks	+4
2	Craftsmen, soldiers, merchants, performers	+6
3	Elders, muezzin (prayer caller), sheikh (religious tribal leader), rawun (tribal lore-keeper), family heads	+8
4	Nobility: Sayyid (lord), Sitt (lady), Faris (knight), Mu'allim (master), Qadi (judge), Nasquib (viscount), Satrap (Persian ruler of outlying province), Vizier	+14
5	Royalty: Amir (prince), Sultan (king), Mushir (duke), Caliph, Emir	+24

ART

While religious art focuses on *arabesques*—floral designs around calligraphy, in which plants grow according to the laws of geometry rather than nature—secular art frequently depicts images of people and animals. Though many argue the Qur'an forbids this, it does not; rather the silence of the Qur'an on the topic is open to interpretation. Because God is worshipped directly without intercessors, much secular art is non-representational and also works with geometric patterns. Indeed, Islamic calligraphers are revered much as famous painters and sculptors in the West. Besides literature, the other great Islamic art was architecture, particularly of mosques, and engineering. Often engineering projects focus on water, such as water-raising machines, waterwheels, wind and watermills, boat bridges, *qanats* (subterranean aqueducts), cisterns, fountains and icehouses.

FAITH AND THEOLOGY

Islam proclaims there is no deity save God and that Moslems must bear witness that Mohammed is the messenger of God. What does it mean to be a good Moslem? Every Moslem observes the Five Pillars, the practice of which is simplicity itself, yet very demanding. The Five Pillars are: Belief (*Iman*), Worship (*Salat*), Fasting (*Sawm*), Almsgiving (*Zakat*), and Pilgrimage (*Hajj*). In short, one who loves their fellow man and reveres God is considered a good Moslem. Beyond this, however, there are competing views as to what a Moslem is forbidden to do, what a Moslem is encouraged to do, and who can become a Moslem.

Often, as the religion and state are so intertwined, leaders have economic and political motives in declaring one person a Moslem and another a non-Moslem. Moslems are forbidden from killing and fighting with one another, cannot be enslaved, stolen from, lied to or cheated. Thus, someone who intends to bring harm to another has a vested interest in first proving that his enemy has committed blasphemy or otherwise cannot be considered a true Moslem. With so many competing heresies, the once unified faith of Mohammed has become a dangerous political battlefield.

LANGUAGE AND ORAL TRADITION

Literacy is not common in the Islamic Caliphates, though the memories of tribal lore-keepers are astounding. Such *rawun* and other scholars routinely memorize long poetic epics, and the tradition of memorizing the Qur'an falls to those who bear the title *hafiz*. Mohammed himself was illiterate and recited the angel Gabriel's message by heart.

At the same time, the largely illiterate society is surrounded by a multitude of languages. Though Arabic is the dominant trade tongue, numerous languages are spoken at home, in ethnic tribunals, and abroad. Languages one might encounter within the caliphate include Hebrew, Spanish, Latin, Pahlavi (Persian), Egyptian, Tamazight (Berber), Turkish, Hindi, Syrian, Greek, Chinese, Aramaic, and Domari (Gypsy).

As many languages are spoken in the Islamic Caliphates, it is not uncommon for characters to know several. When acquiring a rank in the Language skill, a player may choose for the hero to know two oral languages (being unable to read or write them) rather than being both fluent and literate in a language as normal.

CIVIC SOCIETY

The Islamic Caliphate has an unparalleled social structure based on a culture that values public education and welfare. The institution known as the *waqf* supports a variety of public works, including baths, hospitals, maternity centers, soup kitchens, orphanages, insane asylums, and *madrasahs* (centers of learning). *Maristans*, as hospitals are called, are just starting out, and can only be found in Baghdad. In other large

THE PACT OF UMAR

The Pact of Umar is a body of limitations and privileges entered into treaty between the Moslems and conquered non-Moslems, scribed in 637 by Umar I after the conquest of Christian Syria and Palestine. This pact first extended the concept of *dhimmi*, a "non-Moslem person of the Book" who paid a tax in return for protection and exemption from military service. The *dhimmi* had to observe several taboos:

- They are forbidden from holding public office
- City gates are to be open, and Moslems are given food and lodging for three nights
- Non-Moslem children shall not be taught the Qu'ran nor adopt Moslem customs
- Non-Moslem holy symbols and idols shall not be displayed
- Kinsmen shall be allowed to adopt Islam as their faith if they wish
- Refrain from manifesting their religion publicly or converting anyone to it
- Non-Moslems are outlawed from carrying arms without a license
- Non-Moslems won't take any slave previously owned by a Moslem
- They will not sell wine to Moslems
- Whosoever strikes a Moslem with deliberate intent shall forfeit the protection of this pact

cities, it is more likely the state provides guides for the blind, servants to the crippled, and monetary assistance to lepers. While guilds did not exist per se, many professions and neighborhoods are organized by ethnicity, and a government minister is appointed to oversee each professional trade.

VIEWS ON MAGIC

Magic is viewed with a fair degree of suspicion by the Islamic government, in part because the practice of *sihr* is renounced in the Qur'an, and in part because magic is something the state cannot control. Most educated people in the Caliphate distinguish between pious magic (devoted to healing and warding off evil) and impious sorcery (which involves blasphemous allegiance with the djinn and accruing power).

The state officially treats magic with a "don't ask, don't tell" policy; as long as an adept keeps their magic out of the public eye, the state takes no action against them. The truth is, some of the greatest minds of the time are adepts, and their political clout counters the state's desire for more extreme measures against sorcery.

Blatant use of magic against Moslems, whether in a courtroom, on the battlefield, or across continents, is viewed as treason against the state, and often punished with death or slavery. Rumors abound that the state has found a way to "neuter" an adept's powers, and a push is being made in secretive political circles to introduce this as standard punishment for magical offenders. While magic is uncommon, not a week goes by in cosmopolitan Baghdad without a magical event, such as an adept arriving by flying carpet or a djinn haunting a well. Some spectators gawk at such spectacles, but just as many ward themselves against the evil eye and rush indoors to seek protection. Thus, many adepts have learned to disguise their magic as Islamic mysticism.

It is possible for an adept to disguise a power as reciting the names of God, condemning blasphemy, or some other act of pious devotion. This requires a Difficulty 10 Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) check. If anyone viewing also has Knowledge (Supernatural) or Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy), they may make an opposed check against the adept's check result to see through the trickery.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE CALIPHATE

The Caliphate spans a wide range of lands, centered on Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula, the heart of Islam. It extends west across North Africa and into Europe, eastward to Damascus and Samarkand. Travelers come from even more distant and exotic lands, as far away as India or China.

ARABIA

Arabia, the birthplace of Islam and the heart of the empire, is divided into three regions: The towns bordering the Indian Ocean, the nomadic interior dominated by the Nefud Desert, and the northwestern area around Palestine. Indeed, this is only the beginning of the many political, cultural, and religious divisions that compromise Arabia as a whole. Though the advent of Islam has unified the nation in principal, in actuality it is a constant struggle for the caliph to balance the competing tribes, heresies, and provinces.

AL-ANDALUS

Al-Andalus is a bridge by which the rest of Europe receives the scientific, technological, and philosophical legacy of Baghdad. Enticed by state patronage, many famous scholars and poets are migrating to Al-Andalus, and it is becoming a major rival to the throne in Baghdad. The Emirate of Cordoba was formed by the sole survivor of the Umayyad family massacre, Abd al-Rahman, who managed to escape to North Africa, the common refuge of all who sought to get beyond the reach of the Abbasids, by relying on Bedouin and Moorish tribes.

Following the prophecy of his great uncle that he would restore the family's fortune, Rahman organized a coup against the Abbasid's puppet leader in Iberia. His army was so poor he only had one war-horse and a banner improvised by unwinding a green turban and binding it to the head of a spear. This became the banner of the Umayyads, in stark contrast to the black flags of the Abbasids.

EGYPT

Egypt was predominately Christian when the Arabs conquered it, after defeating the Byzantines. In many ways the Islamic army liberated the Egyptians from Byzantine tyranny. The Egyptian patriarch of the Coptic Church, who had been hiding in fear of the Byzantines executing him for his religious beliefs, was able to come out of hiding under Islamic rule. Mostly, the Egyptians welcomed the Arabs and their religion, and Egyptian soldiers swell the ranks of the Islamic army pushing back the Byzantine Empire.

THE MAGHREB

Encompassing the African coast north of the Sahara and west of the Nile, the Maghreb is centered on present-day Morocco, but includes Algeria, Tunisia, and parts of Libya and Mauritania. Its inhabitants

are Moors of mixed Berber and Arab descent. The Maghreb is haunted by slave traders and the corsairs, plying their despicable trade in the Mediterranean and North Atlantic. Though nominally under Umayyad control, the Maghreb is heavily influenced by the Emirate of Cordoba and a hotbed for heresies, such as the Ibadis. Many parts are lawless and dangerous, and remnants of pagan culture litter the landscape, a reminder of the *Ridda* wars.

PERSIA

Persia, present-day Iran, is home to one of the world's most ancient cultures and the oldest known form of monotheism, Zoroastrianism. Persia's conquest by Islamic armies occurred during a period of great internal dissent. Arabic became the new state language, intermarriages were common, and Islam quickly replaced Zoroastrianism. Yet still the Persians managed to retain their culture and even to expand their political power. When the Abbasids came to power, several Persian families dominated the bureaucracy and most branches of government. Their ties to the Caliph's court allowed Persian culture and science to blossom throughout the empire. Persians are universally acknowledged as great scholars and scientists, possessing unparalleled intellect.

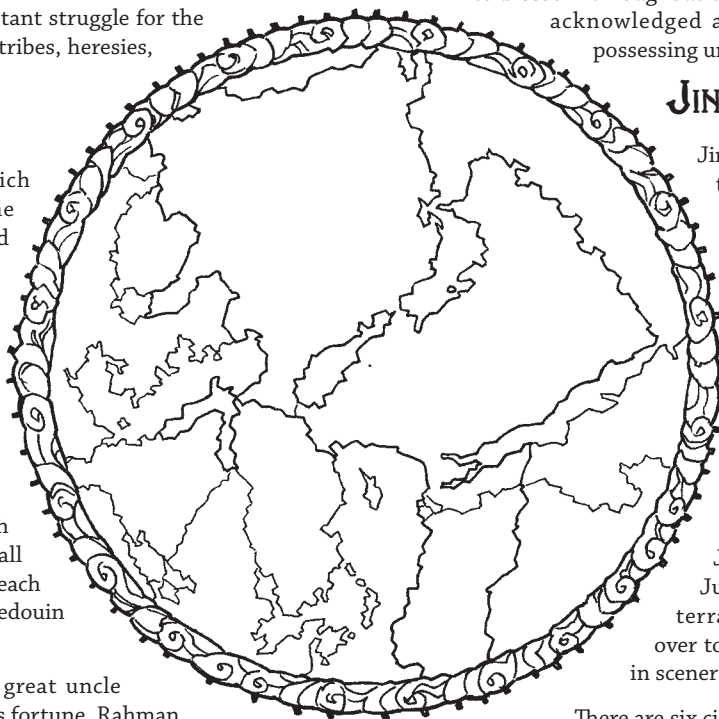
JINNISTAN

Jinnistan is a magical world, home to the djinni, surrounded by emerald mountains called al-Kaf, wherein can be found all manner of mythic creatures. Entering Jinnistan is only possibly through special gates. Such gates might include a fierce sandstorm to reach a tribe of nomadic jann, or a magic carpet that sends one to a library in Jauherabad upon writing in perfect calligraphy the name of the Prophet. Knowledgeable travelers consider "traveling toward Jinnistan" a fifth cardinal direction.

Just like the change from mountain terrain to desert chaparral, crossing over to Jinnistan entails a gradual change in scenery.

There are six cities in Jinnistan. In the Dark Realm lie Jihannan, where the shaitan serve their master Iblis; Ghulistan, a horrifying land where ghuls prey on their slaves; and, at the outskirts, the City of Brass, the fiery home of the ifreet. In Shad-u-Kam, the province of pleasure and delight, are located three splendid cities: Amberabad is fashioned out of amber and is home to the enchanting peri; Jauherabad, City of Jewels, is the celestial realm of the jinn; and The City Beneath the Waves is said to lie within a great opalescent oyster shell and is home to sea creatures, governed by the marid.

Jinnistan appears much as the normal world, but its colors are more vivid, dreams are nearly indistinguishable from reality, and everything is permeated with magic. It feels like the most foreign land one has ever traveled to, with unique customs, a different language, and foreign laws. One minute, a traveler will be conversing with a fox, and later down the road he will meet a fictional character from a story he told to the sultan when he was in a tight fix. Faith, sheer luck, good deeds, the ability to solve riddles, charm and performing skill, humility, and open-mindedness are the key to succeeding in Jinnistan. Returning home can be very difficult; selfish djinn may fall in love with and try to detain travelers, and djinn allied with one's enemies may seek to imprison or deceive.



PLAYER'S GUIDE

This section covers all players need to know of the world of *Caliphate Nights*; in particular, new traits they can give their heroes, and new uses for Conviction associated with the qualities of Arabian heroes and their tales.

ARCHETYPES

Aladdin? A lazy and incompetent boy! Sinbad? A merchant down on his luck. Shahrazad? A spoiled palace brat. Heroes and heroines in *Caliphate Nights* often begin as common people who, through extraordinary circumstances, become legends. Very few devote their lives to adventure. Most are more concerned with making a living, raising their family, spending time with their friends, ensuring a good future for their children, praying in a mosque, and becoming a respected member of society.

Strong archetypes dominate the Arabian Adventure. In part, these are products of Hollywood, but more often they are iconic heroes who are a blend of both Arabian legend and Islamic history. During character creation, each player may choose an archetype in addition to their character's role; an archetype indicates not just what the character is capable of, but their role in society. However, it isn't necessary to choose an archetype. Players with a strong grasp of the genre should be encouraged to come up with their own unique heroes.

The Vehicular Combat feat from Chapter 3 is referred to as Mounted Combat in *Caliphate Nights*, since vehicles other than animals (and the occasional flying carpet) are unknown in this setting.

Feats marked with an asterisk (*) are found in the **New Feats** section following this one.

ADEPT ARCHETYPES

ASTROLOGER (ADEPT)

Some claim man is bound to the present, but the astrologer knows better, seeing the influences of the past, the call of the future, and the invisible connection between all things. While astrology can be profitable, the Islamic government tends to frown on the practice, advocating faith in God. Ironically, many astrologers are devout, knowing they will never be omniscient....

Feats: Astrometry*, Powers (Nature Reading, Scrying, Visions)

Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (earth sciences), Knowledge (supernatural), Knowledge (theology and philosophy)

DERVISH (ADEPT)

An initiate in Sufi mysticism, the dervish walks a sacred path called *tariqah*, experiencing union with God while one is alive. Sufism is the surrender to God over and over again, and the embrace of one's consciousness as gifts and manifestations of God. Some dervishes retreat from society to practice asceticism, though just as many become political activists. Dervishes give up many worldly belongings, often becoming ascetics, in their quest for gnosis.

Feats: Dedicated, Quotable Wit*, Powers (Bliss, Body Control),

Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Perform (dance), Survival

ELEMENTALIST (ADEPT)

Referring to themselves with grand titles—"brother of the north wind" or "lady of the ocean waves"—elementalists are colorful characters,



both elitist and shamanic. Though elementalists favor wind-wracked mountaintops and other desolate areas, they are often found in the desert tribes and cities of Arabia serving princes and sheikhs while seeking out mystical knowledge.

Feats: Powers (Elemental Blast, Water Shaping, Wind Finesse*, Wind Shaping)

Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (earth sciences), Knowledge (supernatural), Survival

HAKIMA (ADEPT)

Those who perceive the truth are revered in Arabian society. In legend, this is often a young woman of deep faith called *hakima*, though men can be equally talented truth-seers, taking the title *hakim*. Often, the *hakima* live in small villages where they serve as wise women.

Feats: Subtle Powers, Powers (Heart Reading, True Seeing*, Truth-Reading)

Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (supernatural), Notice, Sense Motive

SAINT (ADEPT)

According to dominant Moslem belief, Mohammed was the last of the true prophets (*rasul*), the last to be given knowledge of a holy text from the mouth of God. However, there are still many saints (both Moslem and non-Moslem), those who live lives of utter religious devotion and can perform miracles. In fact, people worship at shrines of saints almost as often as they do in mosques. A saint always bears a message from God, often driving the saint's adventures.

Feats: True Faith, Powers (Baraka*, Cure, Cure Disease)

Skills: Concentration, Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Sense Motive, Survival



SHA'IR (ADEPT)

The *sha'ir* summons forth djinn to do her bidding, often for accumulating personal power, but sometimes for benevolent or even pious reasons. They are often feared figures in the Islamic Caliphates, bartering with spirits for mysterious reasons. Many *sha'ir* praise Suleiman bin Daoud as the first of their kind, and consider their art to be of great religious significance.

Feats: Apprehend the Djinn's Hand*, Powers (Djinni Summoning*, Second Sight, Ward)

Skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (supernatural), Sense Motive, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy)

EXPERT ARCHETYPES

BARBER (EXPERT)

The roguish barber is a tradition in Arabian folktales. Part storyteller, part thief, and part lunatic, the barber is only telling the truth about half the adventures he has been on, but who would know which are lies? Equally comfortable in the company of beggars and kings, the barber cuts through all social boundaries to ply his trade.

Feats: Fascinate, Grooming*, Well-Informed, Universal Appeal*

Skills: Bluff, Disguise, Gather Information, Knowledge (popular culture), Knowledge (streetwise), Medicine, Perform (oratory), Sense Motive

BEGGAR-THIEF (EXPERT)

Beggars are at the bottom rung of society, yet everyone thinks twice before harming them. It might be the Caliph in disguise after all! Or what if it is the legendary Beggar King? Overall, most beggars fade into the background, eking out a living on scraps and charity. Above all else, the beggar dreams of making it big some time and never having to beg again.

Feats: Blend In*, Contacts, On the Run, Plausible Deniability*

Skills: Bluff, Climb, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise), Notice, Sleight of Hand, Stealth

EXPLORER (EXPERT)

"A stranger is an ignorant man," goes the proverb, and the explorer is no stranger to the lands of Arabia. From the Maghreb to Hindustan, the explorer wishes to see the world and has the means to do it. A fearless master of travel, the explorer is at home captaining a ship, trading horses for camels in the desert, finding hidden cities—all these are the explorer's birthright. It is not enough to hear or read about the fascinating lands at the edges of the Islamic Caliphates and beyond; the explorer must see it for herself!

Feats: Endurance, Etiquette*, Safe Passage*, Trailblazer

Skills: Climb, Diplomacy, Knowledge (earth sciences), Notice, Ride, Search, Survival, Swim

HAKAWATI (EXPERT)

The professional storyteller, or *hakawati*, performs in tea houses, marketplaces, and at caravanserais when traveling. Storytellers are of very low social status and belong to the *Banu Sasan* caste. Storytellers are not known for being true to the original source, and often twist a story to make it more appealing to the crowds. The storyteller is not a historian by any stretch of the imagination.

Feats: Affect the Masses*, Eidetic Memory, Fascinate, Master Storyteller*

Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (popular culture), Knowledge (streetwise), Notice, Perform (oratory), Perform (stringed instruments)

ARMOR IN CALIPHATE NIGHTS

In the burning deserts, armor is impractical. When wearing armor, add its bonus to the Difficulty of all Fortitude checks made to resist heat. In addition, as heavy armor is not made within the Islamic Caliphate, the Armor Training feat provides proficiency in both light and medium armor types (although heavy armor still requires an additional feat). Needless to say, the Canny Defense feat from **Chapter 3** is quite common amongst heroes in *Caliphate Nights*.

MERCHANT (EXPERT)

Straddling the fence of the law, the merchant walks a delicate balance between usurer and pioneer. A skilled merchant can sell water to a man in a fountain. Merchants motivate exploration in their search for new markets, and if they spread enlightenment at the same time, so much the better.

Feats: An Offer You Can't Refuse*, Connected, Contacts, Dishonest Law*

Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (business), Knowledge (earth sciences), Knowledge (streetwise), Notice, Sense Motive

MULLAH (EXPERT)

Learned theologian, teacher, scholar, legal advocate—a mullah is all these things. Holding a respected position in his community, the mullah often becomes involved in the Islamic clerical hierarchy, the *ulama*, and is considered an authority on temporal and divine law.

Feats: Informed Citizen*, Honest Law*, Inspire, Well-Informed

Skills: Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (civics), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Notice, Perform (oratory), Sense Motive

WARRIOR ARCHETYPES

BEDOUIIN (WARRIOR)

The horseback champion of the tribes is often the bane of “civilized” folk, and when the bedouin rider is at the forefront of a raid, people rush inside their tents to protect their goods. However, just as quickly as the raid ends, the bedouin rider becomes a fearless guide and ally in the desert, offering stranded guests coffee, and teaching them the virtues of a desert life at the mercy of God.

Feats: Horse Savvy*, Mounted Combat, Move-by Action, Weapon Training

Skills: Handle Animal, Intimidate, Ride, Survival

CORSAIR (WARRIOR)

Masters of the Mediterranean, corsairs are a mixed lot of privateers and pirates. While some scoundrels follow the strictest code of honor, others are willing to sell anyone into slavery for a bit of coin. A daring combatant and legend on the high seas, the corsair is often a hunted criminal, and just as often a dashing hero.

Feats: Corsair Savvy*, Navigation*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Training

Skills: Acrobatics, Climb, Jump, Knowledge (earth sciences)

DUELIST (WARRIOR)

When a *diyya*, or blood debt, must be paid, it often falls on the shoulders of the duelist to pay it. The duelist may be a sword-saint, only accepting honorable duels and fighting for those who can't defend themselves, or be little better than a mercenary assassin, charging a stiff fee while playing both sides of the fence. In either case, the duelist thrives on finesse in a battle of one-on-one where the better warrior takes all. Often the duelist views him or her self as a pacifying presence that keeps the blood debts from escalating into violent feuds.

Feats: Issue Challenge*, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Training

Skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand

GHAZI (WARRIOR)

Literally, the term *ghazi* means “forgiver”, and that is often the role a ghazi takes, tempering formidable violence with mercy and absolution. This holy warrior is charged with defending the Islamic faith from foreign nations. Ironically, the ghazi are often the first to oppose the militant expansion of corrupt caliphs. The ghazi is a thoughtful warrior who chooses battle as a last resort.

Feats: Armor Training, Merciful Combatant*, Rage, Weapon Training

Skills: Intimidate, Knowledge (tactics), Knowledge (theology and philosophy), Ride

GUARD (WARRIOR)

Often, guards in Mythic Arabia belong to prestigious military or police groups appointed to guard the palace, the city, a harem, or act as bodyguard to a noble. At the bottom rung are the caravan guards who are often youth who hardly know how to swing a sword. The guard is a loyal professional who will go down fighting if it means his or her charge stays safe.

Feats: Armor Training, Defensive Attack, Eye for Treachery*, Weapon Training

Skills: Concentration, Notice, Search, Sense Motive

MAMLUK (WARRIOR)

While the officers of the Islamic army might be nobles, the cavalry are slaves from across the caliphate and beyond. The mamluks have their own culture, one in which a person of any social status can rise to great fame, eventually earning freedom. Mamluks belong to specific hierarchies, identifying their leader and allegiance with flags, emblazoned shields, even tattoos.

Feats: Armor Training, Military Rank*, Mounted Combat, Weapon Training

Skills: Intimidate, Knowledge (civics), Knowledge (tactics), Ride

NEW FEATS

This section details feats unique to *Caliphate Nights* and suited for heroes in Arabian adventures. Narrators may use these feats in other games and settings as desired, although they are intended for an Arabian style. The feats are presented in the same format as those in **Chapter 3**.

AFFECT THE MASSES (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: FASCINATE, INSPIRE, OR TAUNT, TRAINED IN PERFORM (ORATORY)

You may affect any people in earshot when using Fascinate, Inspire or Taunt. You need only take this feat once; as soon as you acquire one of the three prerequisite feats (Fascinate, Inspire, or Taunt), you gain the benefits of Affect the Masses with it.



AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN DIPLOMACY

On a successful Diplomacy check to haggle with another, you can convince them to part with something they ordinarily would never sell. You must succeed by 5 or more for favored or exceptional items, and by 10 or more for heirlooms or treasured gifts. The base price for the item is 50% higher than normal, but haggling can bring this down.

APPREHEND THE DJINNI'S HAND (ADEPT)

You can recognize the magic of the djinni, and even sense the results of a djinn's granted wish automatically upon seeing them. In addition, you always get to make an opposed Notice or Sense Motive check to detect a disguised, invisible, or shapechanged djinn. Upon meeting a djinn (and realizing it's a djinn), you may make a Difficulty 15 Knowledge (supernatural) check to identify its tribe and master (if any).

ASTROMETRY (ADEPT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN KNOWLEDGE (SUPERNATURAL) AND KNOWLEDGE (EARTH SCIENCES)

Practiced by the Magi of Persia, astrometry is the study of the position and movements of the stars. It is used to determine the distance between locations, and to locate places. You may use Knowledge (Astrology) in new ways.

The familiarity modifiers for powers (see **Chapter 4**) also apply to astrometry. Use an average of the familiarity modifiers of the two locations. For example, if an astrologer in his hometown (present +0) is trying to determine where a fortress described in a book is (slightly familiar +25), the average would be +12.

Difficulty Task

10	Determine how far it is from where you are now to another place
15	Determine the timing of a celestial event or location of a star
15	Determine the direction of travel get to a place from where you are now
20	Determine how far it is between any two points
25	Determine the direction of travel to get from any place to another

BLEND IN (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: BANU SASAN (STATION 1) OR LOWER

You look like others of your station, and pursuers find it hard to distinguish you.

You may make an untrained Disguise check, without any preparation, when among others of your station (and wearing clothing of your station). You do not suffer any penalty for not having makeup or props. In addition, anyone who fails their Notice check to find you by 5 or more has chosen the wrong person. At the Narrator's option, others of equal or lesser station aren't affected by this feat.

CORSAIR SAVVY (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN KNOWLEDGE (EARTH SCIENCES)

You may use your Knowledge (earth sciences) skill for new purposes when near a coast. You can find a hidden cove, allowing you to use your Knowledge as per the Stealth skill to keep your entire ship hidden from others, opposed by the Notice check of the captain following you. You can also lure those following you (or drive those you're pursuing) onto reef or a shoal, allowing you to use Knowledge as per the Bluff skill, opposed by the Sense Motive of the captain following you. When in fog, rain, or darkness you can use your Knowledge skill as the Stealth skill to sneak up on another ship.

DISHONEST LAW (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN KNOWLEDGE (CIVICS)

You know how to manipulate the *Sharia*, the code of Quranic law, to your own advantage. You may use Knowledge (civics) to perform cunning legal tricks.

Difficulty Task

10	Avoid close inspection within city (not palace) or avoid police harassment
10	Get around the <i>riba</i> —the law preventing the charging of interest
15	Get minor charges dropped or find a biased <i>qadi</i> to try a case
15	Waive minor taxes and fees
20	Create delays (paperwork mismanaged, trials put off)
20	Move wealth between cities or even countries (e.g. from Baghdad to Cordoba), smuggle goods, or convert illicit goods to silver standard.
25	Find a loophole in the <i>sharia</i> or make paperwork disappear. Such a loophole may only be used once and may incite the faithful.
25	Secretly channel money into a "heretical" business or cause
*	Create a contract with loose ends.
*	Create or detect a forged legal document.

* Opposed Skill Check. This is opposed by anyone with Craft (caligraphy) or someone with the Dishonest or Honest Law feat on a Knowledge (civics) check. You must be literate and have Craft (caligraphy) to forge a document.

ETIQUETTE (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN DIPLOMACY

You never need to make a Diplomacy check to avoid *faux pas* when dealing with foreign customs. In addition, you may spend a Conviction point to undo any damage from a friend's social blunder the round

after it occurs by deprecating your friend and showering your host with flowery praise.

EYE FOR TREACHERY (WARRIOR)

You have a penchant for identifying the telltale signs of betrayal. You gain a +2 bonus on all checks to detect concealed weapons and poison. You are entitled to a Search check to notice concealed weapons as if you were actively looking, so long as you are within 60 feet of the person and you can see them (though you do not gain the +2 bonus when searching this way).

GROOMING (EXPERT)

Your skills at making others look their best are appreciated by all, though rumors circulate that you're quite mad with your razor. All the better to keep your clientele still. You may groom another given an hour. Make an Expert level check against a Difficulty of 10 + your subject's Charisma. For every 5 points by which you succeed, your subject gains +1 Charisma until the next sunrise (minimum +1 Charisma).

Special: If you don't have razors, scissors, and perfumes, you take a -4 penalty on your grooming check.

HONEST LAW (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: LITERACY, TRAINED IN KNOWLEDGE (CIVICS)

You are well versed in the letter and spirit of the *Sharia*, the code of Islamic law, and you're committed to using such knowledge for the good of your community and nation.

Difficulty	Task
10	Prompt reply for minor request (application, license, permit, visa)
10	Knowing which official to approach and the best time
15	Find an unbiased <i>qadi</i> to try a case
15	Get backup for a specific legal task. Typically this includes a number of 1st level characters equal to your Expert level who are assembled in one day. You must be able to communicate with a mosque or honest government official to get backup. Using backup negligently or manipulating them for extra-legal activities is a criminal offense.
20	Get access to normally secret government documents if they in some way pertain to your current case.
*	Design a contract with no loose ends.
*	Track ill-gotten wealth. Defend/prosecute a court case heard by a council (not a dictator).
*	Detect a forged legal document (see Dishonest Law).

* Opposed Skill Check.

HORSE SAVVY (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN HANDLE ANIMAL

You have an eye for a good horse. Just by looking at a horse you immediately know its breed, gender, and one trait it possesses (e.g. balker, biter, willing). By making a Difficulty 15 Handle Animal check and spending 10 minutes with the horse, you can learn any other traits it possesses. You can pick out an individual horse you know from a herd with ease. You can estimate a horse's market price if you know all its traits. Also, you can train a horse to either mimic or conceal a trait (not both at once) on a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. Lastly, you know how to breed horses and can selectively breed in or out certain traits on a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. You gain a +2 or greater bonus to breed horses if you are in possession of a royal stud book.

INFORMED CITIZEN (EXPERT)

You have a broad knowledge of institutions. You may use any skill you are trained in to identify organizations connected to that skill (e.g. Knowledge (tactics) could be used to learn about a military company, while Craft (weapons) could be used to learn about an arms smuggling outfit). When doing so, you use Intelligence instead of the normal ability modifier for the skill. If the organization is exotic or complex increase the Difficulty by +5, and if the group is highly secretive increase the Difficulty by +10.

Difficulty Information

10	The beliefs and open agendas of the organization, as well as its symbol.
15	Headquarters, sphere of influence, and recent leadership.
20	Public supporters and enemies, and basic history.
25	Sects and leadership, secret supporters and enemies, hidden agendas.

ISSUE CHALLENGE (WARRIOR)

You may issue a challenge to a person who is either present or within the same city or province as you. If they are not physically present, they hear about the challenge within a week. Failing to respond to the challenge or outright refusing results in the loss of a Reputation point. You may only issue a challenge against a given opponent once; subsequent challenges against the same opponent require you to spend a Conviction point. Challenges must be spaced at least one month apart. More frequent uses of this feat cause *you* to lose a Reputation point!

MASTER STORYTELLER (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: FASCINATE, TRAINED IN PERFORM (ORATORY)

Your stories are always enchanting, well crafted, and leave the audience hungry for more. When using a Conviction point to frame a story (see **Conviction** later in this chapter), you gain a bonus to your story modifier equal to half your Expert level. You never suffer a penalty for not finishing your story within a certain time limit, provided you can end with a cliffhanger. In addition, you are so expressive that you can use Fascinate, Inspire, Suggest, and Taunt even with those who don't understand the language you are speaking in.

MERCIFUL COMBATANT (WARRIOR)

Though you may kill, you do so quickly and humanely, offering to spare the lives of those you fight if they surrender. This mercy radiates about you and others cannot help but to see the earnestness in your offer. Those who surrender to you will not take further action against you. If you (or an ally) ever harm or kill someone who has surrendered to you, lose the benefit of this feat.

MILITARY RANK (WARRIOR)

You belong to an organized military unit. Though you must obey the commands of higher-ranking officers, you can issue commands to those soldiers beneath you in rank. In general, if a member of your unit outranks you by 3 levels or more, their orders are to be obeyed immediately and without question. Of course, this applies to those beneath you in the chain of command too. You may also requisition military equipment from your unit. When doing so, treat your Wealth as 4 points higher for the purpose of Wealth checks made to requisition arms, armor, supplies, camels and horses. During a requisition check, add the cost of all the items together—don't make a check for each item individually. You are expected to return all requisitioned equipment when you are finished. If you repeatedly destroy equipment, your rights to requisition will be revoked.

NAVIGATION (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN KNOWLEDGE (EARTH SCIENCES)

You know how to use a captain's *diwan* (log and ocean map) to navigate across the ocean without a compass. When traveling at sea, you may use your Knowledge (earth sciences) skill to get from one point to another via the most reasonable course. The Difficulty is determined by how far you are traveling. If you fail, the journey takes twice as long as anticipated as unfavorable winds and currents slow you down. If you fail by more than 5, you travel halfway to your destination at which point you become lost. You may make a Difficulty 20 Knowledge (earth sciences) check to regain your path once every 12 hours.

Length of Trip	Difficulty
Short (a day or two)	15
Moderate (up to a week)	20
Long (several weeks)	25
Extreme (more than a month)	30

PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: BELONG TO THE BANU SASAN (STATION 1)

No one ever suspects you due to your low status in the community. Whenever the authorities or elders look for a culprit, or question people involved in a situation, you are always the last person they think of. You may claim, "I am but a simple beggar." This is always good enough for them unless they have testimony or evidence of your wrongdoing.

QUOTABLE WIT (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: INTELLIGENCE +2 (SECULAR) OR WISDOM +2 (PIOUS)

You are an endless source of witty repartee and proverbs. When you say a witty one-liner, you may spend a Conviction point to designate it as a piece of "quotable wit." A piece of quotable wit grants a +2 bonus to any related situation in which it is used. A maximum of three pieces of quotable wit may be used in any game session per character with this feat. Likewise, each piece of quotable wit may only be used once, and only those who heard its original use may benefit. Your enemies may not hi-jack your quotable wit; only allies may benefit.

Example: *Rafiqi the rogue, facing a band of midget robbers quips, "My mother always told me bad things come in small packages." His player designates this as quotable wit, spending a point of Conviction. Rafiqi gains a +2 bonus to rolls against the dwarves that take advantage of their size. Later, Rafiqi's betrothed Arasteh acquires a magical box with an ominous skull on the front. Tempted (a magical charm effect) to open it she muses: "My mother always told me bad things come in small packages." Arasteh gets +2 on her Will save to resist opening the box.*

SAFE PASSAGE (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITE: TRAINED IN SURVIVAL

When traveling, you and anyone traveling with you get along more easily. You may perform any one of the following actions without having to reduce your movement (i.e. you may move at your full speed).

- Gett along in the wild by foraging and hunting (Survival)
- Protect yourselves from dangerous weather (Survival)
- Travel in darkness or fog
- Avoid encounters with dangerous animals or enemy patrols

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time, you may perform an additional action while traveling without reducing your speed.

TRUE FAITH (GENERAL)

You are a sincere believer in your faith. You may take 10 on Will saves to resist any suggestion or mind control attempt to make you act against your faith. In addition you may spend a Conviction point to call upon your faith in the following ways:

- Automatically succeed your saving throw against blasphemous magic.
- Repel all vice-aligned djinni, demons, and undead for a scene as per an automatically successful use of the Protection power.
- Identify an angel, a person with True Faith, or a holy person with Baraka.
- A subject instantly recognizes you as a person of true faith.

If you ever break a major tenet of your faith, you lose all benefits of this feat till you atone; however, you permanently lose one way of calling upon your faith (e.g. the ability to repel evil beings) even after atoning, determined by the Narrator.

UNIVERSAL APPEAL (EXPERT)

Used to working with people from every station in society, from beggars to princes, you do not suffer the normal penalties of interacting with those outside your station, though you do retain the benefits (intimidating those beneath you, bluffing those above you). However, if you persist in using your social station to your advantage in this way, you may lose this feat at the Narrator's discretion.

WIND FINESSE (ADEPT)

PREREQUISITE: ELEMENTAL BLAST, WIND SHAPING.

You have developed your control over the wind into a true art, allowing you to create multiple wind speeds and directions in the same area, as well as localized wind effects with specific targets. You may perform new techniques of finesse when using your Wind Shaping power. The listed Difficulties assume light winds are prevalent, though in stronger winds the Difficulty decreases. Some examples include, but aren't limited to:

Catch the Falling: You may use winds to create a cushion of wind, allowing someone or something that is falling to land safely. You must generate a Windstorm to do this for Small targets, Hurricane-Force Wind for Medium targets, and a Tornado for Large targets. You may also attempt to reverse the direction of their fall, hurling them up into the sky. This requires that you beat the Difficulty of your Wind Shaping check by 5. Performing this action out of turn increases the Difficulty by +5. Catching multiple objects/creatures increases the Difficulty by +2 per additional object/creature.

Dust Devil (Difficulty 35): You can create a miniature tornado which you can direct to attack your opponents. You can bring one dust devil into creation by creating Hurricane-Force Winds. For every 5 points by which you exceed the Difficulty to create Hurricane-Force Winds, you may create another dust devil. The target must succeed a Reflex or Fortitude save to avoid or resist an attacking dust devil. If the target fails their save, they are sucked within and whirled around for 1-4 rounds, taking +4 damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage may apply). While the subject is within the dust devil, you may move them up to 100 feet per round trapped. If you do not maintain the dust devils or fail a Concentration check due to distraction, they move about randomly (and are liable to suck up friends or bystanders).

Flying (Difficulty 25 for one person): You may create winds beneath a person which allow them to fly. You must create Severe Winds to propel one person, a Windstorm to propel six people, and a Hurricane to propel a dozen people. Only Suleiman was able to command more powerful winds, able to transport his entire entourage. You gain a +2 bonus on the power check if you use a suitably lightweight object with a large surface area, such as a kite or a carpet. This is a maintained use of Wind Shaping.

Protective Whirlwind (Difficulty 30): You can create a wall of rotating wind around an area or person that protects any within from ranged fire. You must create a Windstorm in order to establish the protective whirlwind. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and everyone within the whirlwind gains concealment against melee attacks and partial concealment against siege weapons. Adepts using Elemental Strike must beat you in an opposed Wind Shaping check. This is a maintained use of Wind Shaping.

Volley of Arrows (Difficulty 30): Though you cannot manipulate an object, you may cause projectiles, such as arrows or sling stones to hurtle through the air. By creating a Windstorm, you can cause up to a dozen arrows to fire. These arrows travel in a general direction, but cannot be given a specific target; thus, a Medium target may only be hit by one arrow, a Large target by 2, a Huge target by 3, and so on, though these tactics can be devastating against armies. Make a normal ranged attack check, using your Intelligence in place of Dexterity, with a -4 penalty due to the difficulty in controlling such a fine object with mighty winds. The arrows deal their normal damage. For every 5 points by which you exceed the Difficulty to create a Windstorm, you may double the amount of arrows you can unleash.

If you fail your Wind Shaping check by 5 or more, you lose control of the winds. The winds may be unleashed on the entire area, or a more specific Narrator-determined backlash might occur.

POWERS

The following powers are in addition to those described in **Chapter 4** and particularly suit the *Caliphate Nights* setting. The Narrator may permit these powers in other settings, as desired.

BARAKA

PREREQUISITE: TRUE FAITH

You exude supernatural energy such that anyone coming in contact with you is blessed by it. This blessing confers a +1 bonus to one type of roll (e.g. professional skill checks, saving throws, Diplomacy checks, attack rolls, and so forth) for a number of hours equal to your level. The Difficulty is determined by the current state of sin of the recipient. For every 5 points by which the check exceeds the Difficulty, you may increase the bonus by +1 or extend the bonus to another kind of roll. If you fail the check by 5 or more, no blessing is conferred and the subject has nightmares about you and is fraught with doubt. A person who is already under the effect of your blessing cannot be blessed again.

In order to use this power, you must adhere to the strictest of religious codes, taking vows of poverty, celibacy, humility, righteous conduct, and so forth. Should you sin, you immediately lose access to this power until you confess and atone.

Difficulty	Task
10	A person with very few sins (e.g. monk or devout scholar)
20	A person of moderate sin (e.g. most peasants and rulers)
35	A great sinner (e.g. executioner or tyrant)

Time: Standard action.

DJINNI SUMMONING

FATIGUING

You can summon a djinni, one of the Arabian spirits born of smokeless flame. This requires a power check with a Difficulty of 10 + twice the djinni's level. If you know a djinni personally, you may call

upon it by name; otherwise, you must specify which djinni house you are summoning a djinn from. You may only summon one djinni at a time.

Upon being summoned, the djinn may or may not do your bidding, depending upon what you're offering, your past relationship, and the situation. The djinn, if it accepts your offer, may stay as long as it pleases.

Fails by...	Result
1-5	No result other than a shimmering curtain of light, a bit of supernatural laughter, crackling sound of flame, or other harmless side effect.
6-10	A mischievous djinn of the opposite type you intended to summon answers your call. It may disguise itself and attempt to trick you, or it may go about wrecking havoc, in which case it's your responsibility to un-summon the djinni. Alternately, the djinn is free to do as it pleases.
11+	You have offended a noble djinn who may send a djinn to punish you, curse you, throw your ship off course, drop you in the middle of the desert, or conjure you to a djinni court to demand an explanation.

Time: Full round action (at least).

TRUE SEEING

FATIGUING

You sense the truth in what you see, piercing concealment and magic. You make a power check based on what you are attempting to see through.

Difficulty	Task
10	See through partial concealment (no miss chance). See through a mirage.
15	See a concealed object like a hidden weapon or a secret door.
20	See through total concealment (no miss chance).
*	See through an illusion, see something that's invisible, or determine the true form of something that's shapeshifted.

* Requires an opposed Power check

Time: Move action.



CONVICTION

There are two new uses for Conviction in *Caliphate Nights*, which surrender certain aspects of narrative control and give the players more ability to directly affect the storyline. These new uses are entirely optional, though including them in the game will enhance the themes of the *Nights*.

FRAMING

A player can spend a Conviction point to initiate a framed story. When this occurs, the player describes the basics of what he or she would like to explore (e.g. How did the Sultan come by his magic dove?). Immediately, the entire group adopts new roles as appropriate and plays out the side story with the player who spent the Conviction point acting as Narrator.

In general, the new story should last no more than half an hour of actual game time, or some other agreed upon time. A framed story can serve several purposes, and many stories serve more than one purpose: (1) Leverage to convince someone to avoid (or take) a certain course of action. (2) Provide history of some situation, and impart knowledge of some truth. (3) Improve the listener's attitude toward the storyteller. (4) Comic relief.

A framed story provides a bonus on the appropriate skill check. Often this will be Diplomacy, though Bluff, Intimidate, and Perform (oratory) are also appropriate. Arabian sorcerers are known for weaving magic into their stories. A framed story can be used in conjunction with another character's skill, such as distracting a sultan while a thief smuggles horses out of the royal stables. Of course, a poorly told story can result in a penalty to the check instead.

POSITIVE STORY ELEMENTS (+1 EACH)

- Story caters to the audience or listener very well, such as playing off of a weakness (e.g. for flattery), an interest (e.g. horses), or an ideal (e.g. slavery is never justified).
- Entire gaming group decides the storyteller did a wonderful job.
- Story involves a cunning poem, joke, riddle, double entendre, song, etc.
- The listener is favorably inclined toward the storyteller (e.g. you're both in a foreign land but are of the same nationality).
- Story has another related story framed within it which elucidates the main purpose of the story. No more than three stories can be framed within a story before the listener loses track (+1 for each story).
- The storyteller handles unlikely actions by a player character in stride, remarkably tying them into a seamless whole.
- The storyteller makes a reasonable excuse for how they came to hear the story and from whose lips it was passed down to them.
- The storyteller presents proof that corroborates their story as true (e.g. "Look at the wall today, touch the brick; is it not burnt and laid with gold?").

NEGATIVE STORY ELEMENTS (−1 EACH)

- Story insults or offends the listener in some way
- The listener is hostile or unfriendly toward the storyteller (e.g. you've lied to him before, you stole from his stall, you secretly married his beloved).
- Entire gaming group decides the framed story rambled and didn't achieve its purpose
- Storyteller is given a time limit, and doesn't wrap the story up in time.
- Story involves an outright lie or something seemingly impossible (−1 for white lies that most wouldn't recognize, −2 for big lies that are hard to miss, −3 for over-the-top, fantastical, or ridiculous exaggerations)

Example: Rafiqi's Tale of the Princess

Jarett's character Rafiqi is found after having broken into the prince's harem. Hoping to avoid a painful death, Rafiqi spins a quick yarn to explain his presence, and decides he will play off the prince's prodigious lust for beautiful women.

Jarett decides to spend a Conviction point to relate a story about the beauty of a princess from Rafiqi's homeland. Rafiqi intends to convince the prince to spare his life and pursue this princess. Jarett temporarily becomes Narrator, and all the other players take on roles of various characters in the princess' story: wicked djinn, jealous step-mother, high-brow suitor, and her true love.

After 30 minutes of role-playing, Jarett decides the tale is complete, and hands the story back to the Narrator. Rafiqi's attempt receives the following modifiers: +1 (caters to prince's lust for foreign women), −1 (prince is hostile), +1 (gaming group felt Jarett did a great job), +1 (the story involved a name-guessing game with a djinn), +1 (Rafiqi claims to have heard the story through his uncle, who serves in the princess' court). The net bonus Rafiqi receives on his Bluff check is +3. Since it is a believable bluff, the prince rolls an opposed Sense Motive check. Rafiqi wins the check, but only barely.

The Narrator decides the prince has decided to investigate the truth of Rafiqi's word and see this princess for himself. In the meantime, Rafiqi is to be held captive in the palace. If he should be caught in a lie, the prince promises Rafiqi that he will permanently initiate him as a harem guard—as a eunuch.

WEAVING

Some stories bloom from one mind, and others are woven from many threads. Weaving give a player the chance to influence what their character learns when rolling a Gather Information, Knowledge, Notice, Search, Sense Motive, Track, or power check. Instead of making the check as normal, the player simply declares whatever she expects the truth to be and rolls a d20, consulting the weaving table below to determine who narrates what happens. Depending on the result of this roll, the player may or may not have to spend Conviction. The Narrator always decides whether a given story allows players to use Weaving. For example, a Narrator who has painstakingly prepared an adventure might forbid Weaving altogether.

Result	Player Narrates	Narrator Narrates	Spend Conviction?
1	–	No, and...	No
2-4	–	No	No
5-10	But...	No	1 Conviction point
11-16	Yes	But...	1 Conviction point
17-19	Yes	–	1 Conviction point
20	Yes, and...	–	2 Conviction points

"Yes" means the truth is as the player expected it to be.

"No" means the truth is other than what the player expected.

"But" means there's a complication or caveat that changes the situation.

"And" means that the failure or success is truly disastrous or spectacular.

Example: Rafiqi is listening to a group of guards conversing on the other side of a door. Jarett (Rafiqi's player) gets a great idea and attempts Weaving; he wants the guards to be arguing about the impending wedding of the sultan and Arasteh. Jarett makes a weaving check and rolls a 12; thus, Jarett narrates the "Yes" and his Narrator the "But." The guards are split regarding the wedding, half believing their pay will be reduced with the sultan fawning over his new wife, and half truly impressed with the sultan's bride to be... but, the guards decide to spy on the sultan to learn more, pushing through the door Rafiqi hides behind!

NARRATOR'S GUIDE



Fortunate are you, O Narrator! Yours is the duty to help spin the tales of the *Caliphate Nights* that will entertain and amaze your friends! But do not be concerned, as this section tells you the things you need to know to help bring these tales to life before their very eyes. Read on, and learn...

STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES

There are several techniques a Narrator needs to know to successfully capture the right feel to the *Caliphate Nights* setting. After all, the Arabian world is the birthplace of some of the greatest storytelling. The Narrator carries on an ancient tradition, albeit in modern times.

BEGINNING AT THE END

A common trick in many of the *Nights*' stories is for a storyteller to relate a story in flashback, narrating the events that led up to the present situation (wondrous, terrible, or double-edged). It is easier for a Narrator to do this, though an adventurous group may allow a different player to provide the framework for the adventure. Perhaps the position is shared on a rotating basis. The only caveat is that whatever is described in the "end scene" *must* come to pass. For example, a player might narrate: "Sit down, weary traveler, and I shall reveal to you how I came to possess this palace and what prevents me from leaving." Thus, sometime during the adventures, it will be revealed how the character came into ownership of the palace and why he or she can't leave.

COMEDIC COINCIDENCE

The *Nights* relies on several types of comedy, especially incredible coincidences and unlikely heroes. One of the great things about the

Arabian Adventure genre is no coincidence is too great. If the three princesses living together welcome a beggar into their home, then blessed be God! And if they also welcome three traveling mystics, then thanks and praise to God! And if later that night, the Caliph in disguise knocks on their door and is invited in, then all hail the Merciful and Compassionate! Coincidence is the Narrator's ally and a powerful tool for comedy. When the Narrator portrays characters affected by coincidence, it is best to role-play their response with great exaggeration and flourish.

FRAMED STORIES

The stories in the *Nights* are like pieces of a puzzle consisting of interlocking arguments and examples, each proving a point while also providing entertainment. This process of hiding stories within stories is known as "framing." A Narrator can use framing in a variety of ways. It can be used when a character relates some piece of their (or another's) past. Alternately, framing can be used by one character to convince another to avoid or take a certain course of action. When initiating a framed story, decide whether to simply tell the tale (if it's short), or have the players take on the roles of minor characters and run it as a mini-adventure (if it's a major element to explaining the current story). Of course, players can frame a story too (see **Conviction** in this chapter).

OPENING LINES

Upon beginning a game, the Narrator (or another player) may wish to focus the group by speaking an opening line. The first moments of a game set the tempo and level of involvement players can expect. Good opening lines create suspense from the very beginning. Some often used opening lines for the *Nights* are:



- It was from a long chain of tellers that this tale did reach my ears. (Then proceed to list a few of these, perhaps foreshadowing a character the heroes will meet)
- These things did or did not occur in the time of Caliph Haroun al-Rashid, the Pious Tyrant.
- Hear my story, for it is a wonder; there is laughter in its tale and there is wailing. You will see there is no blame, nor suspicion, upon me.

PACING

Persian storytellers employ a technique known as *naqqali*, speeding up their pacing when a story is in a period of heightened tension, often accompanied by a drum. Using this idea, the Narrator is not bound to a constant flow of time in the game. There are three different paces a Narrator can have the story move at, like a rider changing the pace of a horse.

FLYING PACE

The story takes on an epic feel as days, weeks, months, or even years go by in a flash. Everything in this scene is poetically described, but is also truncated; a year of labor in salt mines becomes a paragraph describing “the salt in my wound, the price of my Caliph’s betrayal.” This is appropriate when dealing with warfare, birth of an infant, maturity of a child, a prophecy, epic travel, a character’s training, or a repetitive action.

MIXED PACE

Also known as “montage” storytelling, a story moving at *mixed pace* deals with an extended period of time, such as a period of several hours or

several days. There are moments of inaction glossed over in poetry as in *flying pace*, but the interesting scenes are played out as in *easy pace*. This is appropriate for investigative footwork, minor travel, entertaining guests, endurance horse racing, court hearings, etc.

EASY PACE

The scene is described blow by blow, and the flow of time approximates the real world. Ironically, *easy pace* often deals with the most challenging moments in the characters’ lives; rather, it is easy for the player to slip into this mode of playing. Often this scene corresponds to traditional *naqqali* as the moment of heightened tension or drama. This is appropriate for sword fights, furious chases, riddle contests, pleading your case before a Caliph, wooing your beloved, and such.

SETTING THE MOOD

If your group likes to change the mood of their playing environment, you might make the gaming area feel like an Arabian palace or a Bedouin’s tent. Serve traditional Middle-Eastern food. Roll out a carpet and have the group sit on cushions on the floor. Play Turkish, Egyptian, Arabian, Persian, or Indian music in the background. Also, have a colorful piece of cloth handy. This can be used to simulate a veil, allowing more communication to be done through body language and the eyes—very appropriate when in a mosque or among orthodox or conservative communities. Another option is to simulate the hand language of Arabian pearl merchants. This involves placing the cloth over the hands of the merchant (who would buy the pearls) and the pearl boat captain (who’d sell them). The merchant would grab the captain’s fingers, with each finger representing a different amount, starting at the pinky, which is one *dinari*, and ending at the thumb, which is 10,000.

ANTAGONISTS

The world of *Caliphate Nights* offers a wide variety of opponents for heroes to face.

THE ABSTRACT

Often the *Nights* include abstract antagonists, such as mistaken identity, a vow of secrecy, a moral dilemma, or a problematic reputation. For example, a Narrator character might have a secret compelling them to perform a strange action every night. The characters, becoming suspicious or curious, may feel compelled to investigate, though the truth could curse them to the same fate as the Narrator character.

ASSASSINS

The Old Man in the Mountains is the most entrenched enemy the Islamic state has come up against. His tactics are despicable, yet his motives are outwardly honorable. Assassins are great Narrator characters to run as enemies, for nearly all of them have been brainwashed by the Old Man and his Tajir occultists. They desperately want to return to the “paradise” they witnessed before and have nearly been driven mad with longing. While they come in differing shades of fanaticism, all assassins are dangerous opponents who have trained extensively. They are cunning and silent combatants, yet they are also silver-tongued missionaries who can make a faithful man question his most cherished values. If an assassin is successful in their mission, no one knows an assassin was

RACIAL AND SEXUAL ELEMENTS

The original texts of the *Nights* are the transcriptions of folklore with biases against many races and against women. The translations by westerners did nothing to improve any of these biases, and possibly made them worse. Fortunately, we do not live in these times. Racial and sexual relations in the game are more intelligent and civilized than in the historical setting (and possibly more so than in the world today).

involved until the target is dead, driven mad, ruined, kidnapped, or has abandoned their position.

DJINNI

When characters come into conflict with Djinni it will typically be one of the non-Moslem types, such as Ghuls, Ifreeti, Shaitan, and wicked Marids. Rarely, a good Jinn or Jann is compelled to serve a wicked master, though such imprisonment seldom lasts long. Interaction with djinni emphasizes their unique world view and magical nature, even more so if taking place in Jinnistan. Encounters with djinn can quickly dominate a game, so it is best to keep them to a minimum to maintain their aura of power and mystery. When running djinni, remember that they are often haughty and quick to take offense, indignant that man has been made to reign over them.

HERETICS

While most Christians and Jews have signed to the Pact of Umar (or some regional variant), many of the conquered tribes have no such benefit, nor do the pagan followers of Uzza or the Zoroastrians. Anyone dealing with djinni is a ripe target for the Caliph's inquisitors. During times of holy war, the term "heretic" expands to include anyone fighting against the Islamic Caliphates. Heresy often hits close to home, for many in Arabian society have relatives (living or deceased) who can be considered heretics, and there are numerous "heresies" within the Islamic faith itself.

THE STATE

While the advent of a unified nation has brought about great cultural change, there are many ugly sides to the state's policies. Racial violence, over-taxation of the poor, slavery, mistreatment of women, marginalization of tribespeople, persecution of minority religions, and inhumane punishment are just some of the abuses the state commits on a daily basis. If the heroes are more politically minded, they may attempt to fight against these practices of the state, either as exemplars of Islam, ambassadors and officials, or rebels loyal to pagan or even assassin ideals. While the state is immensely powerful, it has trouble mobilizing quickly to deal with a small threat like a band of heroes. In addition, certain bureaucrats may be sympathetic to the characters' cause and provide them with covert aid.

NOBILITY & ROYALTY

Not every conflict with a merchant-prince or caliph's vizier brings to bear the full force of the Islamic Caliphates. In fact, most nobles and royalty want their plans to be kept quiet and will work covertly against anyone opposing them. Wealthy nobles may seek to acquire slaves through illegal methods, sabotage their rival's fleet, steal a royal stud breeding book from a sheikh, or plan a coup against the royalty. Royalty may go mad and terrorize their citizens, conscript people unwillingly for their personal vendetta against a rival, seek to punish a character for a perceived offense, or engage in hedonistic behavior which endangers their family's good name or their slaves. Indeed, there are numerous rivalries and noble houses, not to mention exiled or hiding royal families, in Mythic Arabia.

PIRATES & RAIDERS

The pirates of the Barbary Coast in Maghreb are among the most feared in the world. They are a mixed lot, ranging from corsairs with a code of honor that forbids wanton killing and taking slaves, to ruthless cutthroats who delight in carnage. A rare few are even politically motivated, such as pirates who attack slave ships to free the slaves, or who declare loyalty to the Emir of Al-Andalus. Raiders are equally compelling foes, riding hundreds of miles to perform a raid; when they descend upon a town or caravan, it is said to be like a wave of locusts.



20 ADVENTURE IDEAS

1. A mad sultan makes petty and arbitrary rules, watching the populace of his capital with a spyglass from his palace window. His guards arrest anyone he sees breaking his rules.
2. The characters unknowingly commit a mortal sin according to djinni law, and they are cursed to grant a powerful djinni 3 wishes.
3. A local ruler sends the characters on a missionary expedition to a town of bull-worshippers. Upon arriving, the characters find that an "enlightened" zealot threw a bull's head in the town's well. Now nobody can drink the water unless they convert to Islam. With the characters' arrival, they may be implicated.
4. One of the Jinn claims to have been contacted by the same angel which spoke to his tribe's progenitor, Al-Yazid, in the Sacred Mountains of Asir. As the Jinn begins to announce a new meeting, the Ifreet surely seek to stop him. And when the characters accidentally help the Jinn, he asks them to help in his quest.
5. The characters enter a New Year's competition to recover the most wondrous pearl from the depths of the ocean. A rival competitor hires pirates to thwart the characters, but the pirates have their own agenda.
6. A local ruler has received the components for a flying device. At least that's what the ruler thinks it is. In fact, the device is a trap from a rival. The ruler asks for the characters' help putting the device together.
7. The characters' foolish liege attacks a well-fortified city and is taken captive by a terrible ifreet warlord. If they do not rescue him, they must do something about the vacant throne...before somebody else does.
8. A local qadi is soon to meet with his future wife, who he has heard terrible stories about. Fearing the worst, he asks the

characters to pretend to be him (and his entourage) and receive the noblewoman.

9. One of the characters is conned by a camel merchant who sells them “the finest specimen under the sun.” Later, it turns out the merchant was a fraud who used cheap tricks to conceal the camel’s flaws. Apparently the merchant has done this before and it’s high time somebody stopped him.
10. One of the characters happens to look just like a famous thief. Bumping into the character in the bazaar while disguised with a veil, the thief decides to use this amazing circumstance to his or her advantage. The thief’s bumbling sidekick is confused by the mix-up, thinking the character is his master.
11. Three brothers were cursed as animals by a witch. The two older brothers became a jackal and bear, while the younger became a rooster. The younger brother has been picked on by his siblings his whole life, and this is just fuel to the flame. He asks the characters to help set up a situation in which a rooster can prove himself better than either a jackal or a bear.
12. An old witch is losing her touch. She used to be a master of cursing, but her powers seem to be fading. She hires the characters to get her really angry so that she’ll have the motivation she once had in her youth.
13. One of the character’s relatives finds a baby floating in a basket on the river. The relative doesn’t have time for a baby and asks (or sets up) the characters to become its surrogate parents temporarily.
14. A young prince receives the call from God, and, abandoning his fiancé on the wedding night, joins a community of Sufis. The princess is convinced he is testing her faith, and decides to sneak into the Sufi’s mountain retreat to prove her love. She needs the characters’ help to do it.
15. A noble’s daughter is captured by the assassins who intend to indoctrinate her. There is a captured assassin awaiting punishment

in the sultan’s dungeon, but dare they rely on a treacherous ally to rescue the daughter?

16. A mamluk flees from battle and returns to hide with his family. Though the rest of the tribe consider him a coward and want to turn him over to his fellow slave-soldiers, his mother and father refuse to surrender their only son.
17. Certain hadith collections refer to *suras* that do not exist in the Qur’an. What if a young nomad finds one of these missing *suras*? When the find is authenticated, how does Islamic society react? What is the *sura*’s message?
18. The characters must protect a horse and its rider during an endurance race from Baghdad to Cairo. Along the way they learn the rider’s true purpose is to rescue his captured family. Do they help him even if it puts his life in danger?
19. Having been wrongly accused of stealing a sultan’s prized jewel which he was to present to his beloved, the characters are given two weeks to find and return the jewel or it’s off with their heads.
20. The characters are hired by a prince in love with a foreign princess to woo his beloved on his behalf. However, the princess is actually a disguised beggar. Do they woo her on behalf of the prince regardless, or reveal the truth to him?

DJINNI

Djinn are creatures born from smokeless fire, thousands of years before the birth of humanity. According to pagan belief, they have always existed as nature spirits, while followers of Islam believe God created them to test humanity. When not summoned by an adept, they dwell in Jinnistan or roam the wilds.

“Djinn” is a subtype of outsider (see **Creature Types** in **Chapter 8**). There are six subtypes of djinn, which determine the creature’s traits, including ability modifiers, bonus feats, and special traits (in addition to those of the outsider type). Djinn, as outsiders, cannot be raised from the dead.

Djinn advance either with additional levels in the outsider type or by assuming a heroic role, typically adept or warrior (although there are some cunning djinn experts as well). Djinn start off with 6 points to distribute amongst their abilities, the same as heroes, modified according to their subtype. The default djinn abilities (before modification) are: Str +1, Dex +1, Con +1, Int +1, Wis +1, Cha +1.

Traits: All djinn have the following traits.

- **Darkvision** out to 60 feet.
- **Damage Reduction:** Djinn have damage reduction +4 overcome by supernatural weapons as well as either copper (for djinn allied with Suleiman and the Almighty), or iron (for djinn allied with Iblis and the Devil). Pagan djinn, or djinn who have not made their choice yet, are harmed by some unique thing. Typically this is a seemingly harmless action, like throwing a plum pit near the djinn. A djinn’s natural weapons are considered supernatural for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.
- **Immunity:** All djinn are immune to disease and poison. Individual subtypes are often immune to other effects as well.
- **Night Vision:** Djinn all have Night Vision as a bonus feat.
- **Incorporeal Form:** As a standard action, the djinn can become incorporeal (gaining all the benefits and limitations of the incorporeal subtype). In this form it is also invisible, although dogs and people with the Second Sight power or True Faith feat can make a Difficulty 25 Notice check to sense something is out of place when an invisible djinn is nearby. Note that ghuls do not have this trait.
- **Powers:** All djinn have innate supernatural powers; they wield these powers as an adept of their total level.



RAFIQI LOOKED THE IFREET SQUARE IN THE EYE. “ANYTHING?” IT NODDED. “VERY WELL, I WISH TO BE HERALDED IN SONG ACROSS THE LAND!”

THE RECENTLY FREED IFREET CACKLED GLEEFULLY. “ALAS, I AM FORBIDDEN FROM DOING SO BY MY SULTANA, A CROWN OF FLAMES UPON HER HEAD. THE LAST SUCH WISH I GRANTED WAS TO AN UNTALENTED HACK. HAVE YOU HEARD OF PRINCE ASFHAN?”

“YOU MEAN THE SONG ABOUT ‘THE FOOL WHO WASTED HIS WISH’? ER... YOU DID THAT?” THE IFREET NODDED. RAFIQI SWALLOWED. HE HAD BEEN WARNED BY ARASTEHA ABOUT PLAYING WISHING GAMES WITH IFREET, BUT WHEN IT WAS RIGHT THERE BEFORE HIM, HOW COULD HE RESIST? HE MUST! AT LEAST IF HE STILL HOPED TO MARRY ARASTEHA. “VERY WELL! IFREET, I WISH FOR YOU TO GRANT MY WISH TO MY WORST ENEMY—THE CORSAIR JAYLA AL-MIDJBANI!”

FLAMES BURST FORTH AS THE IFREET VANISHED. “SEEING AND HEARING, I OBEY!”

GHUL

Ghul are wholly corrupted, eaters of human flesh. Though they possess a shrewd intelligence, it is only used to satiate their wicked appetites and dark lusts. Consumed by their passions, Ghul stalk places of death and desolate wastelands, attempting to fool travelers by disguising themselves as lost pilgrims or women in distress. Thankfully, they are infinitely superstitious, a trait human adepts are wise to take advantage of.

Features: Ghul have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution.
- **Feats:** Favored Opponent (humans).
- **Powers:** Dominate, Drain Vitality, Self-Shaping (vulture)
- **Traits:** Scent

IFREET

Ifreet, like the fire from which they were born, are angry, moody, and prone to violence. Their palaces are burning citadels where humans serve as their slaves. Driven to seek power in the temporal sphere, Ifreet often interact with demons. It is believed that most of the djinn imprisoned by Suleiman were Ifreet.

Features: Ifreet have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, +2 Charisma
- **Feats:** Favored Opponent (Jann or Jinn), Rage
- **Powers:** Elemental Blast, Fire Shaping, Self-Shaping (human, dog, serpent, scorpion)
- **Traits:** Immunity (fire), Incorporeal Form

JANN

Jann are mischievous spirits as comfortable in the shade of an oasis as they are in the roaring sandstorm. Marked by an individualistic streak rivaled only by the Marid, the Jann are nomads wandering the caravan routes, often serving as messengers and traders amongst the other djinn tribes. More often than not, they side with humanity, but often pranks go hand-in-hand with their aid.

Features: Jann have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +4 Constitution, +2 Charisma
- **Feats:** Fascinate, Track, Trailblazer
- **Powers:** Earth Shaping, Elemental Blast, Self-Shaping (camel)
- **Traits:** Immunity (earth, weather), Incorporeal Form

JINN

Jinn are consummate scholars and theologians who enjoy the company of mortals, and are known to invite (or kidnap) prominent human sages to their palaces where the wind never stops blowing. Masters of the desert wind, the Jinn are staunch allies of humanity, and terrible foes of the three rebellious tribes.

Features: Jinn have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +4 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, +4 Charisma
- **Feats:** Dedicated, Rage, True Faith
- **Powers:** Elemental Blast, Self-Shaping (eagle, human, lion), Wind Shaping
- **Traits:** Immunity (wind), Incorporeal Form

MARID

Marid are a small and haughty tribe, but also the oldest, whose records go back before the dawn of man. They are alternately fascinated by mortals and want nothing to do with them. Most Marid live near the coast, as they are masters of the weather. Sailors speak of being taken to cities beneath the sea by Marid.

Features: Marid have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, +6 Charisma
- **Feats:** Fascinate, Suggest
- **Powers:** Elemental Blast, Self-Shaping (horse, porpoise, wild elder tree), Water Shaping, Weather Shaping
- **Traits:** Amphibious, Immunity (weather), Incorporeal Form

SHAITAN

Shaitan are masters of deception who delight in manipulating both mortals and other djinn to their own ends. Their arrogance, however, is their downfall. Used to having human worshippers in the past, Shaitan are furious at their current state of subservience, and plot to overthrow the Caliphate.

Features: Shaitan have the following features.

- **Ability Modifiers:** +2 Strength, +4 Intelligence, +4 Charisma
- **Feats:** Imbue Item
- **Powers:** Heart Shaping, Illusion, Self-Shaping (camel, human, jackal)
- **Traits:** Immunity (mind-influencing effects), Incorporeal Form

WISH GRANTING

Djinn are famed for their ability to grant wishes to mortals, although not all djinn have an unlimited to do so. Those that can grant wishes use a unique supernatural power, called Wish Granting, available only to djinn. This power is acquired like any other (costing one of the djinn’s available feats).

Djinn lacking the Wish Granting power may still be bound to fulfill the wishes of a mortal master, but must do so within the limits of the other powers at the creature’s command. Djinn with Wish Granting are potentially capable of granting any wish.

The djinn knows its inextricable bond to humanity and either seeks to pursue its enlightenment through servitude or else to trick mortals, taking advantage of their greed for its own benefit. The djinn can use any single power when fulfilling the wishes of a mortal. The wisher must be sincere and spend a Conviction point to enforce the wish upon the djinn.

MAKING A WISH

Djinn, especially the malicious ifreet and shaitan, are well known for twisting the intent of a wish, fulfilling it in an unexpected way. Before making a wish, it's always wise to get someone who knows the law to run over any holes in your contract. Also, not all djinn are capable of summoning great palaces from nowhere; in fact, very few have mastered the art of granting wishes to such a high degree. Even among its practitioners, there are far more djinni who view granting wishes to mortals as a tool to manipulate and deceive than as a lesson in wisdom and obedience.

STEP 1: WORDING THE WISH

When dealing with a djinn, it's important to remember that it will (in every possibly way) seek to justify freeing itself from bondage on the pretext that its freedom is needed to carry out the wish. With this one exception, few djinni capriciously twist wishes. In general, a djinn will provide an easy answer, such as giving information about where the object of the wish lies and how to get there. Alternately, a djinn might transport you to the object of your wish, or transport what you wished for to you. To what extent a djinn exerts itself depends greatly upon its willingness.

STEP 2: DETERMINING THE DJINN'S WILLINGNESS

When requesting a wish of a djinni one has never met, use the modifiers that follow. In rare cases, the djinn automatically fulfills the spirit of the wish. Rarer still are those cases where the djinn automatically twists the letter of the wish to its advantage. The circumstances (the wisher, what is wished for, and the djinn's relationship to both) determine how a djinn responds.

<i>The Wisher</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Freed the djinn from bondage	+10
Commanded or disrespected the djinn	-10
Has harmed a djinn of the same tribe	-2
Has killed a djinn of the same tribe	-5
Is of the same religion or allegiance	+2
Is of an opposed religion or allegiance	-2
Addresses the djinn properly and well	+2
Has good past relations with the djinn	+5
Offers a suitable gift	+2
Draws up an effective contract	+5
Successfully intimidates the djinn	+2
Fails to intimidate the djinn	-10
Promises a large future reward	+2

<i>The Wish</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Calls on power the djinn has	+2
Strikes the djinn as fun or amusing	+2
Is overly wordy or complicated	-2
Is for something abstract (e.g. authority, beauty, peace)	-2
Attempts to change the past	-2
Involves a short period of servitude	+2
Involves a long period of servitude	-2
Is morally repugnant to the djinn	-5
Involves danger to the djinn	-2

<i>The Djinn</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Ifreet or shaitan	-10
A noble lord or lady	-5

STEP 3: THE FRUITS OF THE WISH

Finally, apply the modifier to the character's opposed Diplomacy check with the djinn and compare their results to the table below.

<i>Check</i>	<i>Result</i>
Succeeds	Djinn adheres to the spirit of the wish
Fails by 1-5	Djinn agrees but with a caveat
Fails by 6-10	Djinn slightly twists the intention of the wish
Fails by 11+	Djinn totally distorts the wish, or the wisher has asked for the one thing which automatically grants the djinn its freedom!

WORDS OF CLOSING

Armed with this edifying book, go boldly forth, O noble and virtuous Narrator! Keep the story near to your heart, and always remember what the poet says:

YOU ARE THE SOURCE, BESTOWING WISDOM
FROM YOUR BOUNDLESS STORE,

O LORD OF GRACE AND ALL MUNIFICENCE,

O TREASURE HOUSE OF KNOWLEDGE, WIT,
AND SENSE!



LUX AETERNUM



For king, country, or corporation, heroes can take up their sword and pistol and set sail into the void. The terraformed planets of the home system offer adventure and intrigue aplenty, while the New Worlds hold fame and fortune for those bold enough to lay claim. Whether you are a treasure hunter exploring ancient ruins, a swashbuckling starship captain fighting pirates in the cold depths of space, or an alien mystic seeking to become one with the galactic consciousness, your destiny will be forged in this crucible far from home.

Lux Aeternum is a cinematic science fiction setting that strives to evoke the romanticized spirit of the 17th Century Age of Exploration—a time of sweeping changes, social upheaval, and limitless opportunity. Action, drama, and grand adventure are key elements to any tale told in this setting. The absence of faster-than-light travel limits the playing field to a handful of star systems and allows this area to be fleshed out with a level of detail and complexity not possible in a galaxy-spanning saga.

The story begins a couple hundred years from now in an area of space known as Nexus Sector. Here, humankind has been given a second chance—an opportunity to dwell in peace side by side with advanced

LUX AETERNUM

alien cultures. But things have gone astray and the dream is fading. This new Eden has become a crucible in which the mettle of these chosen races shall be sorely tested.

Diversity is another vital element in this setting. Levels of technology and sophistication can vary drastically across the

face of a single continent, let alone planet. Swords are as common as guns, and starship combat is more often resolved with boarding parties than impersonal shoot-outs. There are vastly different alien cultures, brought here over the course of centuries, and each has its own vision of the future. Yet the most heated cultural strife is not between different alien species, but between disparate factions of a single race.

Science struggles with religion to define the seemingly mystical powers that can be called upon in this new and wondrous environment. Pre-Victorian humans, established here centuries ago and flourishing, clash with refugees from the war-torn, cyber dystopia of 23rd Century Earth. Sentient androids struggle to become more than just synthetic slaves. Nations posture and prepare to go to war over the resource-laden worlds of a new star system. And beyond the edge of civilized space, darkness gathers—a vast but unknown power with evil intent.

THE STORY THUS FAR

By the 23rd Century, Earth has become a cesspool of pollution and nuclear ruin. While the remaining nations and megacorporations fight over the scraps of “Terra Mortis,” humanity claws its way across the solar system in search of territory, resources, and any advantage it can find.

Onto this stage of violence and despair came the Xyr—an ancient alien race that promised to deliver humankind from the brink of extinction. Those who would set aside their hatreds, fears, and technologies of death were invited to join in a grand experiment—to join with other intelligent species and humans who had gone ahead centuries before. Together an alliance would be forged—a union of civilizations from scattered worlds—a fraternity of species that would one day inherit the galaxy.

To carry humankind to this new Eden, the Xyr brought forth a massive interstellar vessel. The seventh of its kind, this ark took aboard a select million that yearned to abandon the cinders of Terra Mortis and take the decade-long journey towards humanity’s second chance.

But midway between the old home of humanity and the new, something went terribly wrong. The Xyr vanished from the ark. What exactly happened is a matter of speculation and heated debate. Many claim some human faction smuggled weapons aboard Ark VII and tried to take control; some suspect that a dark elder race, a rival of the Xyr, may have attacked. Still others are convinced it is all part of the aliens’ grand scheme to test the mettle of their Chosen. Whatever the reason—the inhabitants of the ark were left to fend for themselves, eventually arriving in Nexus Sector (their new home) without guidance, assistance, or supervision.

Three decades have passed and the Xyr have not returned, though many of their automated guardians still go about their appointed duties. Several factions from Earth survived the crossing intact, and have taken root in Nexus Sector—working alongside those who have dwelt here for centuries, both alien and human.

Kingdoms and corporations work to establish their own visions of a perfect society, and the Terra Novan Theocracy has become strong—delving deep into the seemingly mystical abilities revealed in this new environment. Some hold to the precepts of peace that were so strongly put forth by the ancient alien race, though just as many have broken their vows and fallen back into the habits of avarice and aggressive expansion.

Now conflict is brewing among nations both old and new. Centuries of peace crumble before the inevitability of war. A new trove of uncharted worlds has been discovered around a star at the edge of the Nexus Sector. These worlds are seemingly pristine and home to vast natural resources—resources desperately needed by the home systems if they are to survive the coming conflict. But voyages to the New Worlds are long and perilous, and dark things lurk at the edge of space—unnamed horrors just realizing that the Xyr no longer protect Nexus Sector or its children.

A “union of civilizations” seems a long way off, but the dream is not yet wholly forgotten. Many opportunities, and dangers, lie ahead. It will take brave heroes, intrepid explorers, and steadfast leaders to make the dream a reality.

OVERVIEW

This presentation begins by discussing some of the key elements of the *Lux Aeternum* setting. The playable races are discussed next, followed by an outline of the myriad worlds and nations of Nexus Sector. Larger issues follow, providing more depth and a look at some of the forces at work behind the scenes. We then present some of the equipment unique to the setting, and conclude with the setting-specific rules and game mechanics gathered in one location for easy reference.

FLAVOR

The tone of adventures set in *Lux Aeternum* is meant to be cinematic and action-oriented. Think *Three Musketeers* or *Pirates of the Caribbean* with aliens, starships, and mystical powers. Court intrigue and political machinations abound, but so does breath-taking adventure and

exploration of the unknown. The setting is rife with the potential for moral dilemmas, tests of character, and cultural conflict. Virtue is an honorable path, but not the only one available. *Lux Aeternum* should be the stage for heroic exploits, death-defying battles, and character-driven roleplaying for those who so desire. There should be feats of swashbuckling and chivalry with a dash of cybertech and mysticism thrown in for flare. Diversity is key and options abound, yet one theme remains constant—high drama and fast, cinematic action.

THE CRUCIBLE

“Crucible” is what the residents of Nexus Sector have taken to calling their home since the disappearance of the Xyr, for it seems that in this forge, the worthy shall be remade while the unworthy burn.

Nexus Sector is a grouping of four star systems in close proximity. Two of these (Unity and Chrysalis) contain the “civilized” worlds. The others (E’lan and Pyrrhus) are the distant frontier, home to unimagined opportunity and danger.

THE ARS LUMINA

In *Lux Aeternum*, there is something indefinable but powerful that arises from the interaction of sentient minds. As a pattern of photons can make a color and a complex arrangement of color can make a picture or a work of art, so can thoughts form sentience and a complex pattern of sentience form a greater thing. This higher order meta-consciousness is called the Lux Aeternum (roughly “Light Eternal”) and the study of it is called the Ars Lumina or Illuminated Art. It appears to prove life after death, allows the summoning of tremendous elemental forces, and may eventually yield the secret of faster-than-light travel. As such, it plays an important role in the setting and serves as a source of divine mysticism, sorcery, and advanced science (depending on who you ask).

THE XYR

These mysterious benefactors are an ancient race, masters of both “normal” science and the Ars Lumina. This is, in fact, exactly what makes them an “elder” race, for it has allowed them to evolve beyond the physical. No one knows what a Xyr looks like. They speak directly into the mind and usually interact only through wisp-like minions. These “wraiths” appear as bright points of light (when they wish to appear at all) and have powerful psionic abilities, but no real sentience or will of their own.

The Xyr are also responsible for the construction of Nexus Sector. They created a multitude of habitable worlds in the star systems orbiting the Maelstrom singularity. Over the millennia, they have sought out lesser sentient races to bring to this haven. Here these “Chosen” are instructed to live in peace and cooperation—working towards they day when they too will ascend to the next plateau of consciousness.

Without faster-than-light travel (which seems possible only for ascended races), most civilizations would form, rise, and fall without ever encountering alien life. Even with thousands of such cultures in the galaxy, the distance between the stars is just too great. Another real purpose of Nexus System may be just to bring potentially compatible races together, as much as to help them flourish. One might note that the current Chosen are very similar in regards to their environmental requirements and intelligence.

THE ACCORD

The Accord is a tradition of peace that outlaws certain weapons—those that kill indiscriminately.



The people brought here by the Xyr were expected to live in peace, focusing their efforts on bettering themselves and their society, while they learned about other species and moved towards an understanding of the Lux Aeternum. The Xyr were adamant that technologies capable of genocide not proliferate within Nexus Sector.

Towards this end, they have created guardians to seek out and eradicate those who create or use such forbidden technologies (including nuclear, anti-matter and biological weapons). The Xyr themselves are masters of gravitic technology and have given irreplaceable components to the

Chosen so they may have the power they need, and ships to cross the void, without the potential for easy weapons, rampant pollution, and resource depletion.

The long-standing tradition of peaceful coexistence has also given rise to the Prohibition Against Collateral Damage. This doctrine severely limits personal weapons that could harm an unintended target. Ranged weapons are taboo and considered cowardly by many. So it is that swords have become more “civilized” and popular than guns—though in the chaotic times of recent years, this preference is shifting.

THE CHOSEN

The Chosen races are species that were selected by the Xyr to come to Nexus Sector and inhabit the worlds prepared millennia before. Over the centuries, the Xyr have sought out many young civilizations and brought groups here to settle and live in peace. Many of the races brought here long ago are no longer present. What happened to these precursors is a mystery, but currently there are four chosen races inhabiting the sector: humans, Draugmorre, Kyryk, and V’la.

This section describes the Chosen races and cultures of Nexus Sector. Each description ends with a set of common personality traits, usable for choosing virtues and vices for characters in a *Lux Aeternum* game.

FOUNDERS

The humans brought to Nexus Sector 500 years ago founded the cities on Terra Nova and the Theocracy that today rules the planet and a large part of the system.

CULTURE & HISTORY

100,000 European and Ottoman humans were secretly (and voluntarily) taken from plague-ridden Europe and put into stasis aboard Ark V in 1350 AD. Another 40,000 from Europe, the Americas, and the Ottoman Empire were brought aboard between 1400 AD and 1700 AD, and then the Ark returned to Nexus Sector. The Xyr gave these humans guidance and an Earth-like world to settle. The colonists named their world Terra Nova, for “New Earth”, and set to building a new society.

The teachings of the Xyr regarding the Lux Aeternum appeared to prove the existence of both a soul and an afterlife as well as the possibility of an omnipotent consciousness watching over all. These revelations caused many religions to revise their collective dogma and form the Unified Church of the Divine Truth (more commonly known as the Unified Terran Church). This establishment later formed the basis of the Terra Novan Theocracy, which currently rules much of the Chrysalis star system. It should be noted there is archeological evidence of pre-Aztec settlements on some worlds, but none of their people remain. It seems many cultures, both human and alien, have been brought to Nexus Sector over the millennia. Whether they moved on or perished is unknown.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Founders were European and Ottoman, and the gene pool has mixed thoroughly in the intervening centuries. The usual dress is a baroque Elizabethan style with Middle Eastern and high-tech elements added in.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Explorer, adventurous, adaptable, artistic, devout, architects

NEWCOMERS

The recent human refugees from 2200 AD are commonly called “Newcomers.” Genetically identical to the Founders, they differ radically in philosophy and culture.

CULTURE & HISTORY

These people came from the polluted, war-torn wasteland of Earth and the Sol system. They followed the promise of a new Eden and were abandoned by their benefactors. While some have stayed the course of peace, many have fallen back into their traditions of paranoia, greed, and ruthless expansion (if they don’t claim it, a rival will). Many of the Newcomers held atheistic views before coming here, and many view the power of the Lux Aeternum with a scientific eye—seeking to formulate and quantify what the Theocrats take on faith. This is another source of friction between the two groups.

The Newcomers don’t have a home world in Nexus Sector. They are instead scattered across Chrysalis system and beyond. Many have taken to the asteroid fields and other deep-space habitats. They rely heavily on technology, with cyberwear and Synthetic or robotic servants being common. One thing both types of human have in common is their desire to explore and travel the void. Only the Draugmorre seem to really share this ambition, and they have more a spirit of hunting than exploration.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Ethnically, just about all parts of old Earth, often referred to as Terra Mortis (“Dead Earth”) are represented among the Newcomers. They

RACES OF THE CRUCIBLE

Race	Typical Size	Life Span	Comfortable Temperature	Geographic Niche
Human	6’	100 years	72°F	Surface (structures)
Synthetic	6’	Indefinite	0°F to 120°F	Surface (structures)
Draugmorre	7’	80 years	85°F	Sky (floating cities)
Kyryk	4’ then 8’	40+10 years	45°F	Subterranean (caves) or Arctic
V’la	5’	400 years	60°F liquid	Ocean (drifting groups)
E’lanari	3’	60 years	75°F	Surface (vegetation)
Xyr	Incorporeal	Infinite	NA	NA
Kor’Diel	Incorporeal	Infinite	NA	NA

dress in a wide variety of fashions with denim, chrome, and rubber prevailing. Function over fashion is the rule of thumb, and they are used to grungy, durable, clothes.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Greedy, paranoid, ambitious, explorer, envious, bitter, arrogant, tech savvy.

SYNTHETICS

The Synthetics are androids, humanoid robots built as slave labor and war fodder, and are considered property. The technology for their construction came with the Newcomers; there were no sentient non-organic machines in Nexus Sector before thirty years ago. Most are built in Tokoshima or at facilities in the al'Ghazali Expanse. The Brood of Steel is also experimenting with soldier models. There are both large and small androids (derisively called manikins & minikins) and a lot of variance in quality and appearance.

Note there are also "bots," non-humanoid, non-sentient, robotic machines built for specific purposes. Common examples include cleaning-bots, tank-bots, and so forth. They can look like just about anything, from microscopic nanobots to massive automated installations. Bots are not an option for player characters.

CULTURE & HISTORY

It is traditional to only give humanoid constructs sentience, leaving bots as "dumb machines." Only sentients are a player character option as they are the only ones with a real personality or the capacity for free will. Their personalities may be programmed, but the code can evolve, or be reprogrammed, over time. A Synthetic hero would likely be the property of another character. Escaped, or even freed, Synthetics are also possible, though rare. Regardless, most humans treat a Synthetic as an object, and few are comfortable thinking of them as self-aware beings.

The Xyr cautioned against bringing Synthetic life to Nexus Sector. Perhaps they felt humans were not ready for the responsibility, or perhaps they foresaw the Kor'Diel threat. Despite the warnings, several corporations and syndicates started production at first opportunity. In recent years, it has been discovered that Kor'Diel minions can take over Synthetics (much like Xyr wraiths can possess living creatures). Shanghaied androids have been used to spy and commit terrorist atrocities. The resulting fear has led to an increase in prejudice against artificial beings throughout Chrysalis System.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Androids rarely look fully human, though they can be made that way at considerable expense. It is customary for sentient machines to be bipedal. They can be anywhere from 3 feet to 7 feet tall and do not usually wear (or need) clothing. Synthetics often have no sense of smell.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

preprogrammed, inflexible, deferential, logical, single-minded, loyal, reliable

DRAUGMORRE [DROG-mor]

Also called Draugmorrians, and sometimes "dragonmen" by Terrans, the Draugmorre are a proud race of winged, reptilian humanoids. In Nexus Sector they are divided between the elemental sorcerers of the Brood of Song (Khel-Corahnus), and the tech-oriented Brood of Steel (Khel-Telenthorre).



Like Humans, the Draugmorre were brought to Nexus Sector in two waves. And also like the humans, there is a strong distinction between the two. The Brood of Song is focused on Elemental sorcery while the Brood of Steel focuses on “true” science, technology, and cyberwear (a popular field among the Draugmorre due to their rapid healing and narcissism). There was a brief, but violent, civil war a hundred years back when the Brood of Song tried to annex the Brood of Steel. Though the Xyr put an end to hostilities, animosity still simmers between the groups.

CULTURE & HISTORY

The Draugmorrian race is originally from a lush, low-gravity world known as Skoryndar. The winged reptiles ruled this exotic jungle from floating citadels: city-states built into magnetically hovering bergs of iron. The society was warlike and chaotic, with a constant flux of alliances and factions as individuals rose to power and were eventually overthrown. They warred among themselves and were just starting to venture into space when contacted by the Xyr. The first departure (a thousand years ago) took many of the mystics from Draugmorrian society, which may be why the home world society all but abandoned mysticism afterwards. The second wave, brought to Nexus Sector 300 years ago, was far more science oriented.

A typical Draugmorre is very concerned with the self. They tend to see things only from their own point of view and generally accept that might makes right. It is difficult for them to yield to authority. They can develop loyalties, but do not trust easily. Individual status, prestige, and appearance are very important. Family ties are generally weak: there is no marriage, and females raise the young, alone or in communal clutches.

An interesting note is that genetic analysis indicates the Draugmorre are not an evolved race, but rather genetic constructs (some 25,000 years back). The Draugmorre history has no records as to why this might be so.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A typical adult Draugmorre is six and a half to seven and a half feet tall, though they tend to hunch forward and crouch slightly. At first glance they resemble reptilian gargoyles or dragon-men, but they are lithe, with thin waists but broad chests to support their bat-like wings. The Draugmorre in Nexus Sector have well-defined musculature—a result of their adaptation to the “heavy” gravity the other Chosen races favor. The overall impression suggests speed and wiry strength. Skin tones range from grey, through brown, to black.

The Draugmorre have elongated snouts and sharp teeth. They have long, thin tails that branch into three tips like a trident with webbing between the tines. These flare out for stabilization during flight. Their hands and feet each have three sharp claws. They have a third eye nestled in the bone ridge over the other two, allowing for excellent depth perception.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Narcissistic, aloof, disorganized, belligerent, political, ambitious

E'LANARI (EH-LAN-AR-EE)

A low-tech shamanic culture, the small, savage people of E'lan are a mixture of plant and animal physiology. Their technology is wholly organic and they are also adept at using the Lux Aeternum to control the creatures around them. At this time, the E'lanari are not a playable race as they will only be encountered deep in the wilderness of the New Worlds. This may change with future supplements devoted to the E'lan System and those who dwell there.

CULTURE & HISTORY

E'lanari are the native people of the New Worlds, though they were likely seeded there thousands of years ago rather than evolving naturally. Like much of the New World flora and fauna, they are found on many different worlds in that system. Reclusive and generally peaceful, they are dangerous and relentless when roused. Their culture varies from world to world but is generally tribal and often nomadic. They have no knowledge of the space beyond their native environment, but they have many legends and myths to explain the workings of the universe.

There has been substantial contact between the E'lanari and the colonies of Lochlyn—some peaceful, some violent, but such interactions are not commonplace. As the colonies expand, they will undoubtedly encounter the native population more and more. The exotic E'lanari are almost always in the company of some beast or other, for they have a symbiotic relationship with most, using them for protection, travel, and warfare.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A typical E'lanari appears composed of a mass of intertwined roots or plant-like tendrils. Below where the waist would be on a humanoid, the fibrous tendrils form a single long appendage, allowing for serpentine movement. Above the waist, the root clumps form a torso with four tentacle arms and a crude approximation of a head between. This “head” contains sensory apparatus, but the complex nerve cluster that serves as a brain is actually buried in the center of the torso. The arm tentacles are themselves composed of a single thick tendril with numerous smaller ones wrapped about it. A tough bark (like the outer casing of a walnut) usually covers part of the torso and some individuals grow long thorns, spore casings, and even moss-like “hair”.

From head to tail, and typical E'lanari is 6 to 7 ft long. Much of this is the snake-like lower half of the body, so they only stand 3 to 4 ft high when upright. Coloration is generally grey, brown, or green and usually matches the native habitat of the tribe (they can change color over a number of weeks).



TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Savage, curious, balanced, trusting, patient, relentless

KYRYK (KEER-ICK)

The stocky Kyryk is born as a “builder,” small, cautious, and driven to create. They grow to adulthood and then (at around 40 years of age) transform into a “defender”—a big, aggressive, soldier type. In both forms, a Kyryk is a bipedal humanoid with tough, wrinkled skin and bone plating covering much of the body—though more so in the case of a defender. Having evolved on a high-gravity world, they are strong and dense, but slow. They do not see well, but have excellent hearing and can use a limited form of echolocation to perceive their immediate environment.

CULTURE & HISTORY

The Kyryk evolved in the subterranean spaces of an icy world with heavy geothermal activity (the constant tectonic rumbling helped evolve their echolocation ability). Over the centuries, they developed a rigid society and caste system, broken into clans or multi-clan hives. The Kyryk were at the tail end of a massive industrial age when contacted by the Xyr. Clan warfare was becoming fierce due to overpopulation, and resources on the home world were nearing exhaustion. Even in Nexus Sector, the Kyryk favor a rough industrial approach to construction, whether it be buildings, gear, or starships.

The Kyryk religion is based on ancestor worship and communication with spirits. It is believed that these spirits watch over their clan and wage war against the spirits of enemy clans, bringing good fortune or ill to their descendants. They are fairly new to interacting with the Lux Aeternum, but Kyryk shamans have adapted their dogma and mastered several useful arts.

Female builders were traditionally called breeders, but in recent years this term has developed sexist connotations. Defenders are genderless. All Kyryk are omnivorous, with builders favoring vegetables and defenders meat. This species evolved in a sulfur-rich environment, and their preferred atmosphere contains small amounts of hydrogen sulfide. This smells awful to other races and is strong enough to cause mild nausea in non-Kyryk.

When Kyryk builders sense their impending transformation, they traditionally burrow into a large, dead creature and hibernate. Eating while asleep, they transform into their second stage of life over a period of about three weeks. The defender stage is bigger (6 to 8 feet tall) and heavily armored, often dull-witted, but fierce and loyal to the clan. Typically, females mate prior to the change and leave a clutch of eggs in the carcass as well. These days, an artificial chrysalis is often used for the transformation, but any large source of protein and liquid will do. Defenders are historically used to protect the clan from predators and to wage war against other clans.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The skin and plating on a Kyryk can range anywhere from charcoal grey to ivory white depending on the individual. They have short snouts with blunt teeth and tufted ears. They also sport a single pupil-less “eye” that stretches horizontally across the head (like someone wearing wraparound sunglasses). This sight organ only allows for black and white vision with poor depth perception. The Kyryk have hair, though it varies greatly by individual and gender. The most common hair pattern is a fringe along the jaw line of males, or a rough mane on the back of a female’s head.

A builder averages 3 to 4 feet tall and has five digits on each hand, like a human hand with a second (fully opposable) thumb where the smallest finger should be. On a defender, the three non-thumb digits on their



hands fuse into a single powerful claw and the thumbs grow hooked talons. The brow grows heavier and the posture more hunched. Either type of Kyryk can wear clothes and use equipment. A loincloth and equipment harness (with belt and pouches) is the common dress. Kyryk often decorate their carapaces with patterns or symbols representing their clan and accomplishments.

Uncouth Terrans sometime refer to Kyryk as ‘dillos (for armadillo) and rhinos.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS (BUILDERS)

Cowardly, creative, frenetic, communal, practical, inflexible

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS (DEFENDERS)

Violent, protective, obedient, argumentative, blunt, stoic

V'la (VEH-LA)

The jellyfish-like V’la dwell in water and travel on dry land either in enclosed hover-spheres or on the backs of ape-like (or Synthetic) hosts. They control these hosts like puppets by sending specialized tentacles directly into the nervous system. V’la speak using bioluminescence, and are devoted students of the Ars Lumina.

CULTURE & HISTORY

According to the V’la, they evolved on the same world as the Xyr millennia ago and were uplifted to sentience by them. This world, whose name is forgotten, was a gas giant and the V’la dwelled in a miles-deep band of water in the middle atmosphere. Heat from below kept the temperature comfortable and the constant storms above provided a flickering, but ever-present light. The rich soup of this rare world gave rise to a wide variety of aquatic and air-borne life—from



tiny planktons and algae, to huge colonies of buoyant coral and kelp. In a near-infinite ocean with no bottom (just a layer where the water gave way to hotter, less hospitable liquids) the V'la built a civilization. Their technology is heavily based on chemistry, organic tech, and the *Ars Lumina*. They had no industry and nothing in the way of metals in their home environment, though they have learned to use such things in Nexus Sector.

V'la society is very fluid (pun intended). Colonies of like-minded V'la form for a given task and individuals join or leave to suit their own purposes. Family units likewise form, drift as one for a number of years, and then disperse, never to meet again. When in physical contact, V'la can interweave their tentacles and form direct neural connections to one another's minds. A colony will often join in this manner to form an aggregate mind known as a consensus. In Nexus Sector, there is a single V'la political entity. It is known as the Confluence, and all V'la populations throughout the sector are members in addition to (and before) any other political obligations they may have. The elected head of state is known as the Monarch and this individual serves as the V'la Tetrarch as well as the Monarch of the Confluence.

The genderless V'la relate to the galactic meta-consciousness through a religion known as T'dorae (The Art). The Xyr are revered as holy beings in the service of the I'dyra (the One Who Sees All). V'la priests devote themselves to piercing the veil of time and reality to glimpse what lies beyond. Those who master the Art are considered holy and are looked to for guidance in times of trouble. Their religious myths also speak of a dark enemy who wages eternal war against the Xyr. These beings are called the Kor'Diel, and that name has been applied to the new enemy from System IV. Whether these beings are the source of the myth or not remains unknown.

The natural V'la environment is dimly lit water at a pressure of 10 atmospheres (equivalent to a depth of about 300 ft on Earth), but they

have a good tolerance for variance in pressure and temperature (42°F to 105°F water temp and 0.5 to 30 atmospheres being tolerable). They originally developed their puppeteering ability to hunt and to avoid predators, but after discovering dry worlds, they adapted the talent for use with land animals. To join with or leave a host requires about an hour of time during which the host must remain still. Some V'la prefer to stay independent and use the equivalent of vehicles (repulsor equipped, liquid-filled spheres) to get around.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A V'la looks a lot like a Terran jellyfish or man-o-war about 5 feet tall. The tentacles are different lengths, ending in strange filaments, eye-like sensors, or talons. They also flicker with an internal light. The V'la can control the frequencies of these lights to "speak" with others of its kind in a color-based language. Translation units, often worn around the necks of host creatures, can turn this into speech and speech into color. The "head" is also covered with less intense bioluminescent cells and will slowly change color when idle (the color reflects their mood). If carrying equipment, a harness web will be stretched across the mottled head with various devices or pouches attached to it.

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Aloof, enigmatic, condescending, contemplative, leisurely, deliberate.

ELDERS

These are not playable races. They are alien civilizations that long ago became one with the Lux Aeternum and ascended beyond the physical. They have existed for tens of thousands of years and have interests that span the galaxy (and possibly others galaxies or realities as well). It is unclear how many Elder Races there are, but two play a part in the story of *Lux Aeternum*. They are rare, enigmatic, and powerful, though not omnipotent. Most interactions with these races are through their constructs or minions.

XYR {ZEEER}

According to the V'la, the Xyr originally evolved in the turbulent upper atmosphere of an exotic gas giant. It is unclear what their original form was as they have existed as incorporeal patterns of consciousness for scores of millennia now. When they have been encountered, it has only been via telepathic contact or through their minions—wisps which appear as spheres of light, or organic constructs the Xyr can inhabit when needed.

The wisps, also known as wraiths, are incorporeal and normally invisible. They are powerful psionics and single-minded of purpose, having been created mainly to enforce the edicts of the Xyr.

KOR'DIEL {KOR DEE-EL}

The Kor'Diel (a word which basically means "dweller in darkness" in the translation from the V'la) are evolved from a non-organic species—perhaps artificial intelligences or sentient robots. A hyper-advanced form of self-aware software, they can use the Lux Aeternum to maintain their pattern independent of physical matter. To interact with the material universe they must, in effect, "download" a part of themselves into some form of computer-operated hardware (anything from an android to a battleship).

Pyrrhus System appears to be an outpost of the Kor'Diel and their servants. From here, they observe Nexus Sector and make their plans for conquest. The Xyr have always held the darkness at bay, but now the Xyr are gone. Perhaps the Newcomers, with their war-forged pragmatism and harsh willingness to do what it takes to survive, are the best chance for the Chosen to survive the inevitable invasion....

THE CRUCIBLE

Nexus Sector includes four star-systems in close proximity:

Chrysalis, home of the major human nations.

Unity, home of the Tetrachy of the Chosen and the main worlds of the alien races.

E'lan, the “New Worlds” of the frontier and home of the savage E'lanari.

Pyrrhus, an unexplored area that is the lair of the feared Kor'Diel.

“The Crucible” refers to all of Nexus Sector (all four star systems and the space between) since the disappearance of the Xyr. The Unified Terran Church coined this term to represent their view that the Elders had purposefully left the Chosen on their own in this “time of trials.” It is the Church's position that Nexus Sector has become a testing ground and now is the time the Chosen will either fail or succeed on their own. They believe the final test is at hand. The worthy will be reformed into something greater, while the unworthy are burned away in this trial by fire.

Without faster-than-light technology (something only the elder races have mastered), it is decades of travel to the nearest star beyond the Crucible. The systems also border upon the edge of a great nebula that stretches beyond E'lan and Pyrrhus. This vast area of swirling, glowing gasses makes for a breathtaking nighttime sky. Also, the close proximity of the four primary stars and numerous micro-stars makes for some brilliant points of light. Then, of course, there is the Maelstrom in the center of it all, with its accretion disk of swirling gas and polar plumes lancing out into the black. All said, it is a much more interesting night sky than most Newcomers are used to.

TERRAFORMING

Most of the inhabited worlds in Nexus Sector were terraformed by the Xyr using an organic nanobot approach—sending trillions of microscopic, self-replicating organic machines onto the target planet. Over the centuries, they work their way into the mantle and weave a web of microscopic, superconducting fibers far below the surface. This web uses gravitic technology to increase the planet's surface gravity and also generates power as the planet moves through the gravity field of its parent star or planet. This power is fed to subterranean terraforming engines and to energy access points on the surface for use by future colonists. These access points are prized spots for settlements; otherwise, geothermal, hydroelectric, or solar power must be employed.

In the distant past, gravitic technology was also used to collapse gas giants into miniature stars (commonly called micro-stars). These provide light and heat to the moons that circle them, which can then be terraformed into habitable planets—in effect making a tiny solar system (known as a subsystem). None of this planet-scale technology can be replicated by the Chosen races. The Xyr were inflexible on the matter as much of it could easily be used for war. Even with the Xyr gone, their automated minions often arise to prevent tampering with existing systems.

A NOTE ON RESOURCES

Since terraformed worlds have not had organic life for very long (geologically speaking), there are no petroleum reserves beneath the surface. There have also been numerous other civilizations present on the worlds around Unity and Chrysalis, so what mineral resources could be easily mined are long since gone.

The New Worlds are another matter. Initial expeditions found that the worlds of that system have not yet been harvested of their mineral resources. These resources are the driving impetus for much of the exploration and colonization of the New Worlds. So, ships laden with gold are possible—but just as valuable are ships laden with isotopes, petroleum products, and chemicals important to manufacturing and industry.

THE FOUR SYSTEMS OF NEXUS SECTOR

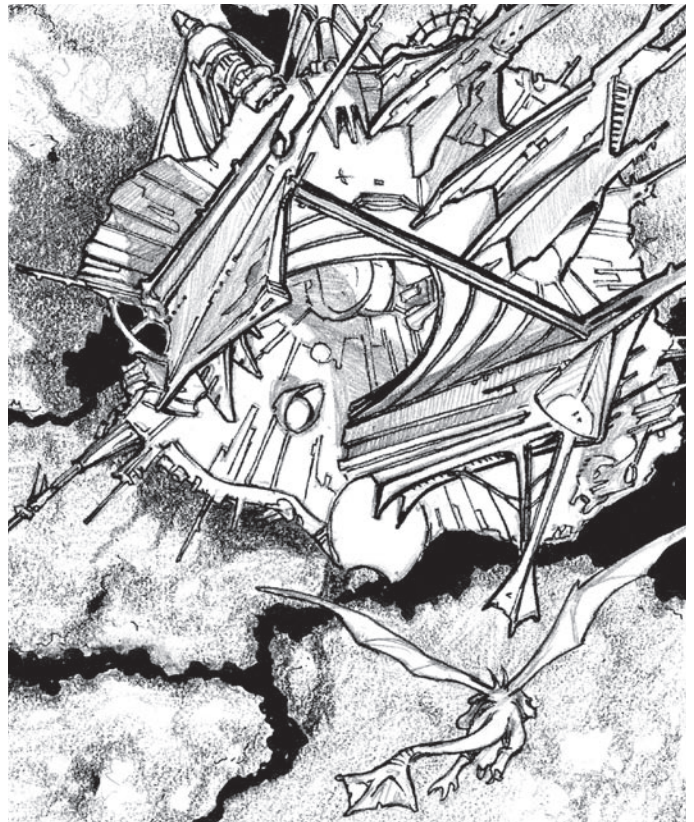
The following is a brief summary of the four star systems of Nexus Sector. An in-depth treatment of each world and areas of interest will be available in future supplements.

CHRYSALIS SYSTEM

Chrysalis System is the home of Terra Nova, the planet given to the humans brought here from 17th Century Earth. This star system now contains the Terran Novan Theocracy, one of the most powerful nations in Nexus Sector, as well as other important human and Draugmorrian states.

The central star of this system is called Chrysalis, and it is a medium-sized, yellow star much like Sol. The three micro-stars (former gas giants) that orbit it are all white or blue-white.

The inner planets of Chrysalis are Hades, Khaldun and Terra Nova. Hades is a scorched and barren rock. Khaldun is a planet of red deserts, home to the Sultinate of al'Agra. Terra Nova is the “home world” of humans in Nexus Sector and the seat of the Theocracy of the Unified Terran Church. Terra Nova's largest moon, Avalon, has been terraformed and is heavily populated as well.



An asteroid belt known as the al'Ghazali Expanse separates the inner worlds from the outer. This dense field of stellar debris has become home to many Newcomers and is a new frontier within the very heart of civilized space.

Next are the former gas giants Cervantes, Cymbeline, and Tempest. All three were long ago collapsed into micro-stars so their larger moons could be terraformed. Cervantes has three former moons: Rosinante—seat of the Kingdom of Montreaux; Dulcinea—home of the Kingdom of Valencia; and Galatea, a damp moon claimed by both and the cause of centuries of strife.

The micro-star Cymbeline likewise has three small worlds orbiting it. These are lush Giderius, the hunting preserve of Arviragus, and Imogen, a world of industry and the Draugmorrian shipyards. All three worlds are claimed by the Draugmorrian Brood of Steel, who have made the subsystem their new home.

The last micro-star is the aptly named Tempest. Its four worlds are covered by a patchwork of nations and small states, all recently annexed by the Theocracy. These worlds are the crystalline Iris, the agricultural

center of Ceres, temperate Juno, and volcanic Caliban—home of Caliban Spaceport (last stop before the crossing to Unity System).

Rounding out Chrysalis System are Poseidon, an uninhabited blue gas giant; and Dyrud, a dark ball of ice and stone that is home to some Kyryk miners and the Theocracy-controlled Keldurin Spaceport. This new port of call was constructed to service ships bound for Trinity and the New Worlds beyond.

UNITY SYSTEM

The star optimistically named “Unity” is large and yellow-orange in color. Like Chrysalis, it has a handful of inner worlds and a trio of micro-star subsystems further out. There is no appreciable asteroid belt here, however, and there is much greater racial diversity.

The Tetrarchy of the Chosen has its capital here on the world called Concordium. This meta-nation is a joining of four semi-independent domains, one established by each of the Chosen races. A single ruler (the Tetrarch) is periodically chosen from the leaders of these four domains. The current Tetrarch is the V'la representative, who is also Monarch of the V'la Confluence. The four states that comprise the Tetrarchy are:

- The V'la Confluence
- The Draugmorrian Brood of Song
- The Syrys Hive
- The Dominion of Xeos Two

The innermost world of Unity System is the volcanic, lifeless rock of Ishyr. Next are the storm shrouded binary worlds of Xeos—war torn city states where the strongest rule. After that comes the ancient, radioactive ruin of Malakai, then Concordia, a temperate planet where all four Chosen races live in harmony. Syrys, the primary Kyryk world in Nexus Sector, occupies the fifth orbit. It is an arctic planet riddled with underground cities and sprawling industrial complexes.

In the outer reaches of the system were four gas giants, but three have been turned into micro-stars. Valaquentarsis is the first. Its three terraformed moons are the home of the Draugmorrian Brood of Song. The moons are swamp-choked Phindarious, the oceanic world of Delphindaragos, and the lush jungle of Vhal Zeron—site of the Broodholm of Vhal (capital of the Brood of Song).

Next is the gas giant Z'ln, which has *not* been collapsed. Like the long-lost V'la homeworld, it contains a miles-thick layer of liquid water in its middle atmosphere. This is home to the V'la Confluence—the major political state of the enigmatic invertebrates. The gas giant has two inhabited moons (V'ryd and B'tar). Not having been terraformed, they are frozen and lifeless, with the inhabitants dwelling underground or in domed cities.

The Rhudendaria subsystem is next—some of the last fallow land left in civilized space. There are four habitable moons rich in flora and fauna (a mix from various Chosen biomes), but no sentients dwell here. This was at the request of the Xyr, and so far their wishes have been honored. The (Draugmorrian-named) moons are forested Deralis, tropical Pentalion with its shallow seas, arid Aldarion, site of extensive underground ruins; and the cold, windswept moon called Lindercyndaris.

The third and final micro-star is K'ndaros, gateway to the Tonshu Archipelago and Chrysalis System. There are four inhabited former-moons. Each is independent and claimed by one of the Chosen races. The moons are Vaeloch, a world of towering forests claimed by the dragonmen; Al'Idrisi, a ravine carved moon that is an outpost of the Theocracy; A'del, whose green oceans hold several V'la colonies; and Zyryz, a small Kyryk hive dwelling on, and beneath, the windswept mountains.

The last orbit of Unity holds the unremarkable world of Ryr. Too distant and barren to be of interest, it has stood uninhabited for decades. Kyryk once dwelt there, but no longer.

WORLDS AND MOONS OF NEXUS SECTOR CHRYSLIS

C1	Hades
C2	Terra Nova, Avalon
C3	Khaldun
C4	al'Ghazali Expanse
C5	Cervantes, Rosinante, Dulcinea, Galatea
C6	Cymbeline, Giderius, Arviragus, Imogen
C7	Tempest, Iris, Ceres, Juno, Caliban
C8	Poseidon
C9	Dyrud

E'LAN

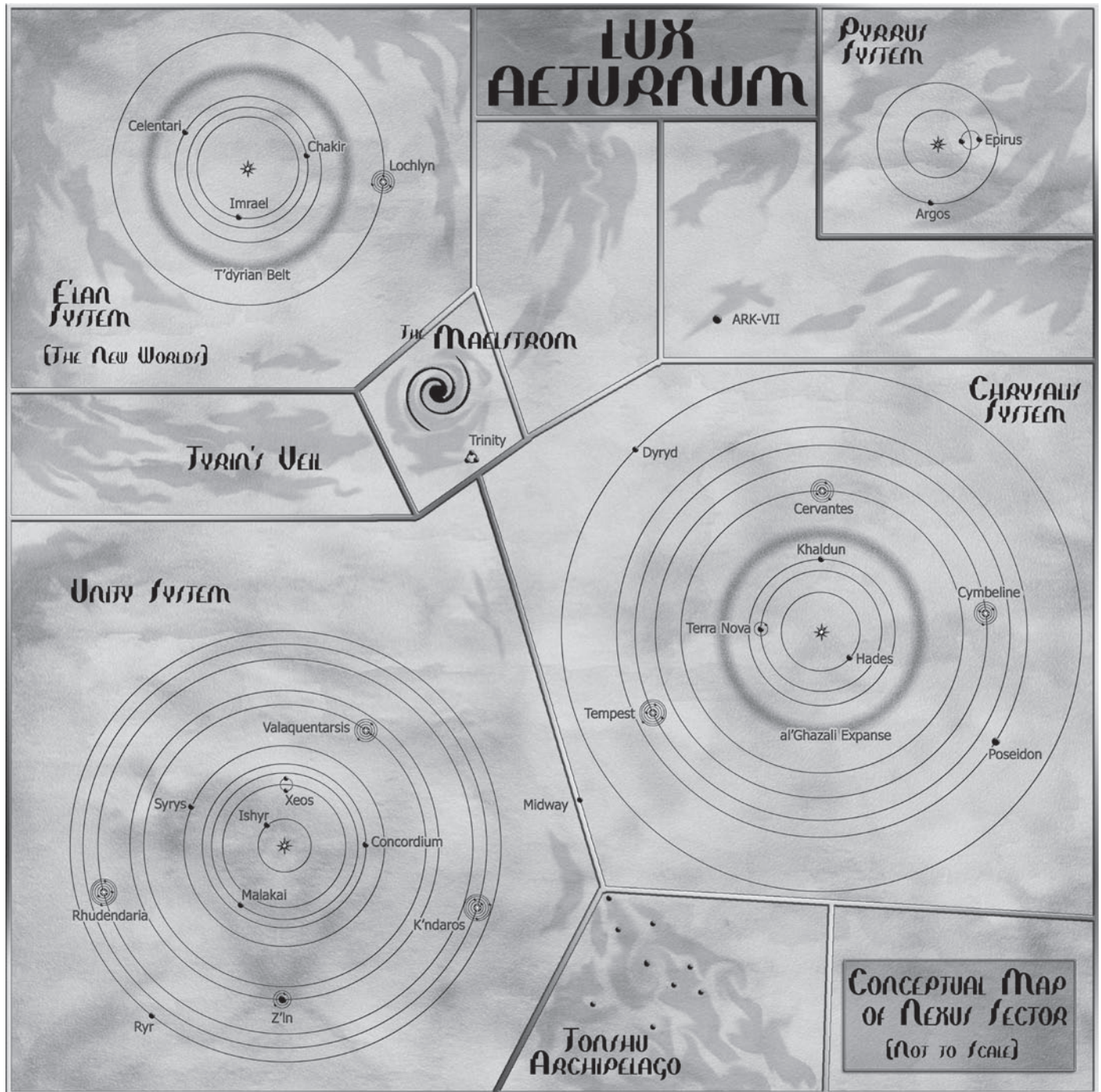
E1	Imrael
E2	Chakir
E3	Celentari
E4	The T'dyrian Belt
E5	Lochlyn, Gheldeheim, Kvinherad, Drammenfjord

UNITY

U1	Ishyr
U2	Xeos (I and II)
U3	Malakai
U4	Concordium
U5	Syrys
U6	Valaquentarsis, Phindarious, Delphindaragos, Vhal Zeron
U7	Z'ln, V'ryd, B'tar
U8	Rhudendaria, Deralis, Pentalion, Aldarion, Lindercyndaris
U9	K'ndaros, Vaeloch, Al'Idrisi, A'del, Zyryz
U10	Ryr

PYRRHUS

P1	Epirus (I and II)
P2	Agros



E'LAN SYSTEM

This star system has been officially named E'lan but it is more commonly referred to as the New Worlds. Though currently inhabited (and apparently inhabited long ago as well), the mineral resources of these worlds have not yet been plundered. That makes them valuable to the nations in the Unity and Chrysalis systems. In addition, there are factions seeking to make a new home, or establish new nations, far from the political and social pressures of the home systems. Colonization is still in its earliest stages and the entire system is a wild frontier ripe for exploration.

The system has three notable inner planets: desert choked Imrael, pristine Chakir, and storm-wracked Celentari. The T'dyrian asteroid belt lies between these E'lanari inhabited worlds and the Lochlyn subsystem.

The three moons circling the Lochlyn micro-star are mountainous, storm swept Gheldeheim; the arid world of Kvinherrad; and rugged Drammenfjord. Port Speranza is a new starport in orbit over this last moon. Built by a consortium of Newcomer corporations, it is the primary destination for Terran ships crossing the void from Charybdis.

PYRAHUS SYSTEM

Just decades ago (coincident with the disappearance of the Xyr) a new star appeared in the sky, a bloody red light in the dark nebulae beyond the Maelstrom. It may have been a simple shift in the cosmic winds that just now revealed this uncharted system, or it may have been a tremendous use of the Lux Aeternum by an Elder race to kindle this new light. Whatever the case, the crimson star has planets circling it and something dwells upon these worlds, something powerful, dark, and malicious.

These beings are either minions of the Kor'Diel or the Kor'Diel themselves (ancient enemies of the Xyr) as reports are of synthetic monstrosities: from warbots the size of battle cruisers to near-human artificial beings sent to infiltrate the Chosen worlds. The threat from Pyrrhus is one of the primary excuses used for military build up among the more militaristic factions.

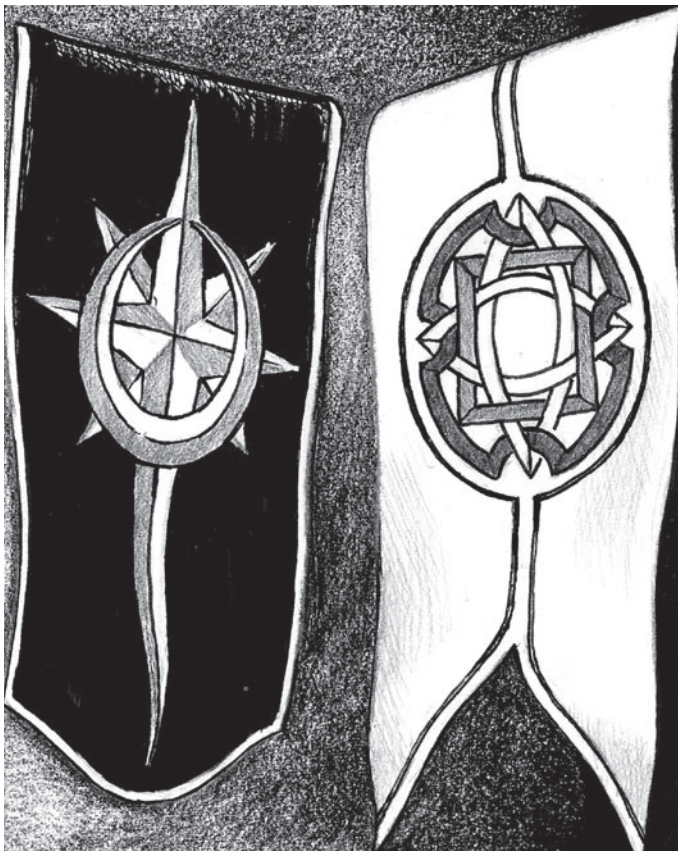
Three inhabited, or technologically active, planets have been confirmed in Pyrrhus: a double world called Epirus and a lone planet given the name Argos. It is very likely that there are other (possibly inhabited) planets in the system, but so far the intervening nebula and other factors have made reconnaissance impossible.

POLITICS

There are two major powers among the Chosen races of Nexus Sector: the human-centric Terra Novan Theocracy and the mixed-race Tetrarchy of the Chosen. Each dominates its respective star system.

Within Unity System, the Tetrarchy of the Chosen holds sway. From the capital of Concordium, the Tetrarchy claims Z'In, Syrys, both Xeos worlds, and all three moons of Valaquentarsis. The only independent nations are the four moons of K'ndaros; each holds a single small, but fiercely independent, state.

In Chrysalis System, there is somewhat more variety. The Terra Novan Theocracy controls Terra Nova, distant Dyryd, and the moons of Tempest. It also considers Cymbeline and its moons a vassal, though the Brood of Steel might disagree. The moons of Cervantes are home to the Kingdoms of Valencia and Montreaux, while the planet of Khaldun is home to the Sultanate of al'Agra. All three of these latter kingdoms are independent, and powerful in their own right. Countless Newcomer enclaves and corporations operating in the asteroid belt have appeared as well. Many have joined with one faction or another, but many more consider themselves autonomous. Some wield considerable (and growing) power.



OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

In addition to the worlds and moons in the Crucible systems, there are a few other important areas that are worth mentioning.

TONSHU ARCHIPELAGO

Between Unity and Chrysalis lies the Tonshu Archipelago, a wide nebula and debris field of interstellar material. It is now the home of the Tokoshima Empire. A couple dozen city-sized space stations (each its own Prefecture) lie scattered across the resource-rich nebula. The empire can field considerable economic clout and a sizable fleet. Though small in population and scattered across a large area of open space, it is a nation to be reckoned with.

The Tokoshima Empire is a conglomeration of Newcomer Japanese megacorporations that have formed a nation. There is an Emperor, but he answers to a board of directors. Daimyo and their samurai rule over oppressed wage slaves. Politically, there are three major factions in the empire. These have taken the names Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu, with the current Emperor being part of the Ieyasu faction. Beneath the feudal corporate strata lie a strong cyber-subculture and an organized network of criminal operations and pirates known as the Nuwokou Ronin.

TRINITY

Three small artificial worlds orbit a white micro star dangerously close to the Maelstrom singularity. The squared-off plastic and ceramic landscape frames lush gardens and tranquil pools. The environment is obviously artificial and there are many sprawling surface installations protected by Xyr guardians. The interiors of these worlds appear to be gigantic gravitic induction engines, drawing enormous amounts of power from the planetoid's passage through the Maelstrom gravity field, but it is unclear what the power is being used for.

While several Chosen settlements exist and prosper on the surface of these worlds, no one has survived an expedition into one of the Xyr facilities. Since the discovery of the New Worlds, there has been a substantial increase in traffic to and through this area, considered a holy land by many. The chief spaceport is Port Charybdis; from here ships can either skirt wide around the Maelstrom or try the more dangerous close approach for a faster voyage (using the singularity's massive gravity as a slingshot).

THE MAELSTROM

A massive black hole at the center of Nexus Sector, this singularity is the gateway to the galaxy beyond, at least for ascended races that have mastered enough of the Ars Lumina to pass through it intact. A great accretion disk of glowing matter streams into the singularity, and long plumes of intense radiation flows from either pole. All in all, it's not something any sane captain would approach without trepidation.

TYRIN'S VEIL

An arm of the great nebula streams towards the Maelstrom, creating the curtains of Tyrin's Veil, home of the pirates who call themselves Corsairs. This faction is described in more detail in a later section.

ARK VII

The remains of Ark VII still float in interstellar space, moving slowly away from the Maelstrom and towards Pyrrhus. The colossal hull, bereft of its habitation spheres, still has functional life support and gravity, but no propulsion. It has been used as a waypoint by explorers and a den for pirates, but it is so far from inhabited space that it is often left abandoned.

The derelict may still contain useful treasures and technologies because the Xyr defense systems still protect the inner chambers of the great vessel. Whatever secrets and treasures it may hold are drifting ever nearer to the dark menace of Pyrrhus.

LIFE IN NEXUS SECTOR

This section looks at different aspects of life in the Crucible of Nexus Sector, from the supernatural *Ars Lumina* to culture, technology, religion, and the various factions vying for power and survival.

THE ARS LUMINA

One of the key aspects of *Lux Aeternum* is the accepted presence of “supernatural” powers in a science fiction setting. The source of these powers (regarded as divine, magical, or just a new form of science) is a higher level of consciousness brought about by the complex interaction of a multitude of sentient beings. It is unclear whether this meta-consciousness derives from the lesser beings (i.e. humans), or the other way around, but the tie is unmistakable. It is also unclear whether this consciousness is itself sentient or just an abstract, infinitely complex pattern of meta-energy. It is commonly called the *Lux Aeternum* or “eternal light” in Terra Nova’s Latin, and the art of studying this power is known as the *Ars Lumina*. To fully understand the greater consciousness, one would have to evolve beyond the physical as the Elders have done.

Whatever its nature, it is clear this wellspring of power can be tapped by sentient beings (even Synthetic ones). The *Lux Aeternum* can be channeled though a trained, or naturally gifted, mind to cause various effects as detailed in **Chapter 4: Powers**.

The art of accessing this power has many different names and styles. The Founders came up with *Lux Aeternum* to refer to it as a whole and use the term *Lux Sanctus* (divine light) to refer to the subset of powers they endorse as holy. The Newcomers and Synthetics refer to it as Second Science, insisting it must have its own set of theories and rules, even if they are unbridled by the common laws of physics. The Draugmorre use a sound metaphor—calling it the Celestial Voice or the Eternal Song—but do not subscribe to a notion of divinity. The Kyryk just call it the Way (or Way to Enlightenment) and the V’la refer to it as The Art. All of these terms and views are equally valid.

DISCIPLINES

In *Lux Aeternum*, the powers listed in **Chapter 4** are divided into categories called disciplines. Each discipline is associated with a certain school or methodology such that it would be unlikely for a person to learn powers from different areas. There is no rule that says a person cannot pick and choose between disciplines. There are, however, strong story reasons why this would be difficult. The disciplines are only taught at certain places, by certain races, and to certain people. It is uncommon for a student of one discipline to study with teachers of another.

The common disciplines are as follows:

- **The Eternal Song**, the elementalism of the Draugmorrian spell chanters. It includes the powers Cold Shaping, Earth Shaping, Elemental Blast, Fire Shaping, Light Shaping, Water Shaping, Weather Shaping, and Wind Shaping.
- **Kinethesis**, the force-centric powers of the Synthetics. It includes the powers Manipulate Object and Move Object.
- **Psionics**, the extension of the mental arts just emerging on 23rd Century Earth. It includes the powers Bliss, Calm, Dominate, Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, Mind Probe, Mind Reading, Mind Shaping, Mind Touch, Psychic Blast, Psychic Shield, Psychic Weapon, Sleep, and Suggestion.
- **Forbidden Rites**, teachings forbidden by the Unified Church but still practiced by secret cabals. The Rites include the powers Body Control, Dominate, Drain Vitality, Enhance Other, Enhance Self, Flesh Shaping, Harm, Imbue Life, Mind Touch, and Pain.
- **That Which Dwells Beyond**, nature-based shamanism of the E’lanari that includes Beast Link, Dominate, Nature Reading, Plant Shaping, Mind Shaping, and Mind Touch.
- **The Art**, powers of the V’la and their T’dorae mysticism, focusing on perception and powers such as Combat Sense, Enhance Senses, Heart Reading, Heart Shaping, Illusion, Mind Touch, Object Reading, Scrying, Second Sight, Sense Minds, Truth Reading, and Visions.
- **Lux Sanctus**, the divine teachings of the Unified Church, focusing on mysticism and healing. It includes the powers of Body Control, Cure, Cure Blindness/Deafness, Cure Disease, Cure Poison, Enhance Other, Enhance Self, Flesh Shaping, Imbue Life, Mind Touch, and Ward.
- **The Way**, the clannish spiritualism of the Kyryk, a scattering of powers from different disciplines, including Cure, Cure Disease, Cure Poison, Earth Shaping, Imbue Life, Mind Touch, and Scrying.

Unlisted powers are rare and generally unknown in *Lux Aeternum*, although the Narrator may permit them as “secret arts” of any of the disciplines. It’s possible to learn the powers of other disciplines, but difficult, as adepts tend to guard their knowledge and are reluctant to teach it to outsiders not of their path.

SOCIETY

Even aside from the swashbuckling adventure in the void, there is a lot going on in *Lux Aeternum*. The following sections discuss some of the important social and cultural aspects of the setting.

SLAVERY

Synthetics are normally property, owned by humans. Kyryk builders control and direct the defenders. Ape-like hosts, and perhaps other races, are the puppets of the V’la. The Kor’Diel can “possess” advanced technology, including Synthetics. These issues present roleplaying opportunities. Do the heroes take advantage of the social system by amassing Synthetic “property?” Or is the time right for emancipation? How does a group composed of different races and castes interact with each other? These issues are here if you wish to deal with them, but they can just as easily fade into the background if that is not what you want in your game.

RELIGION

The Unified Terran Church is a result of the merging of Christian and Muslim teachings prevalent among the Founders when they first came to Nexus Sector, with both faiths heavily modified after the revelations of the Xyr “Eruditus” (revelation). The dogma of this church is geared towards upholding Xyr ideals and striving towards ascension. The Unified Terran Church is a strong proponent of tolerance and peace, but can field a considerable army when negotiation and economic actions are not enough.

There are numerous other religions that are still intact from old Earth, the largest being the Islamic faith in the Sultanate of al’Agra. The Newcomers did not bring much with them as far as religion, but most major faiths are still represented among the Founders.

Among the non-humans, there is no such diversity of theology. The V’la worship the Xyr; the Kyryk pay homage to the spirits of the ancestors; and the Draugmorre scoff at the idea of worshiping anything other than themselves. It remains to be seen whether mankind’s spiritual diversity will be its salvation or doom.

ADDITIONAL FACTIONS

In addition to the nations outlined earlier, there are a few other factions in the Crucible worth mentioning. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but rather a sampling of the most important groups.

TYRIN CORSAIRS

These are a loosely organized collection of pirates and smugglers who hide on the fringe of civilized space. The ionized gases of Tyrin's Veil foil sensors and jam communications, making it the perfect hiding place for those on the wrong side of the law.

There are a few asteroids scattered throughout the area, but most bases are free-floating stations or large bulk haulers converted into makeshift ports. The pirates are predominantly human, with a fair number of Draugmorre and the rare Kyryk crewman. The humans are a mix of Founders and Newcomers and here they have managed to mix into a homogenous blend of the two cultures.

The discovery of the New Worlds has created a steady stream of cargo-laden ships upon which the Corsairs can prey. Constant infighting prevents real organization among the pirate gangs, though they have been known to band together when sufficiently threatened. Currently, their "capitol" is a collection of ships and old space stations tethered together into a makeshift city known as New Tripoli.

CRIME SYNDICATES

The Newcomers brought organized crime to the Crucible; or perhaps they just helped organize the crime already present. There are a number of independent associations commonly known as "Syndicates". They range from loose affiliations of gangs, to efficiently run corporate organizations, and focus on a wide variety of illegal activities—from extortion, to piracy, to slave trading, to fencing goods on the black market.

A few notable syndicates are:

- House Medici, which controls the underworld among the belt miners of the al'Ghazali Expanse
- The Nuwokou Ronin, pirates preying on the stations of the Tonshu Archipelago
- The Ranthalion Cartel, a Draugmorrian organization of smugglers, arms dealers, and slavers.

There is an ongoing effort to merge the leadership of these various organizations, but problems arise when everyone wants to be calling the shots.

PRIVATEERS

It has become common practice for governments to authorize private citizens to engage in wartime activities in the void. A ship captain can be granted Letters of Marque, permission to rob and destroy vessels belonging to enemy nations. Those who engage in this sort of legitimized piracy are known as privateers. Valencia and Montreaux each employ privateers to raid the other. Ships laden with resources from the New Worlds make particularly fine prizes.

TERRANOVAN MERCHANT GUILDS

Many medieval trade guilds were re-established on Terra Nova and have modernized and flourished over the centuries. There are major and minor guilds covering nearly every trade, and they routinely form alliances and coalitions to control who will be on the ruling Council of Guildmasters. These organizations wield a great deal of economic

power but exist at the sufferance of the Theocracy. Some of the larger guilds have branches outside of the Theocracy, and many include alien members, primarily Draugmorre, as the Kyryk have their own guild system and the V'la seem uninterested in the concept.

KARORAK TRADE UNION

The Kyryk have an ancient tradition of inter-clan trade unions arranged by skill set and product. These guilds are heavily involved in politics and often wage economic war against each other. Though predominantly Kyryk, many Newcomer laborers have been receptive to Kyryk recruiters looking for new members. There are currently several chapters in the al'Ghazali Expanse.

TECHNOLOGY

In *Lux Aeternum* there can be a huge disparity in technological levels, even on a given planet. The rural lands of Terra Nova, for example, could be right out of the dark ages except for a few modern conveniences. The cities, however, are marvels of modern architecture with soaring gothic spires and cathedrals more grand than anything on Old Earth. While a horse drawn wagon plods across the cobblestones, a repulsor-driven truck cruises overhead and a gravitic monorail glides silently into a nearby station.

As you move from planet to planet, the changes become even more dramatic. On Concordium, not only do the levels of technology vary, you have four alien races all blending their industry and commerce together. But even with the great diversity, there are a few things that are common across continents and worlds.

Inhabited areas generally have robust communication networks in place for delivering text, audio, and video messages. Direct communication between planets is common, but expensive, and so is usually restricted for government use. Since communication is limited to the speed of light, time delays are also a factor to consider. Communication between systems (as opposed to between planets in the same system) is almost always done via courier ship due to the distances involved. There is nothing in Nexus Sector resembling our present-day Internet.

LOST TECH

There were countless technicians and scientists versed in nuclear and antimatter technology on Terra Mortis. Strangely, none of these people were invited aboard Ark-VII. The people who did come aboard were also asked not to bring data (technical records, schematics, etc.) pertaining to these potentially destructive technologies with them. Most people complied, and the Xyr apparently managed to erase or confiscate any remaining material en route.

While it would be possible to reconstruct a power plant, engine, or weapon based on these forbidden principals, it would require years of research—years during which the wraiths could show up at any moment. So, in effect, these technologies have been lost to the cultures in *Lux Aeternum*. Since the Xyr provided better alternatives for power and propulsion, the loss was not mourned—until it became clear that the most important gravitic technology could not be recreated without Xyr assistance...

CREATURES OF LUX AETERNUM

The three-dozen or so inhabited worlds in the Nexus Sector hold a tremendous abundance, and variety, of life. Much of the flora and fauna in the system was transplanted here from the Chosen races' home worlds, including Earth. There is, however, also a great deal that is unfamiliar to any of the races—things that have been here long enough to not only adapt, but also evolve.

When as a Narrator you find yourself in need of a denizen, you should feel free to take an existing creature from any applicable source and translate it directly into *True20*. By changing the flavor text and name you can use many of the “monsters” originally created for other games, be they science fiction, fantasy, or even horror. *Lux Aeternum*, with its inherent metaphysical aspects, can accommodate many of the mystical

or supernatural creatures that would be out of place in a setting limited to hard science.

So, use your imagination and go wild when it comes to creatures! While there is not space enough here to include a bestiary of all the myriad life forms that inhabit Nexus Sector, you can expect a sampling to appear in future supplements.

EQUIPMENT

Between the multiple races and the wide range of technology found on the various colonies throughout Nexus Sector, there is a vast variety of equipment available for use. All of the usual items one would expect to find in a medieval or renaissance society are present, as are those things one would see in a near-future cyberpunk dystopia. And then, of course, there are the alien equivalents. These are items that perform the same functions (weapons, armor, utility devices, etc.) but with a different technological approach. The V'la tend towards the organic, the Kyryk towards the austere industrial. The Draugmorre will always work in a baroque style, full of esoteric symbols and ornate detail, whether it be in gold or steel.

The purpose of this section is to describe some items unique to *Lux Aeternum*, or warranting special mention.

VEHICLES

Vehicles (by which we mean non-starship conveyances) in *Lux Aeternum* run the gamut of technology and sophistication. Horses and horse-drawn devices are common on many of the Founder worlds, where communities are small and close together. The V'la, too, make heavy use of native beasts both for travel and to haul cargo. While Kyryk favor a more mechanized approach, they do still occasionally use large badger-like creatures in much the same way that humans use horses.

Wheeled, tracked, and propeller driven craft make up the middle tier, technology-wise. These were much more common a couple hundred years ago and still see widespread use outside of the major cities on non-rural worlds.

Many newer vehicles make use of compact, anti-gravity engines known as repulsar drives. These reverse the pull of gravity to make the vehicle weightless. They can also enhance and redirect the field somewhat, to provide stability and propulsion. It should be noted that a repulsar drive is of no use in space, where gravity fields are too weak. They can, however, work against the field created by a gravitic induction engine, to act as reactionless maneuvering jets on a ship so equipped. Unlike induction engines, repulsar technology is reproducible by the Chosen races.

As with most equipment in *Lux Aeternum*, the Narrator is encouraged to import items as desired. Prices vary greatly by item and location, but should be comparable to similar items in other settings.

WEAPONS

The longstanding Prohibition on Collateral Damage (enforced throughout the Tetrarchy and Theocracy) forbids the use of weapons that can easily harm unintended targets. This, combined with the scarcity of required resources, has led to a culture where swords are more popular than guns. Accordingly, melee weapon technology has advanced considerably, while firearms remain relatively primitive. The weapons that follow, plus all of your common medieval fare (and alien equivalents), are pretty much what you have to work with as far as offensive capabilities go. For armor and other gear, including vehicles, the Narrator should feel free to import whatever catches his or her fancy from **Chapter 5** or other settings. It would be hard to come up

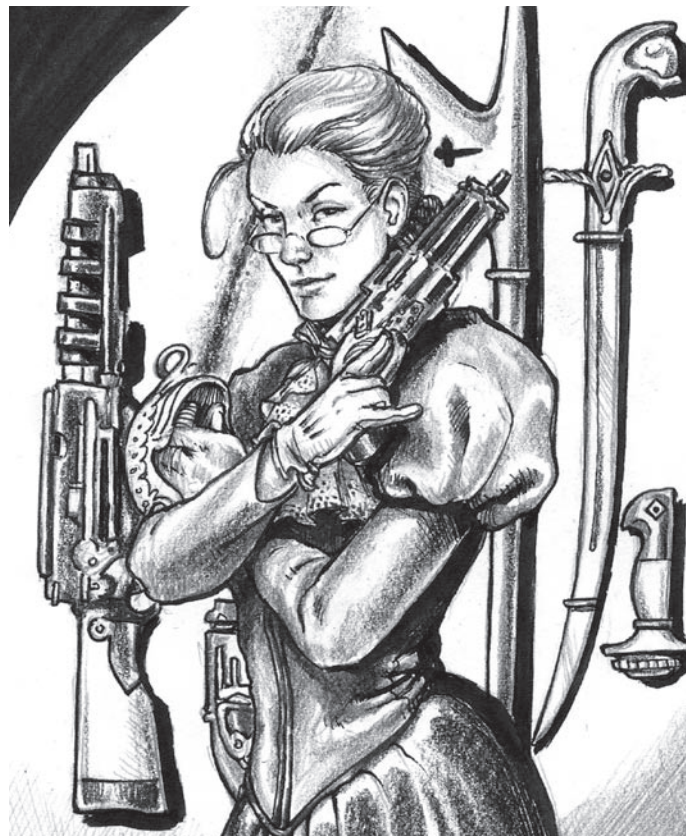
with something that was not being used by someone, somewhere, in Nexus Sector.

MELEE WEAPONS

There are three tiers of powered melee weapons, the simplest being *Firebrand* and *Shock* weapons. The former use superconducting filaments to make the striking surface of a weapon red hot, while the latter use similar technology to deliver a nasty electric shock along with a successful strike.

The mid-range weapons are the “sonics”. *Ultrasonic* weapons use tuned vibrations to enhance the cutting and piercing power of a blade, while *Subsonic* weapons employ resonating frequencies to increase the impact of a blunt weapon. Both come with some impressive audio effects when employed.

The highest tier of powered melee weapon is the *Plasma Blade*. Ignited plasma is injected into a tube-shaped containment field to form a thin cylinder of white-hot energy. The containment field attenuates the heat so that it is at full strength along the blade, but drops off rapidly with distance (to avoid cooking the wielder). There are many different types of weapons that can be constructed with plasma blades rather than metal ones. Everything from daggers, to spears, to rapiers and swords are possible. When activated, all such blades are brilliant white and radiate a great deal of light—making sunglasses a common accessory for your high-tech duelist.



This table outlines the increased damage and costs of these weapons. These are modifiers to the base weapon statistics given in **Chapter 5**.

Weapon Type	Damage Modifier	Purchase Difficulty Modifier
Firebrand or Shock	+1	+2
Sonic	+2	+4
Plasma*	+3	+8

*The Exotic Weapon Training (Plasma Blade) feat is required to use plasma weapons with proficiency. Weapon Training is a pre-requisite.

It takes a free action to activate a powered weapon and they generally deactivate when sheathed or dropped. These weapons use a small energy cell: a coin-sized disk contained in the haft or hilt of the weapon. Such a cell is good for about an hour of continual use (half that in plasma blades).

FIREARMS

Though considered dishonorable, firearms are still used. In recent years (and especially among Newcomers and out in the void), they are becoming almost commonplace.

Some important ingredients for slug-throwers are scarce on the resource-poor worlds of Charybdis and Unity systems. Because of the ever-present threat of the Wraiths, many scientists are justifiably wary about creating new weapons technology. So it is that the “pulse gun” is the standard personal firearm in *Lux Aeternum*. This type of weapon has been in limited use for centuries, and while not as deadly as some of the high-end firearms in use back on Terra Mortis, it gets the job done.

Every pulse gun uses a disposable energy cell that stores a tremendous amount of power. This energy is released in short, blue-white pulses that are a mixture of energy, plasma, and energized particles. In an atmosphere, the air along the flight path is vaporized and displaced much like it would be by small bolt of lightning—with a similar thunder-like sound effect. There is also a fair amount of recoil and waste heat generated by the firing process. Due to overheating, fully automatic fire is not feasible (and would be a serious violation of the Prohibition on Collateral Damage regardless).

PULSE GUNS					
Weapon	Range	Shots	Damage	Cost	Weight
Pistol	40 ft	14	+6	20	2 lb
Carbine	80 ft	12	+7	22	5 lb
Rifle	120 ft	10	+8	24	8 lb

STARSHIPS

Starships are very clearly divided into those that utilize Xyr technology and those that don't, the latter being primitive by comparison (often called old-tech).

TECH & XYR-TECH

Old-tech ships employ chemical rockets or solar sails (or both) since nuclear, fusion, and anti-matter technologies are unavailable. These ships accelerate slowly, making journeys very time consuming. Old-tech vessels also lack internal gravity, though it might be simulated by spinning the habitation section of the ship. Most rocket-powered ships are Kyryk designs, while solar sails are commonly older Founder vessels.

The Xyr-constructed gravitic induction engine is the key to easy travel within or across Nexus Sector. Though the induction drive does not allow ships to reach or exceed the speed of light, it does allow them to

accelerate rapidly and achieve an impressive velocity (some as high as 30% of light speed).

PROPULSION

When a gravitic induction engine is activated, the pseudo-sentient organic control core draws upon the Lux Aeternum to create an induction field around the ship. The gravitic engine is then used to accelerate the ship forward, while the induction field shunts realspace (along with the tremendous G forces and other bothersome side effects of rapid travel) around the vessel. The primary benefits of the Xyr-tech gravitic induction engine are:

- It allows for acceleration greater than the occupants and vessel could normally endure. The drive can maintain a normal, downward gravity field inside the ship even as it accelerates to tremendous speeds. A typical gravitic ship can accelerate from a relative standstill to 1% of light speed in six seconds. That's about 50,000 Gs, so it's a good thing that the ship and crew are spared.
- No fuel is required. The engine harnesses the ambient gravitic fields of the galaxy for power, and taps into the Lux Aeternum to create the induction field.
- The engine creates an energy barrier at the bow of the ship where real space meets the induction field. This intersection area can be anything from a barely-discernable ripple to a coruscating blaze of light depending on the speed of the ship, what is impacting the field, and how well tuned the induction engine is. A similar energy field (called the induction wake) trails behind the ship where the shunted energy, matter, and space collapse back together. These barriers protect the vessel very well from the front and rear.

The main drawback of these engines is that they can only shunt so much realspace per second, and this sets an effective speed limit on the vessel, determined by the quality of its control core. It is possible (and common for pirates) to transplant control cores from one ship to another. Some other drawbacks of a gravitic induction engine include:

- It is built into the hull with a specific orientation, allowing it to propel a ship along a single vector (“forward”). You can't use a gravitic induction engine to make instantaneous direction changes, or fly sideways. Course changes are long curves; much like a large, winged craft would maneuver in atmosphere.
- You can't cut the engine and coast, since the ship returns to mundane (very slow) speeds at that point. To move in a direction other than “forward” requires a repulsar drive or maneuvering thrusters, so speeds are very limited in directions other than straight ahead.
- Only the Xyr can create control cores for these engines, so they are irreplaceable. This is why starship combat is usually resolved with boarding actions. It is far preferable to capture a ship, or at least its coffin-sized core, than to destroy it.
- Gravitic induction engines do not work close to large gravity wells like moons and planets. Most Xyr-tech ships are equipped with a repulsar drive and standard thrusters for maneuvering and landing.

STARSHIP WEAPONS

There isn't a whole lot of variety in starship weapons these days. Pulse cannons have been in use for centuries. They do the job well enough, and there just isn't a whole lot of incentive to destroy an enemy ship anyway. Speed, for boarding or escaping, has always been more desirable.

CANNONS

Pulse Cannons are larger versions of the common sidearm used throughout Nexus Sector. They emit a concentrated blast of plasma at very high velocity to inflict damage (both energy and kinetic) on the

target. Due to the tremendous heat generated, a cannon must cool down for several seconds (one round) between firings. Light, medium, and heavy cannons are available.

MISSILES & MINES

Missiles do not see much use because they are not compatible with gravitic induction engine technology. If a gravitic ship at cruising speed fired a missile, the projectile would be destroyed as soon as it left the shooter's induction field (because it would suddenly drop to a near-zero velocity). Missiles are too small to have their own induction engines, and so would have a hard time catching a ship so equipped.

Stationary mines are more effective, though the bow field of a cruising ship offers good protection against detonations from directly ahead. For this reason, proximity sensors (short range radar) are usually employed—hoping for a broadside blast as the mine flies by. Many mines can also recognize IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) signals—allowing allies to pass. Due to the sheer volume of space, mine fields are only practical when defending a specific (small) location.

GRAPPLING SYSTEMS

Starship combat is often resolved with boarding actions, because gravitic induction engines (or more specifically, their control cores) are irreplaceable. When two ships come alongside, their induction fields merge and the vessels are able to dock or grapple easily (as if both ships were at rest). Combat ships are often equipped with grappling systems to facilitate boarding hostile vessels. These systems fire a number of cables into the hull of the other ship and then pull the two together, at which point the boarders jump across the void and either enter through airlocks or cut their way through the hull. Some newer ships use gravitic or magnetic grapples. These work just like the cables but without the mess.

Some attackers prefer to use breaching pods. These are like escape pods fired from close range (once the induction fields merge). They clamp onto the enemy hull and burn a hole through which the occupants can board. In recent years, ships have even been designed with boarding gangways—extendable hallways with cutting apparatus on the end. These allow boarders to cross to the enemy ship without ever entering vacuum.

LIFE SUPPORT & SCANNERS

All of the Chosen races have solved the life support problem and have technology that can indefinitely recycle the air and water on a ship, so long as the engines are functioning. On larger vessels, it is possible to recycle food as well, but such reprocessors are generally only used in emergency situations, or on very long voyages.

Compared to many science fiction settings, “scanners” in *Lux Aeternum* are limited. You have radar, infrared, and radio, but nothing like a “life detector.” At range it is often difficult, if not impossible, to tell a powered down ship from an asteroid; and you usually have to get within weapons range before you can clearly see the nationality designations on an approaching vessel. As far as scanning a planet, it is easy to find cities and pick up on radio or video broadcasts, but nearly impossible to find a specific object or person unless they emit some sort of homing signal.

TRAVEL TIMES

The following table shows typical travel times for an average ship using a gravitic induction drive. There is a great deal of variation in these times depending on the position of the planets, the shape of their orbit, and even solar weather. A very fast ship could cut these times in half, while an old-tech vessel will typically take ten times as long to make the same journey.



From	To	Time
Center of system	Edge of system	14 days
Center of system	Inner world	9 hours
Inner world	Outer world	8 days
Outer world	Edge of system	6 days
Edge of Chrysalis	Edge of Unity	40 days
Edge of either Chrysalis or Unity	The New Worlds	100 days

RACIAL DIFFERENCES

Founders learned of starships from the Draugmorrian Brood of Song, so their vessels resemble a mix between the ornate beauty of those vessels and the sailing ships of the Age of Exploration. For several centuries, the Founders employed solar sail ships almost exclusively. There are even monochromatic laser arrays set up near Tempest, Cervantes, and Cymbeline to facilitate the transit back towards the primary star.

The ships that Newcomers were used to back in the Sol system were a lot like early Kyryk vessels—made of metal, and using nuclear, fusion, or other “dirty” drive systems. Rotation would be used to simulate gravity, or the crew would just make due in zero-G. The human vessels often carried a wide assortment of missiles and other armaments—none of which are currently employed in Nexus Sector. Here, they manufacture

similar looking vessels, but equipped with gravitic induction drives acquired from pre-existing ships.

These days, the Kyryk still build blocky, sturdy ships. They tend to leave out the windows—taking an almost submariner approach to space travel.

V’la ships are usually featureless chrome spheres, possibly in emulation of the Xyr arks (which are just a cluster of huge habitation spheres). They use gravitic induction engines and repulsar drives almost exclusively.

The E’lanari are not believed to be capable of travel through the void. There are, however, large lifeforms that dwell in the space between the worlds of the E’lan system. The remains of these creatures have been found planet-side, leading to the speculation that they sometimes descend to the planetary surface. It is possible, though not probable, that they could be used for crude space travel.

GAME MECHANICS

Since our goal here is to provide an overview of Nexus Sector and its many facets, we cannot devote several pages to the game mechanics of starship operation and combat. An in-depth treatment of starships, their game statistics, and rules for void warfare will have to wait for a supplement that can do it justice. Barring that, the Narrator can use an existing system to simulate the vessels described here, or approach ship combat as a narrative element rather than a tactical simulation.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

The purpose of this section is to give a brief overview of some possible *True20* campaigns that could be run in *Lux Aeternum*. It is more likely each group will forge its own campaign, perhaps spanning the length and breadth of Nexus System, and touching upon many different aspects of the setting. In that case, let these examples give you some ideas as to what some supporting (Narrator-controlled) characters might be up too while the player characters go about their adventures.



EXPLORING NEW WORLDS

A half dozen worlds, ripe for exploration and exploitation—what more could an ambitious group of explorers want? Let the Newcomers and Founders bicker over morality and theology. Let the Theocracy and the Tetrarchy posture and maneuver to claim the scarce resources of the old systems. Here, in the New Worlds, there are vast tracts of unexplored wilderness rife with ancient ruins and mysteries to be solved. What are a few rumors of hostile natives and horrendous predators compared to the glory and riches that await them?

A PRIVATEER'S LIFE FOR ME

With letters of marque from the Kingdom of Valencia, an armed galleon sets off into the void. While hauling cargo for the guild, the captain has orders to protect ships bound for home, and permission to seize treasure-laden vessels bearing the insignia of Montreaux. The Cervantes subsystem slides closer to war as armies gather on the moon of Galatea. Severing the supply lines that fund the enemy war machine could well mean the difference between victory and defeat.

VOID CORSAIRS

A variant of the privateer campaign, in this scenario the characters dwell in the mists beyond civilized space. In the nebula of Tyrin's Veil, they live as pirates in the collection of derelict hulls that serves as a makeshift port of call. Serve well, and survive long enough, and they may one day command a ship of their own. Then it will be up to them whether they continue to prey on the lone ships making the long journey to the New Worlds, or strike out for the civilized worlds where the rewards, and the risks, are even greater.

KNIGHTS ERRANT

As servants to the true Church, the Templars are tasked with bringing justice and enlightenment to the people of the Terra Novan Theocracy and beyond. From the towering cathedrals of Avon, they set forth to combat evil and prove their worth to the Conclave of Elders. Peacekeepers and shining beacons of chivalry, these paladins are well versed in both combat

and the divine arts of the Lux Sanctus. Whether by burning blade or sacred spell, the villainous shall perish beneath their righteous wrath.

WARRIORS OF XEOS

The binary worlds of Xeos have forever been torn by war and neglected by the Tetrarchy. Borders fluctuate as city-states betray old allies and form new loyalties. As heirs-apparent to the besieged cities of the northern coast, the characters must prove their valor to win the loyalty of the armies they will one day command. Whether it is in the distant courts of Concordium, or the ravaged battlefields of home, one must know one's enemy and face them without fear.

SUPPLEMENTAL RULES

Gathered here are the rules that, when added to those in the **Introduction** through **Chapter 8**, will allow you to run a *True20* game in Nexus Sector.

STRUCTURAL FEATS

Structural feats include a number of physiological and structural abilities that distinguish individual creatures in notable ways. Without Narrator approval, and a serious game reason (such as genetic manipulation or the like), humanoid PCs do *not* have access to these feats. After all, 10-foot tall quadrupeds with armor-plated skin do not generally meet the definition of "humanoid." Note that some alien races do have access to one or more of these abilities—but by racial nature, not *ala carte* selection. The following examples are *mostly* limited to those traits necessary to detail the races presented in this setting. Future supplements will present many more structural feats, enabling the Narrator to build a variety of lifeforms.

ENHANCED MOVEMENT (STRUCTURAL)

You have either a movement form improved beyond that of the humanoid structure, such as claws for burrowing or fins for swimming, or you have greater land movement due to an increased number of legs or more powerfully mobile leg assembly (such as some dinosaurs). If this is a new movement form, it starts at 10 feet and increases 5 feet per additional Enhanced Movement feat. If this is land movement, it starts at 40 feet and increases 10 feet per additional feat.

IMPROVED LONGEVITY (STRUCTURAL)

Due to metabolic efficiency, body chemistry, or some other exotic reason, you have a lifespan double the human norm. For each additional time you acquire this feat, double your lifespan and age categories.

NATURAL ARMOR (STRUCTURAL)

Your tough skin, resilient structure, or bony plating renders you less susceptible to physical damage. Add +2 to your Toughness saves. However, durability comes at the cost of speed and maneuverability: you suffer a -1 penalty to your Reflex saving throws. You can acquire this feat multiple times; each time increase your Toughness by +2 and decrease your Reflex save by 1.

NATURAL ATTACK (STRUCTURAL)

You have some form of improved natural attack, such as horns, claws, dorsal spines, or something else. You have a +1 to your unarmed damage when attacking with said item. Increase this by an additional +1 for each additional time you take this feat, up to a maximum of twice your natural damage bonus from Strength.

NATURAL FLYER (STRUCTURAL)

You have wings or some other means of aerial propulsion. You have a flight modifier of (1/2 level + Strength), can substitute your flight modifier for your Acrobatics skill when airborne, and have a movement

A TANGLED WEB

As ambassadors, adjuncts, or even spies, the characters move in the elite circles of the nobility—mixing with alien dignitaries as well as the movers and shakers of the home system. With orders from the highest levels, they covertly thwart the plans of those who mean the sovereign harm, while engaging in the courtly dance of scheming and romance. Whether working behind the scenes in the parliaments of home, or on assignment within a distant regime, the stakes are high, as are the penalties for failure. Court intrigue is not a game for the inexperienced.

rate equal to your flight modifier times 5 feet. Each additional time you take this feat, increase your flight modifier by 1.

PUPPETEER (STRUCTURAL)

Upon sustained physical contact with another creature's skin, you may attempt to override their nervous system and usurp control of their physical form, essentially relegating them to being passengers in their own bodies. Make a Concentration check against a Difficulty of 10 + the target creature's Will save bonus. The Narrator may penalize this check based on environmental conditions, the personality of the target creature, etc. If forcing a target to do something dangerous or strongly against their nature, they may attempt to regain control—another concentration check is required, this time against a Difficulty of 10 + the result of the creature's Will save.

SAPIENT (STRUCTURAL)

You are self-aware, possessing at least basic reasoning and even language skills. Without this feat, machines are simply constructs and automatons, while "natural" creatures are limited to animal-level mental abilities and instinctual drives.

SIZE CLASS (STRUCTURAL)

This feat permanently moves you one level up or down the size chart (see Chapter 8). In addition to the modifications indicated on the chart, every level above medium size increases your racial limit for Strength by four points. You still have to pay for the ability, but the limit no longer rests at +5. For example, a large creature has a Strength maximum of +9. Each additional acquisition of this feat increases or decreases your size another category.

BACKGROUNDS

In addition to the human background presented in **Chapter 1**, the *Lux Aeternum* setting has the following background options. Structural feats in these backgrounds are treated as Supernatural powers in terms of bonus feats (trading two for one), but cost only single feat slots following character creation.

SYNTHETICS

"Synthetic" is a general term applied to any of a number of series and models of artificially created and artificially intelligent beings. Their uses, appearances, and dispositions vary greatly throughout Newcomer held space.

Ability Adjustments: +1 Intelligence, -1 Charisma, No Constitution

Bonus Feats: Sapien, Tough

Favored Feats: Eidetic Memory, Skill Focus (Computers)

Special: With Narrator permission, a Synthetic may have access to certain Structural feats to reflect a non-humanoid construction. Further, with

a simple rename to “Upgrade” or “Features,” a Synthetic can be fully justified in selecting feats from the Cybernetic or Genmod list. Finally, a Synthetic has no Constitution score. The benefit from this is that the character is effectively immune to any effect requiring a Fortitude Save (which they also lack), as they aren’t truly alive. The down side is that they do not gain ability score bonuses through character advancement (they must purchase them through the aforementioned “Upgrades”), and they do not heal naturally from damage suffered; instead, they must be repaired as any other machine.

DRAGMORRE

Draugmorre are a race of winged reptilian humanoids with intensely passionate cultural striation among their communities. Though well-muscled, this merely brings them up to par on “normal” gravity worlds; being from a low gravity world, they would normally suffer strength penalties when outside of their natural environment. They are quick, but fragile due to their light bone structure. Draugmorre have the following background traits:

Ability Adjustments: +1 Dexterity, –1 Constitution

Bonus Feats: Aggressive Attack, Natural Flyer

Favored Feats: Diehard, Weapon Training

KYRYK

The Kyryk come in two varieties—younger Builders that comprise the majority of the race, and the larger, older Defenders, who act as community protectors for the rest of their people. A player must choose one of the two stages when playing a Kyryk. Community-minded among themselves, Kyryk are bluntly practical and single-minded, and therefore sometimes difficult to socialize with from the viewpoint of other races. Kyryk have the following traits:

BUILDER

Ability Adjustments: +1 Constitution, –1 Charisma

Bonus Feats: Talented (Craft and Concentration), Tough

Favored Feats: Diehard, Endurance

DEFENDER

Ability Adjustments: +4 Strength, +2 Constitution, –2 Intelligence, –2 Wisdom, –2 Charisma

Bonus Feats: Natural Armor, Size Class (Large)

Favored Feats: Rage

V'la

The V’la are a race of great intellect that strongly resemble the (now extinct) jellyfish of Terra Mortis. They don’t possess the necessary physiology to move outside of a fluid environment without a host or other conveyance, and their structure is more fragile than that of most humanoids.

Ability Adjustments: +1 Intelligence, +1 Wisdom, –2 Constitution

Bonus Feats: Iron Will, Puppeteer

Favored Feats: Eidetic Memory, Skill Focus (Concentration)

TECHNOLOGICAL AUGMENTATION

Newcomer technology, representing, in some cases, the cutting edge of 23rd Century Terran engineering, includes both Cybernetics and Genetic Modification. Future supplements will include more material on cybernetics

and geneneering, as well as conditions such as cyberpsychosis and VGRS (Volatile Genetic Rejection Syndrome) but the basic rules are as follows.

CYBERNETICS

Cybernetics are acquired as specific feats. This is due to game balance issues as well as the simple fact that such implants are not easily neutralized or taken away from a character. Specifically designed EMP (Electromagnetic Pulse) weapons can force cybered individuals to make a Fortitude save or lose all Cybernetic functions for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which the save failed. Further, obvious cybernetic enhancements, such as replacement limbs, armor casing, or the like, impose a –5 penalty to appropriate interaction skill usage when faced with people (such as devout Church members) who view such modifications as anathema; they take exception to those who feel they can improve on God’s design.

Cybernetic implants fall into one of three categories: Minor, Intermediate, and Major. A minor modification consists of some additional usage or extension of a natural human ability, or a relatively limited (in terms of integration) piece of cybergear. Examples would be sensory implants (lowlight enhancement, ultrasonic imaging, etc.), or retractable finger razors. Intermediate implants are more sizable, more integrated into other systems within the body, or require more extensive neural interfacing. Examples include Integral VRNet Interlinks, Cyberlimbs, Synthetic Muscle Implants, Skeletal Reinforcement, etc. Major Implants are either macroscale replacements (e.g., a Cybertorso with limb carapace-plating) or highly demanding neural interactives, such as Cortex Firewire (reflex enhancement) or an integrated secondary cyberbrain.

CYBERNETIC MODIFICATION (GENERAL)

This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time, it grants 3 modification points for “purchasing” cybernetic implants. Minor implants cost 1 point, Intermediate cost 3 points, and Major cost 6 points.

GENETICS

Genetic engineering is generally less obvious than cybernetics, somewhat safer statistically, but more limited in the heights to which it can improve human performance. As with cybernetics, genetic enhancements (or “Genmods”) are acquired as specific feats. However, unlike cybernetics, they cannot be targeted except with the most sophisticated biological weaponry, and unless also cosmetic in nature, are virtually undetectable. Many existing feats, such as save bonuses like Great Fortitude, or feats offering limited improvements over standard capabilities, such as Night Vision or Run, can be presented as Genmods. Some Structural feats can be purchased as Genmods with Narrator permission, such as Improved Longevity or Natural Armor (similarly, many Genmods, such as the two here, can be purchased as Structural feats). Future supplements will expand on these two basic Genmod feats.

IMPROVED NATURAL ABILITY (GENMOD)

You have 3 more attribute points than those granted at character creation or level advancement. You are still limited to racial caps in each attribute, however. This feat may be taken up to three times.

EXTRAORDINARY ABILITY (GENMOD)

You have an additional attribute point specifically to raise a single attribute from +5 to +6. You must already have an attribute at +5 before you can take this feat.

MECHA VS. KAIJU



Mecha: Giant humanoid robots controlled by human pilots. Kaiju: Giant monsters spawned by atomic radiation. *Mecha vs. Kaiju* portrays the epic struggle of heroic mecha pilots in their towering war machines, defending the people of Japan against gigantic radioactive monsters.

The setting is based on two unique influences from Japanese pop culture.

The kaiju detailed here are based on monsters such as the ape-like Gargantua, the noble insect Mothra, and the unstoppable Godzilla—all products of the legendary Toho film studio. Inspiration for the heroic Mecha Assault Force comes primarily from anime series like *Mobile Suit Gundam*, with a healthy dose of *sentai* (taskforce) teams (best known in the west as “Power Rangers”) thrown in.

The heroes in *Mecha vs. Kaiju* are members of an elite taskforce of pilots and specialists willing to do whatever it takes to defend their

MECHA VS. KAIJU

homeland. They train endlessly for the cataclysmic moment when giant robots, bristling with bleeding-edge technology, go toe-to-toe with the massive and destructive kaiju. But members of the Mecha Assault Force must be equally capable outside their war machines, as they confront a 50-year conspiracy to undermine their homeland from within.

A *Mecha vs. Kaiju* campaign features opportunities for every heroic role to shine. Adepts use psychic and spiritual power to augment their towering battle vehicles and confront inhuman foes. Experts use their peerless skills in a variety of ways, from maximizing the power of their mecha to running down the most cunning and dangerous human foe—the ninja! And of course, warriors use their combat prowess to fight diabolical enemy agents as well matching their mecha one-on-one against the awesome might of the kaiju.

HISTORY

The year was 1945, and Japan stood at the brink of defeat. With Okinawa crushed and America poised to invade, the military overlords of Japan swore to fight on. Their will was broken at 8:15 a.m. on August 6th, when a bomber dropped its atomic payload on the city of Hiroshima. The plane took photographs of the growing mushroom cloud for several minutes, then left. They did not witness the true devastation that walked out of the cloud on two legs.

The people called it Kaiju, or “mysterious beast.” At the time they thought the bomb and the monster were both dropped by America. Later, it was theorized that the kaiju was somehow generated by a massive spontaneous mutation caused by the explosion. Similar mutations caused by subsequent above ground nuclear tests have lent credence to this theory. Whatever its origin, the creature wreaked havoc on the ruins of the city, then began moving south across the face of the nation. Harassed by the remains of the Japanese army, the creature made its way towards the southern island, where it was destroyed in a second atomic blast in Nagasaki. Japan surrendered and the remains of the kaiju were gathered for study. But in the Cold War struggle that followed, North Korean forces sought to use the kaiju as a weapon.

Building upon Japanese nuclear experiments once conducted in their own lands, the scientists of North Korea were somehow able to grow their own kaiju at the Chosin Reservoir, unleashing them against the American military during the Korean War. Though quickly outlawed as offensive weapons by the United Nations, the effect of giant monsters in the Asian theatre would have long lasting results. In 1956, a kaiju broke free from the Korean demilitarized zone and swam across the Sea of Japan, destroying a fishing village and leveling Tokyo before it was defeated.

This incident led to the formation of the Japanese Self Defense Force, and its two specialized corps, the “Anti-Kaiju Force” and the “Mecha Assault Force.” It is the mission of these two agencies to defend Japan against kaiju raids. Today, in addition to rogue giant monsters, the M.A.F. must contend with the growing threat of North Korean intelligence agents operating on Japanese soil. In order to combat this new, unconventional threat, the organization has begun recruiting new members from outside the military. Yet with so many enemy agents infiltrating the home islands, can the M.A.F. even trust its own?

“IRON STRIKER, INBOUND!”

LT. ACE KASURAGI PILOTED HIS GLEAMING WINGED VEHICLE OVER THE STREET, BLOWING OUT WHAT WINDOWS REMAINED, FOLLOWING THE SWARM OF MISSILES STREAKING TOWARDS THE GREAT BEAST. THE MISSILE'S COOKIE-CUTTER TECHNOLOGY SWERVED THE PROJECTILES AROUND HIS COMRADE'S IRON ANGEL MECHA AND INTO KAIBUTSU'S CHEST.

IT PAUSED FOR A MOMENT, DISTRACTED BY THE FIRE AND SMOKE AS THE STRIKER FLEW OVERHEAD, AND THE ANGEL MOVED OFF. UNABLE TO FOLLOW THE ONE STREAKING AWAY FROM THE COMBAT, IT TURNED DOWN THE STREET TO PURSUE THE OTHER.

A VOICE CRACKLED OVER ACE'S RADIO. “YOU BOUGHT THE CAPTAIN SOME TIME, ACE. NOW LET THE SARGE FINISH THE JOB!”

SGT. KEIKO WATANABI PUSHED THE HULKING FORM OF THE IRON DEMON THROUGH THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF A BUILDING, BLOCKING THE CREATURE'S PATH. HER BATTLE CRY FILLED THE STREETS AS TWIN GRAVITY BEAMS OPENED UP ON KAIBUTSU. THE CREATURE STUMBLER BACKWARDS AND TOPPLED TO THE GROUND, UNMOVING.

“GOOD SHOT, SARGE! WE'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH JUICE TO GET BACK TO BASE.”

CAPT. FUJITA, THE IRON ANGEL'S PILOT, RADIOED BACK. “LEG ACTUATORS ARE FREEZING UP. LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE HITCHING A RIDE BACK WITH YOU.”

ACE, IN THE STRIKER, HAD A BETTER VIEW OF THE BATTLEFIELD. CAPT. FUJITA'S SMILE FADED AS HE HEARD, “UH, TEAM, I HATE TO BREAK THINGS UP BUT...KAIBUTSU'S NOT DEAD!”

CLAMBERING OUT OF THE RUINS, THE GREAT BEAST STOOD TALL, ENRAGED BY THE INSECTS THAT WOULD DARE COMBAT HIM. IT STRODE FORWARD, READY TO CRUSH ALL IN ITS WAY.

“CAPTAIN, WHAT DO WE DO?”

CAPTAIN HIHARU FUJITA GRITTED HIS TEETH, RESET HIS SYSTEMS, AND PRAYED. “WE DO WHAT WE ALWAYS DO, SARGE. WE FIGHT FOR THE DEFENSE OF OUR NATION. MECHA ASSAULT FORCE...ICHIMASU!”

HERO CREATION

In the *Mecha vs. Kaiju* campaign, the heroes are members of a specialized branch of the “Anti-Kaiju Force” (A.K.F.) called the “Mecha Assault Force” (M.A.F.). This elite fighting corps draws the best young men and women from military and civilian sources to utilize state of the art technology against monstrous threats. Their enemies range from giant monsters to legions of ninjas and robotic soldiers. Their weapons include powered armor, energy weapons, high-tech vehicles and, of course, giant robots.

Heroes are mostly recruited into the M.A.F. from outside agencies, meaning they have as little knowledge of the inner-workings of the organization as anyone else. All Japanese citizens are aware of kaiju attacks, and the fact that they are becoming more frequent. And they are aware that the M.A.F. combats these creatures with giant robots, advanced tactical fighter craft, GAZER tanks, and many other high-tech means.

Hero characters can come from any background, provided that they in some way show an aptitude for machines, piloting, super-science, or something equally important to the M.A.F. It is a common trope in anime that the best mecha pilots are not military trained, and the same can hold true in your campaign. It is just as likely that heroes are indeed chosen from the ranks of the military: fighter pilots, tank operators, or perhaps junior members of the A.K.F. itself, working their way up the ranks to the premier position of mecha pilot.

ABILITIES

Heroes in *Mecha vs. Kaiju* are exceptionally capable—far more than normal individuals. You have 10 points to divide among your hero’s abilities, rather than the usual 6 as given in **Chapter 1**. The only limitation is you cannot put more than 5 points into a single ability score.

ROLES

Character roles and traits are unchanged, except where noted. This section describes the particular forms the heroic roles take in *Mecha vs. Kaiju*.

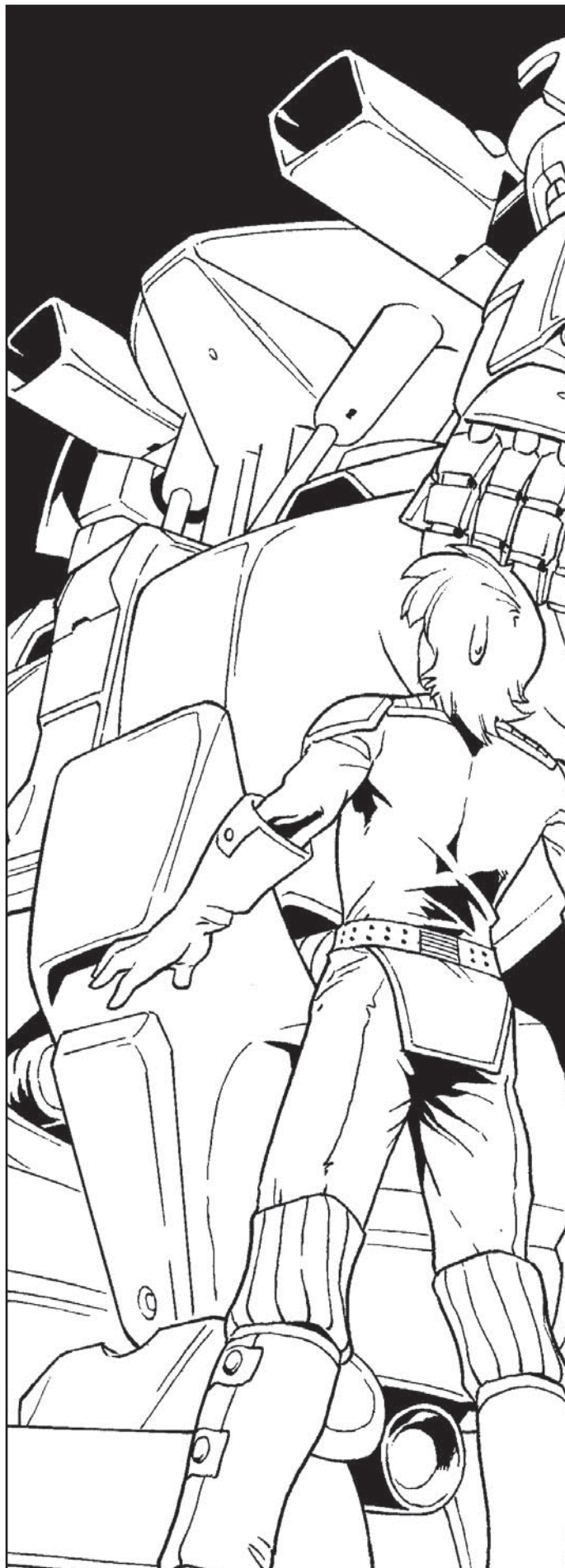
ADEPT

The adept may be a deeply spiritual soldier, who battles the kaiju as an affront to nature. He or she may also be an outsider in touch with the Kami spirits of Shinto, perhaps even a priest capable of speaking with spirits. Finally, the adept may be a gifted psychic, able to detect the presence of the giant monsters before they appear.

There are two sources for supernatural powers: Mind and Spirit. Spirit-based powers are derived from a connection with the spirits of the world, called “Kami”. Everything has a Kami spirit within it, from the humblest stone to the noblest animal. Those in touch with spirits are usually followers of the Shinto religion, though there are many lay-persons capable of making contact. Spirit powers use Charisma as a base.

The other source for supernatural power is the Mind. Psychics have always existed, strong and forceful personalities able to command those around them, often without any knowledge that their influence is anything more than a winning smile. The psychic draws her power from her own forceful presence. The more powerful presence of the Kaiju upsets the psychic mind, and they are often aware of the creature’s location even hundreds of miles away. Psychic powers use Wisdom as their key ability.

Feats: Choose four from General or Adept.



EXPERT

The expert may be a trained fighter pilot, with a special aptitude towards mecha piloting. Or he or she may have knowledge and skills from outside the military that can be used in the fight against the kaiju.

Feats: Dodge, and choose three others from Expert or General.

WARRIOR

The warrior is most likely a soldier, taken from any branch of the Self Defense Force. Knowledge and tactics eventually must be put into practical application, and that is the warrior's job.

Feats: Armor Training (Light), Firearms Training, and choose two others from General or Warrior.

CHARACTERISTICS

The Characteristics for *Mecha vs. Kaiju* heroes are the same as those found in other settings, with the addition of a new descriptor: the Archetype. A hero's Archetype incorporates his or her Nature to determine the overall personality.

ARCHETYPE

Anime, manga, and sentai genres all feature characters that fall into clearly defined Archetypes, each with its own unique goals and methods. Archetype is used here to denote how a character acts and interacts with others on the team. More than just a duty or job, a character's Archetype expresses who they truly are as a person.

Characters in *Mecha vs. Kaiju* fall into identifiable Archetypes. Each archetype has an appropriate Virtue and Vice, and playing to your Archetype is a way to restore spent Conviction.

YUSHA (HERO)

You are the first one to volunteer when there is danger, and the last one to leave. You will never leave an innocent in harms way, even at the risk of your own life. And you will never leave a teammate behind on the battlefield, even if it means you may fall.

Of course, being right much of the time often makes you think you're right all of the time. Your bravery can sometimes border on foolhardiness. Or are your heroics just a sham to cover up a dark secret?

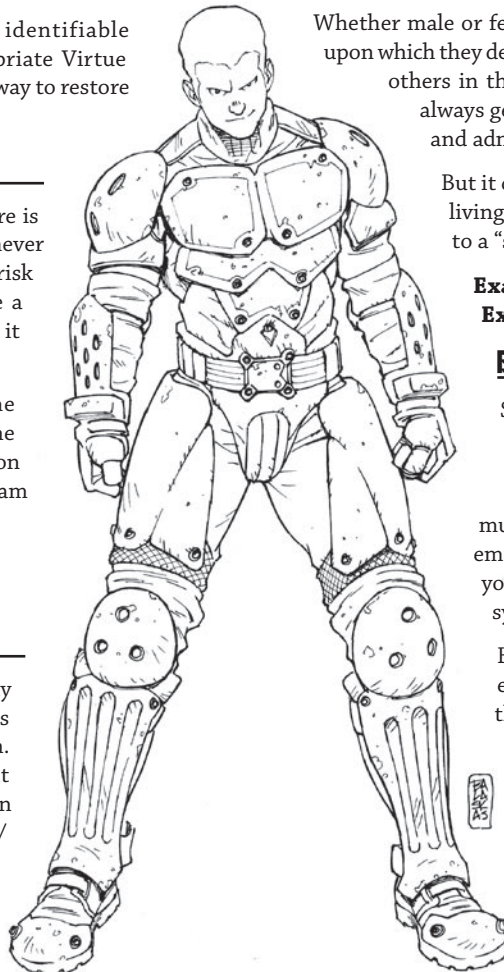
Example Virtue: Decisive

Example Vice: Over-protective

RAIBURU (REBEL/RIVAL)

You are the antithesis of the hero. Actually you are the antithesis of everyone. If there is consensus, you are the one voice in opposition. If there is authority, you are the one that constantly questions it. If there is one person in a group that is the most powerful/rich/good looking/popular, you instantly and instinctively set yourself in opposition to that person.

But maybe you see more than others.



Perhaps you just realize the truth that the rest miss. Staying out of the herd can keep you on top of things. And you can bet that the day you actually agree with someone else's opinion, people will go along with it.

Example Virtue: Independent

Example Vice: Rash

BAKA (FOOL)

If there is a banana peel to be slipped on, an ottoman to be tripped over, or a house of cards to be toppled, you are the one that will make it happen. People laugh at you, not with you. If you have something serious to say, it might be hard for others to take you seriously.

Yet, your friendly and lovable personality endears you to everyone you meet. Maybe they don't respect you, but they sure do like you.

Example Virtue: Kind Hearted

Example Vice: Gullible

HONCHO (BIG GUY)

There is no one bigger, wider, or taller than you. You always stand out, which makes you the most outgoing and gregarious of anyone else in a group. Your good-natured personality often makes you the life of the party.

But it can be lonely at the top. Those that want to have a good time with you at the party usually go home with someone else. And sometimes you don't know whether to weep or scream.

Example Virtue: Good Natured

Example Vice: Callous

SHINYU (BEST FRIEND)

Whether male or female, you are the Hero's foundation, the rock upon which they depend on. Because the Hero trusts you implicitly, others in the group will trust you as well. You might not always get the guy/girl, but you always have the respect and admiration of others.

But it can get cold in the shadows. You can grow weak living off reflected light. And many refuse to listen to a "sidekick".

Example Virtue: Loyal

Example Vice: Jealous

BURRIKO (CUTE GIRL)

Sweet, honest, friendly, trusting, naïve—these are only some of the words others use to describe you. You don't think about these names much, since you don't think about yourself much. Others are more important, especially their emotional well-being. If someone is feeling down, you are always there with a ready smile and a sympathetic shoulder to cry on.

But living for others can be a hollow, empty existence. Behind the smile and the cute face, is there anything else? At the end of the day are you giving, or are others just taking?

Example Virtue: Optimistic

Example Vice: Panicky

AMA (BAD GIRL)

The only important thing in the world is you. Others are there to make your life easier. Using them is what you live for,

and making their lives more difficult is the greatest satisfaction there is.

But no one is an island, and sooner or later you will find you need another. After all the wicked tricks and put downs, how can you face those you have wronged? Will you have the strength to ask for help?

Example Virtue: Sly

Example Vice: Manipulative

OTEMBA (TOUGH GIRL)

They all think you're weak. A girl can't box, a girl can't play soccer, a girl can't pitch a fastball. But you prove them wrong time and time again. You are strong enough to do anything a boy can do, tough enough to take any punishment they can dish out, and hard enough to rebuff any attempt at closeness or affection.

But can you shake the fear that others will only hurt you in the end? Is self-destruction your only goal? Can you ever learn to measure yourself against yourself alone, or will you always need others?

Example Virtue: Determined

Example Vice: Stubborn

DASAI (QUIET/CREEPY GIRL)

There's always one, isn't there. Alone, even in a crowded room, you sit and examine the houseplants, or an interesting bug on the ground. Few people want to get close to you, and fewer still know how.

But there are wonders inside you, if only someone could break down the walls. You've been hurt so many times, how can you learn to trust? After being alone for so long, how can you learn to be part of the group?

Example Virtue: Thoughtful

Example Vice: Fearful

NEW FEATS

The following additional feats are available in a *Mecha vs. Kaiju* game. The Narrator can decide if they should be available as options in other *True20* games.

ADVANCED STRIKE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: IMPROVED CRITICAL, IMPROVED STRIKE, BASE COMBAT BONUS +8.

When you score a critical hit on an opponent with an unarmed strike, you deal +6 damage instead of +3.

LIFTING (GENERAL)

You are capable of lifting and carrying amounts far in excess of someone with your strength. When you take this feat, multiply your lift and carrying capacity by two. You may take this feat multiple times. Each time, add two to the weight multiple for your lifting and carrying capacity. For example, a person taking this feat three times would multiply their lifting and carrying capacity by six.

UNBALANCE OPPONENT (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: DODGE, BASE COMBAT BONUS +6.

During your action, you designate an opponent no more than one size category larger or smaller than you. That opponent doesn't get to add

his or her Dexterity modifier to attack rolls when targeting you. (If the opponent has a Dexterity penalty, he or she still takes that penalty.)

You can select a new opponent on any action.

MECHA FEATS

If you have the Mecha Weapon Training feat, any feats that apply to ranged weapons (such as Point Blank Shot or Precise Shot) also apply to the relevant ranged mecha weapons. Melee-oriented feats don't apply if you're operating a mecha.

ADVANCED MECHA OPERATION (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION.

You have received advanced training or extensive practice in mecha movement.

Choose a size of mecha (Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal). When you are operating a mecha of the chosen size, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to Defense. Furthermore, armor penalties for operating the mecha are 2 less than they would otherwise be (minimum penalty -0).

EVASIVE ACTION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +4, MECHA OPERATION

A pilot can spend a point of Conviction and make a Pilot check to lessen the damage dealt by a successful attack against his mecha. If the check result exceeds the attack roll, the damage is reduced by half (round fractions down, minimum of +1 damage). The pilot can make an evasive action check once per round.

HAIR TRIGGER (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +6.

You have developed a delicate sense of timing, and your area attacks hit your foes when they're ill-prepared to defend against them.

Whenever you make an attack from your mecha that requires enemies to make Reflex saving throws, the Difficulty for such saves is increased by +2.

IMPROVED EVASIVE ACTION (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +8, MECHA OPERATION, EVASIVE ACTION

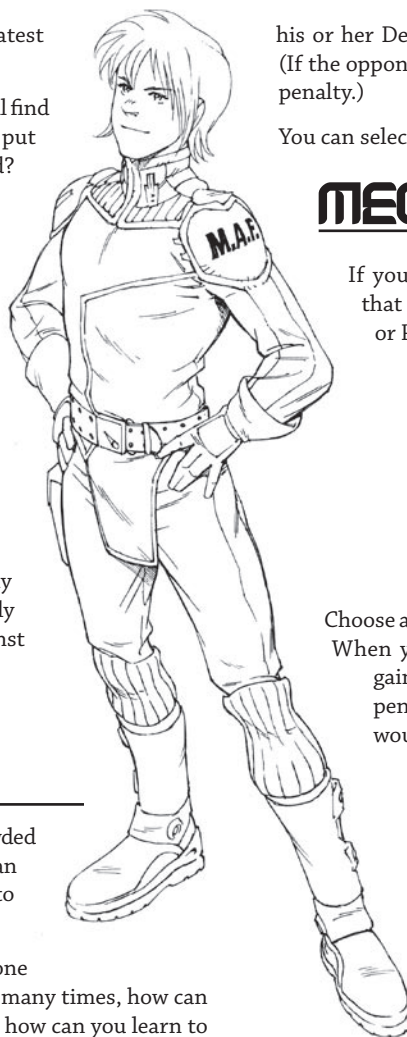
A pilot can spend a point of Conviction and make a Pilot check to lessen the damage dealt by a successful attack against his mecha. If the check result exceeds the attack roll, the damage is negated. The pilot can make an improved evasive action check once per round.

MECHA CRUSH (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION.

You can hurl your mecha's body onto opponents to deal tremendous damage.

As an attack action, you can maneuver your mecha to jump or fall onto opponents, using the mecha's body to crush them. This attack is useful only against creatures at least two size categories smaller than your mecha. The base damage for a crush attack depends on your mecha's size category, as given on the next page. Add 1.5 times your mecha-modified



Strength bonus to this base damage to determine the total damage for the attack.

Mecha Size	Damage
Large	+4
Huge	+6
Gargantuan	+8
Colossal	+12

A crush attack deals bludgeoning damage and affects as many creatures as can fit under your mecha's body. Each creature in the affected area must succeed on a Reflex save (Difficulty 10 + your mecha's size modifier for grapple attacks). On a failure, the creature is pinned and automatically takes crush damage each round the pin is maintained.

MECHA FEINT (EXPERT)

PREREQUISITES: INTELLIGENCE +1, TRAINED IN BLUFF, MECHA OPERATION

A pilot with Mecha Feint can make a Bluff check in combat as a move action (instead of an attack action). He receives a +2 bonus on the Bluff check made to feint in melee combat.

MECHA FLING (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION

You can pick up an opponent with your mecha and fling it.

Your mecha can make a grapple check at a -20 penalty against an opponent at least two size categories smaller than it. If the grapple succeeds, you can use an attack action to fling the held opponent on your next action. The range increment for the thrown foe is 10 feet, and the maximum range is 100 feet.

A creature may be thrown horizontally or vertically. If thrown vertically, it takes normal falling damage. If thrown horizontally, it takes damage as though it had fallen half the distance thrown (rounded down), and you may apply your mecha-modified Strength bonus to the damage.

Your mecha may also fling your opponent at another mecha, vehicle, or creature. To do so, make an attack roll at a -4 penalty, with appropriate range penalties, against the target. If you hit, both the thrown creature and the target take the amount of damage that the thrown creature would have otherwise taken, as given above.

MECHA FOCUS (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION

Choose one specific mecha. You gain a +1 bonus on Drive, Pilot, and Craft (Mecha) checks with this mecha. The same bonus is applied to attack rolls with the mecha's ranged weapons. To designate a focus mecha, the pilot must have operated it for at least one month. Minor changes and upgrades to the mecha don't affect familiarity, but if the pilot switches to a mecha with a different size, different flight system, or more than one new weapon, he must operate it for at least one month before he is focused with it. A pilot can focus on only one mecha at a time.

MECHA OPERATION (GENERAL)

You know how to operate a mecha.

You do not suffer restrictions on movement or penalties on skill checks for being unfamiliar with mecha controls. You can move normally in a mecha and generally perform any action as if you weren't inside a mecha, subject to the obvious limitations of size.

Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on Acrobatics, Climb, Drive, Escape Artist, Pilot, and Stealth checks when operating a mecha. Furthermore, they cannot run or charge.

MECHA SPECIALIZATION (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA FOCUS WITH CHOSEN MECHA, MECHA OPERATION

Choose one specific mecha for which you have already selected the Mecha Focus feat. You gain a +2 bonus on Drive, Pilot, and Craft (Mecha) checks with this mecha. The same bonus is applied to attack rolls with the mecha's ranged weapons. This bonus does not stack with Mecha Focus bonuses. To designate a specialized mecha, the pilot must have operated it for at least one month. Minor changes and upgrades to the mecha don't affect familiarity, but if the pilot switches to a mecha with a different size, different flight system, or more than one new weapon, he must operate it for at least one month before he is specialized in it. A pilot can specialize in only one mecha at a time.

MECHA SWEEP (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION, POWER ATTACK

You can use your mecha's great size and strength, along with your own knowledge of balance and leverage, to pick up a heavy object (such as a large tree or boulder) and attack an area as an attack action. The area affected is a half-circle with a radius equal to your mecha's reach. This attack deals damage to all creatures two or more size categories smaller than your mecha within the area. The base damage dealt depends on your mecha's size, as given below. Add 1.5 times your mecha's Strength bonus to this base damage to determine the total damage for the attack.

Mecha Size	Damage
Large	+3
Huge	+4
Gargantuan	+6
Colossal	+8

Though it can deal significant damage, this form of attack is awkward and unbalancing. You take a -2 penalty to your mecha's Defense and on Reflex saves until your next turn.

MECHA TRAMPLE (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +4, MECHA OPERATION.

Your mecha can knock down and crush opponents.

When you attempt to overrun an opponent while operating a mecha, the target may not choose to avoid your mecha. If your mecha knocks down the target, your mecha may make one free slam attack against the target, gaining a +4 bonus on the attack roll because the target is prone.

MECHA WEAPONS BOOST (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +8, TRAINED IN CRAFT (MECHA).

By disabling safeguards and shunting auxiliary power into your weapons, you can attain greater destructive power at the cost of weapon accuracy.

You can take a penalty of up to -5 on your attack roll. If you do, the mecha weapon of your choice deals +2 damage for each -1 penalty you took. The attack penalty persists until the beginning of your next turn, but the additional damage applies only to the next single attack you make.

MECHA WEAPONS TRAINING (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: MECHA OPERATION.

You know how to acquire targets and fire your mecha's weapons using onboard computers and sensors.

You no longer suffer the standard penalties on attack rolls while you're in your mecha. You can use any feats that refer to firearms with your ranged mecha weapons.

Characters without this feat take a –4 penalty on attack rolls made while in a mecha cockpit. Furthermore, they cannot apply firearm feats to a mecha's ranged weapons.

STUN MECHA (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: BASE COMBAT BONUS +8, MECHA OPERATION, PRECISE SHOT.

By channeling electricity into an enemy mecha's control system, you can temporarily short it out.

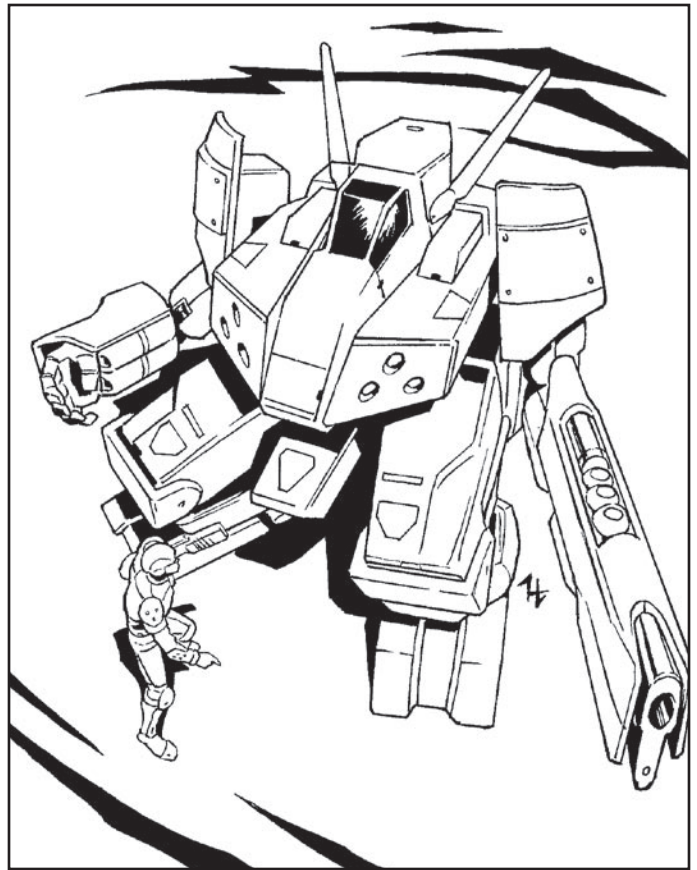
If you threaten a critical hit with an electricity attack against another mecha, you may automatically confirm the critical. In addition to suffering the effects of the critical hit, the mecha is automatically stunned for 2d4 rounds. The stunned mecha automatically drops what it is holding and can take no attack or move actions. While the mecha is stunned, apply a –2 penalty to the mecha operator's Defense (even though the operator is not stunned).

THRUSTER BLAST (GENERAL)

PREREQUISITES: TRAINED IN PILOT, MECHA OPERATIONS, MECHA EQUIPPED WITH FLIGHT SYSTEM.

By directing your vectored thrusters all around your mecha, you can kick up a cloud of dust and debris that obscures the battlefield.

You can aim your thruster exhaust toward the ground to create a hemispherical cloud. If you are within 30 feet of the ground and there is loose debris or dust, you can create a cloud with a 50-foot radius centered directly below you. The generated winds snuff out small fires and give enemies attacking you a –4 penalty on their attack rolls. Creatures without eye protection caught within the debris cloud are blinded while inside it and for 1 round after emerging from it. The debris cloud grants anyone inside it one-half concealment (20% miss chance). Mecha with sensor systems ignore the concealment effects.



Because some mecha have vectored thrust systems, their flight path isn't affected by the aim of the exhaust. They don't have to hover or fly upward to create the cloud.

MECHA

The heart of *Mecha vs. Kaiju* is, of course, the robots. The M.A.F. is famous for its mecha. Since the 1960's, giant mechanical weapons have defended Japan against the attacks of the monstrous kaiju. The vehicles have undergone a number of incarnations over the years, from the first lumbering diesel-powered mecha firing sixteen-inch naval guns, to today's advanced fuel cell systems powering devastating energy weapons.

M.A.F. MECHA TYPES

Naming conventions for the Japanese Self Defense Force use a root word for each kind of vehicle. For example destroyers are named after weather effects. Mecha, due to their anthropomorphic design, all contain the root word "Jin" (man).

The current mecha design is the "Tetsujin" (iron man) line, founded on a rugged inner frame that can be modified to the specifications of individual pilots. Plans are in the works for a much larger "Yamajin" (mountain man) model, capable of going head-to-head with the strongest kaiju. The previous M.A.F. team had worked together for several years, and had substantially customized their Tetsujin mecha. These vehicles were lost along with the entire team on a recent mission, and today's mecha are merely bare-bones systems.

The Tetsujin is currently outfitted in two modes: light and heavy. The light unit has a low-yield, rapid fire gazer emitter, great speed and high maneuverability. This is the standard training mecha for all pilot candidates, due to its additional levels of computer control, which also

allow it to effectively engage in melee combat. Tetsujin heavy is an armored goliath equipped with super-charged gazer cannons capable of leveling a city block. The heavy is more than able to withstand the attacks of most kaiju currently fielded by enemy nations. For urban engagements in close quarters, there is also a much smaller Sennyojin (elf man) power-armor unit, capable of maneuvering in terrain inaccessible to its larger cousins.

Size bonuses and penalties are already factored into the attributes for each mecha. Because they are designed to respond to direct human interaction, pilots add the mecha's strength bonus to their own. A mecha's Dexterity penalty applies to its operator's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, and Stealth checks, in addition to the pilot's Ranged Attack Bonus. Its Toughness takes the place of the pilot's own Toughness save. The Attack Bonus applies to both melee and ranged attacks. Slam Damage adds to the pilot's basic melee attack damage. A mecha adds its Defense Bonus to that of its pilot. The Armor Penalty applies to those same pilot skills reduced by the mecha's Dexterity Penalty.

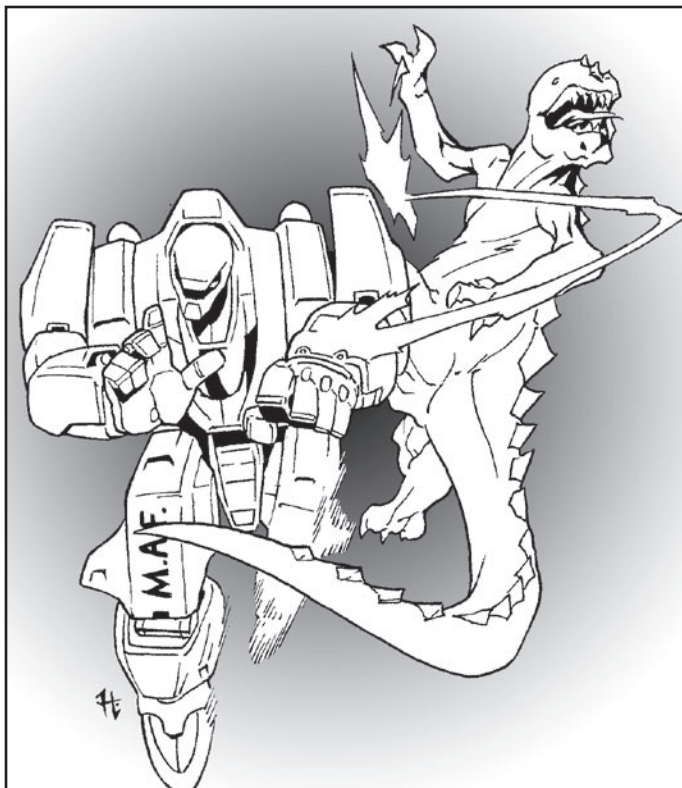
SENNYOJIN POWER ARMOR

Size: Large **Strength Bonus:** +4 **Dexterity Penalty:** —

Speed: 30 ft. **Toughness:** 10 **Reach:** 10

Attack Bonus: +1 **Slam Damage:** +3 **Defense Bonus:** +3

Equipment: Comm. System, Renda Chaingun: Dam +10, Crit 20, Range Increment 60', Orakuru Targeting System Mk.II, Shi-rudo Shield, Moderu Ni Sensor System, Jump Jets



TETSUJIN LIGHT

Size: Huge **Strength Bonus:** +8 **Dexterity Penalty:** —
Speed: 50 ft. **Toughness:** 15 **Reach:** 10
Attack Bonus: -2 **Slam Damage:** +12 **Defense Bonus:** +7
Armor Penalty: -4

Equipment: Comm. System, *Koutetsu* Armor, *Bouheki* Tactical Shield, *Youma* Neural Link, Jump Jets, *Kantsu* Combat Pike (Dam +24 Piercing, Crit 20, Reach 20'), *Joubatai* Gazer Emitter (Dam +14 Fire, Crit 20, Range Increment 60'), *Moderu San* Sensor System, *Shintaku* Defense Suite, *Usagi* Speed Enhancement

TETSUJIN HEAVY

Size: Huge **Strength Bonus:** +8 **Dexterity Penalty:** —
Speed: 35 ft., fly 150 ft. **Toughness:** 15 **Reach:** 10
Attack Bonus: +0 **Slam Damage:** +12 **Defense Bonus:** +11
Armor Penalty: -6

Equipment: Comm. System, *Odoshi* Armor, *Bariki-do* Tactical Shield, *Rakurai* Shock Rod (Dam +24, Crit. 20, Range Melee), *Chiri* Rocket Launcher (Dam +20 Piercing, Range 200'), *Kommetto* AutoGazer (Dam +16, Crit 20, Range Increment 75'), *Orakuru* Targeting System Mk.II, Jet Assist Wings, *Moderu Shi* Sensor System, *Shintaku* Defense Suite, Jet Pack

YAMAJIN

Size: Gargantuan **Strength Bonus:** +12 **Dexterity Penalty:** -1
Speed: 40 ft., fly 150 ft. **Toughness:** 25 **Reach:** 15
Attack Bonus: +1 **Slam Damage:** +20 **Defense Bonus:** +15
Armor Penalty: -8

Equipment: Comm. System, *Gasshiri* Armor, *Barike-do* Tactical Shield, *Tsunami* Gazer Cannon (Dam +24 Fire, Crit 20, Range Increment 150'), *Tsume* Missile Launcher (Dam +30, Range 2000'), *Tora* Claws (Dam +36 Slashing, Crit 19-20, Range Melee), *Chrysanthemum* Gazer Array [Dam +32 Fire, Area 60' radius (Reflex save for half)], *Orakuru* Targeting System Mk.V, *Moderu Shi* Sensor System, *Toushi* Sensor Suite, *Daiba* Fortification, Advanced Diagnostics, *Shintaku* Defense Suite, Thruster System

There are a wide variety of components that go into the construction of of Mecha, and the configurations presented here are just a selection of the ones that are possible. Mecha equipment falls into several categories: flight systems, sensor systems, defense systems, weapons (both hand-held and integrated), and miscellaneous systems.

WEAPONS

Mecha use both melee and ranged weapons to dispatch foes. In addition, a weapon can either be handheld or integrated into the mecha's superstructure; M.A.F. mecha use integrated weaponry.

GAZER WEAPONS

GAZER is an acronym for Gravity Amplification by Zeta Emission Recovery. Zeta particles were discovered in 1960 as a means of generating large amounts of energy with even less radiation emission than lasers. Early units required access to vast amounts of power, such as a city's electrical grid. Today, gazer weapons are much more efficient and can be fired dozens of times from easily replaceable fuel cells.

CHIRI ROCKET LAUNCHER

The Chiri rocket launcher is designed to take advantage of one of the few weaknesses common to kaiju: their inability to stop piercing attacks. The rockets do +20 Piercing damage, but because the launcher only holds 2 rockets it is often used to finish the beast after softening it up with other weapons. *Range:* 200 feet.

CHRYSANTHEMUM GAZER ARRAY

A barrage of phosphorus gazers that deals massive damage to the mecha's surroundings, making this a weapon of last resort. Everything within 60 feet of the mecha (but not the mecha itself) takes +32 fire damage, after which the gazers burn themselves out. A successful Reflex save (Difficulty 25) means the target takes only half damage. Once fired, the Chrysanthemum burst array becomes nonfunctional and must be replaced.

JOUBATAI GAZER EMITTER

More compact and powerful than the Kommeto Autogazer, the Joubatai fires a low-yield gazer beam in rapid succession to cook a specific area of its target, rather than overwhelm it with massive firepower. The weapon does +14 fire damage with a 60' range increment.

KANTSU COMBAT PIKE

This massive carbon-alloy polearm deals piercing damage based on the size of the mecha wielding it: Large +8, Huge +16, and Gargantuan +24. It deals +4 damage on a successful critical hit. The pike has an extra 5 feet of reach. The armor-piercing pike's size category is one greater than the mecha's size category, up to a maximum size of Colossal.

KOMMETO AUTOGAZER

Consisting of a rotating ring of gazer cannons, the Kommeto autogazer deals +16 points of fire damage with a successful attack, with a range increment of 75'.

KUROHYOU CLAWS

A mecha equipped with these durable alloy claws can tear great rents in most metal plating. The claws can be extended or retracted as a free action.

The claws convert the mecha's slam attack into a claw attack that deals slashing damage. The amount of damage is based on the mecha's size: Large +4, Huge +6, Gargantuan +8, and Colossal +16. The claws have a critical threat range of 19-20.

The claws are one size category smaller than the mecha's size category.

Rakurai Shock Rod

The “Thunderbolt” shock rod is essentially a one-handed metal rod with an electrical current running through the end. Damage is determined by the size of the mecha wielding it: Large +12, Huge +16, Gargantuan +20, and Colossal +24. Half of the damage is bludgeoning damage, and half is electricity damage.

The shock rod’s size category is the same as the mecha’s size category.

Renda Chaingun

Essentially a high-tech version of the medium machinegun, the M-9 Barrage has multiple barrels that fire large-caliber ammunition, dealing +10 ballistic damage on a successful hit, with a range increment of 60’.

Tora Claws

A mecha equipped with these durable alloy claws can tear great rents in most metal plating. They can be extended or retracted as a free action. The claws convert the mecha’s slam attack into a claw attack that deals slashing damage. The amount of damage is based on the mecha’s size: Large +8, Huge +12, Gargantuan or Colossal +16. The claws have a critical threat range of 19–20.

The claws are one size category smaller than the mecha’s size category.

Tsume Missile Launcher

The most common missile launcher installed on mecha, the Tsume deals +30 points of damage to its target; half of the damage is ballistic damage, and half of the damage is fire damage. The missile’s guidance system negates the normal penalty for range increments. *Range:* 2,000 feet.

Tsunami Gazer Cannon

The Tsunami gaze cannon has two aperture settings: focused beam and wide-angle beam. The mecha operator can switch between settings as a move action. The focused beam setting deals +24 points of fire damage with a successful ranged attack. It has a critical threat range of 20 and a 150’ range increment. On the wide-angle setting, the weapon automatically hits everything within a 60-foot cone for +24 points of fire damage, but those in the area can make a Reflex save (Difficulty

19) to reduce the damage by half. Critical hits aren’t possible on the wide-angle setting.

armor

Armor can be welded or otherwise fixed securely to a mecha’s superstructure, providing an equipment bonus to the mecha’s Defense. Mecha armor does not impose a maximum Dexterity bonus upon the mecha operator (as worn armor does) and does not require a special training feat to use.

Different types of mecha armor are presented below, along with the following statistics:

- **Equipment Bonus:** The equipment bonus that the armor provides to the operator’s Defense.
- **Armor Penalty:** Mecha armor applies this penalty on its operator’s Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, and Stealth checks.
- **Speed Penalty:** The amount by which the armor reduces the mecha’s base speed.

Koutetsu Armor

Koutetsu armor is made of advanced plastic polymers, such as carbon fiber and high-grade fiberglass. Although relatively cheap and light, it doesn’t offer tremendous protection.

Odoshi Armor

This easy-to-acquire alloy is lightweight and reasonably strong.

Gasshira Armor

Gasshira alloy is harder, heavier, and more durable than Odoshi.

MECHA ARMOR

Name	Equipment Bonus	Armor Penalty	Speed Penalty
<i>Koutetsu</i>	+3	–4	—
<i>Odoshi</i>	+5	–6	–5 feet
<i>Gasshira</i>	+8	–8	–10 feet

MECHA WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment
Conventional Weapons				
Renda Chaingun	+10	20	Ballistic	60 ft.
Gazer Weapons				
Joubatai Gazer Emitter	+14	20	Fire	60 ft.
Kommeto Autogazer	+16	20	Fire	75 ft.
Tsunami Gazer Cannon	+24	See Text	Fire	See Text
Chrysanthemum Gazer Array	+32	—	Fire	—
Melee Weapons				
Kantsu Combat Pike	Varies	20	Piercing	—
Rakurai Shock Rod	Varies	20	Electricity/Bludgeon	—
Tora Claws	Varies	19-20	Slashing	—
Projectile Weapons				
Chiri Rocket Launcher	+20	—	Piercing	—
Tsume Missile Launcher	+30	20	Ballistic/Fire	—

DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Defense systems include energy shields, life support systems, and other equipment intended to protect the mecha and its operator from harm.

SHI-RUDO SHIELD

The Shi-Rudo shield—a high-tech version of the shields carried by knights of old—is worn on one of the mecha's arms. It improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by +4.

BOUHEKI TACTICAL SHIELD

The Bouheki tactical shield improves upon the Shi-Rudo shield (see previous). It improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by +6.

When not deployed, the Bouheki can retract into the mecha's arm. Deploying or retracting the shield is a move action.

BARIKE-DO TACTICAL SHIELD

A larger version of the Bouheki tactical shield, the Barike-Do not only improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by +8, but its superior ceramic coating grants the mecha fire resistance 10.

When not deployed, the Barike-Do tactical shield can retract into the mecha's arm. Deploying or retracting the shield is a move action.

SHINTAKU DEFENSE SUITE

The Shintaku defense suite consists of a heuristic collision avoidance system, enhanced crew restraints, and a series of adrenal and nonadrenal autoinjectors for the mecha operator. The Shintaku suite grants the operator a resistance bonus on all saving throws for 1 minute: +1 for the Mark I version and up to +5 for the Mark V version.



Daiba FORTIFICATION

The mecha's structural integrity is reinforced so it can shake off attacks that would cripple it otherwise. Daiba fortification converts 25% of all critical hits into regular hits.

FLIGHT SYSTEMS

All mecha are equipped with legs that allow them to walk and run. A mecha's size determines its base speed. This section describes various optional flight systems. Note that mecha are not stable enough to fire weapons in flight. Mecha cannot make any ranged attacks in the same round in which it has flown.

JETPACK

A jetpack combines vectored thrust with simple avionics, granting the mecha a fly speed of 100 feet (clumsy maneuverability). The jetpack carries enough fuel for the mecha to travel a total of 1,000 feet.

JET-ASSIST WINGS

Jet-assist wings allow a flying mecha to maneuver more effectively, but do not provide the mecha with the ability to fly. A mecha with jet-assist wings improves its flight maneuverability by one category (clumsy to poor, poor to average, and so forth).

JUMP JETS

This simple thruster system allows the mecha to do jet-assisted jumps. The jets provide a +8 jump bonus and halve any Armor Penalties for jumping.

THRUSTER SYSTEM

Thruster boots combine powerful fusion thrusters to give the mecha a fly speed of 150 feet (poor maneuverability).

SENSOR SYSTEMS

Sensor systems make it easier for mecha operators to perceive their surroundings. However, not all mecha are equipped with sensors (or even require them). In such cases, mecha operators must rely on their own acute vision and hearing.

A mecha equipped with sensors conducts passive scans of the surrounding area constantly, without the operator's attention. A passive scan extends in all directions at once, providing the operator with data on surrounding terrain, obstacles, and the location of other creatures, vehicles, and mecha within several miles of the mecha's position.

A sensor system can also be used to conduct an active scan of a single target. With a successful Computers check (Difficulty 15) and a move action, a mecha's operator can use the onboard sensor system to actively scan a single nonliving target (usually another mecha or vehicle) and determine specific information about that target, as specified in the sensor system's description.

MODERUICHI SENSOR SYSTEM (CLASS I)

This sensor system includes air/space radar that allows a mecha operator to scan the basic topography of the surrounding area and pick out targets well enough to aim weapons at them. A Moderuichi sensor system grants a +2 equipment bonus on the operator's Pilot and Notice checks.

With a successful Computers check (Difficulty 15) and a move action, the operator can use the sensor system to actively scan a single nonliving target (usually another mecha or vehicle) and determine all the following information about that target:

- The target's size.
- The target's locomotive capabilities.
- The target's present direction or trajectory.

Range: 1-mile-radius emanation centered on your mecha.

MODERUNI SENSOR SYSTEM (CLASS II)

This sensor system includes an electromagnetic (EM) detector array that localizes electromagnetic emissions, and an infrared detector that tracks targets by their heat signatures. It also incorporates a high-resolution video system that differentiates targets by their visual profile. The hi-res video system incorporates a zoom feature, allowing close inspection of distant targets. A Moderuni sensor system grants a +2 equipment bonus on the operator's Pilot and Notice checks.

With a successful Computers check (Difficulty 15) and a move action, the operator can use the sensor system to actively scan a single nonliving target (usually another mecha or vehicle) and determine all the following information about that target:

- The target's size.
- The target's locomotive capabilities.
- The target's present direction or trajectory.
- The number of living creatures aboard, if applicable.
- The composition of the target's hull or superstructure, as well as the type of its armor, if any.
- The target's weapon systems (functional and nonfunctional).

Range: 1-mile-radius emanation centered on your mecha.

MODERUSAN SENSORY SYSTEM (CLASS III)

This system combines the features of the Moderuni sensor system with an advanced night-vision unit.

The mecha operator gains darkvision to a range of 90 feet. A Moderusan sensor system also grants a +2 equipment bonus on the operator's Pilot and Notice checks.

With a successful Computers check (Difficulty 15) and a move action, the operator can use the sensor system to actively scan a single nonliving target (usually another mecha or vehicle) and determine all the following information about that target:

- The target's size.
- The target's locomotive capabilities.
- The target's present direction or trajectory.
- The number of living creatures aboard, if applicable.
- The composition of the target's hull or superstructure, as well as the type of its armor, if any.
- The target's weapon systems (functional and nonfunctional).

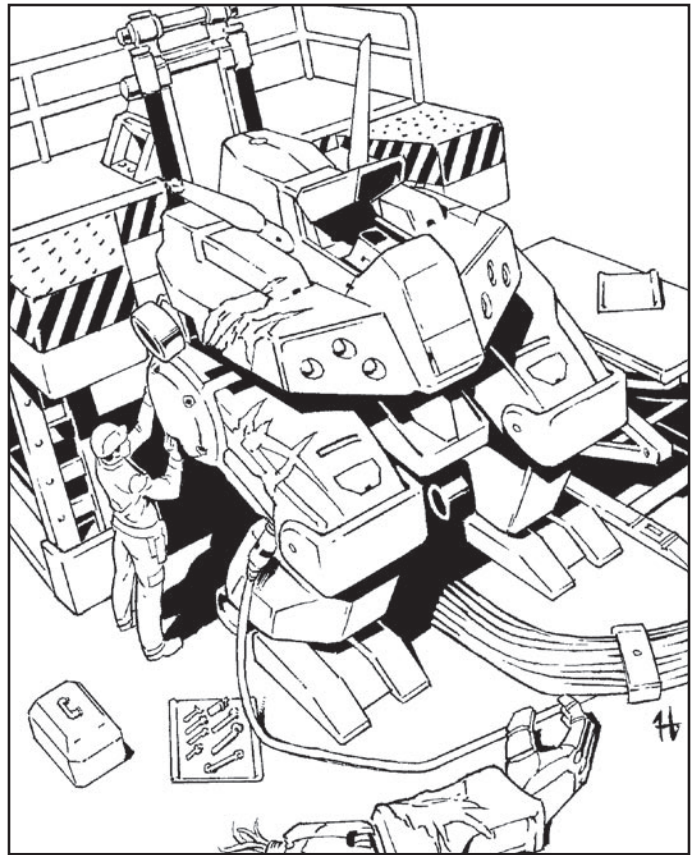
Range: 1-mile-radius emanation centered on your mecha.

MODERUSHI SENSOR SYSTEM (CLASS IV)

This system integrates the Orakuru (purchased separately) with electromagnetic (EM), infrared detector, hi-res video, and nightvision sensors similar to those found on the Moderuni and Moderusan systems. It also incorporates a ladar system that uses low-powered laser beams to quickly locate and identify difficult terrain, distant obstacles, and targets.

The mecha operator gains darkvision to a range of 120 feet. A Moderushi sensor system also grants a +4 equipment bonus on the operator's Pilot and Notice checks.

With a successful Computers check (Difficulty 15) and a move action, the operator can use the sensor system to actively scan a single nonliving



target (usually another mecha or vehicle) and determine all the following information about that target:

- The target's size.
- The target's locomotive capabilities.
- The target's present direction or trajectory.
- The number of living creatures aboard, if applicable.
- The composition of the target's hull or superstructure, as well as the type of its armor, if any.
- The target's weapon systems (both functional and nonfunctional).
- How much damage the target has taken.

Range: 10-mile-radius emanation centered on your mecha.

TOUSHI SENSOR SUITE

Using a combination of thermal imaging, X-rays, and vibration sensors, the Tousehi sensor suite enables the operator to effectively see through solid objects. Fine details can't be detected, but a mecha using the Tousehi suite could tell, for example, that three Medium-size humanoids were crouched behind a closed door, or that an escape tunnel runs from one building to another.

A mecha with the Tousehi suite reduces the effects of concealment by two grades. Thus, an object with total concealment (50% miss chance) would have three-quarters concealment (30% miss chance) instead.

Range: 150 feet.

ORAKURU TARGETING SYSTEM

This computer-assisted targeting system combines holographic displays and heuristic target-prediction profiling to increase a mecha operator's accuracy. The system is available in five grades (Mark I through Mark V) that grant an enhancement bonus on attack rolls (+1 to +5) when using a specific ranged weapon selected by the operator. Switching the bonus from one weapon to another requires a move action.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

This section describes various other pieces of mecha equipment that don't fall neatly under the other categories, including a variety of electrical systems.

ADVANCED DIAGNOSTICS

Multiple redundant systems coupled with the ability to detect and correct minor system faults allow the mecha to repair moderate damage. Advanced diagnostics allows the mecha to make a standard recovery check as if it had a +5 Con. Only the mecha's condition is repaired, not damage to the mecha's operator.

COMM SYSTEM

The mecha is equipped with a radio transceiver that can transmit on multiple frequencies in either LOS (line of sight) or omnidirectional

mode. It can handle up to ten simultaneous two-way conversations. This is, obviously, a crucial piece of equipment.

Range: 100 miles.

USAGI SPEED ENHANCEMENT

The mecha's speed is increased by reinforcing the leg structure and installing powerful movement actuators. This process increases the mecha's base movement by 10 ft. The process can be repeated multiple times, but each installation uses an additional equipment slot. Each time it increases the mecha's speed by 10 ft., to a maximum increase of +30 ft.

YOMIA NEURAL LINK

This unit links the operator's brain directly to the mecha, making it feel less like a machine and more like an extension of the operator's body. While piloting the mecha, the operator gains a +2 bonus on initiative checks. In addition, the operator can use any of his nonmecha-specific feats while operating a mecha, including Warrior combat feats.

MECHA MOVEMENT AND COMBAT

Combat between mecha and kaiju is conducted much as it is between characters. Characters operating mecha are simply much larger and stronger than they would otherwise be, and they can wield truly frightening weapons. However, they still obey the essential rules of movement and combat. They still take move actions and attack actions, duck behind cover to gain a bonus to Defense, and so forth. In some respects, however, mecha movement and combat differs from character movement and combat. The following sections describe specific situations that arise when mecha maneuver and clash on the battlefield.

COCKPIT ACCESS

It takes a full-round action to climb into a mecha's cockpit, and a move action to activate its various systems so it can move and fight. It takes a full-round action to get out of a mecha as well.

PILOTING AND MOVEMENT

Mecha operators use the Pilot skill to operate their mecha. In general, mecha operators don't need to make Pilot checks to steer their mecha around the battlefield. However, this skill comes into play when a mecha operator must make unusual maneuvers, such as opposing a trip attempt.

MECHA CRITICAL HITS

D%	Roll Effect
1	Normal damage
2	Normal damage, crew dazed
3-5	Normal critical hit
6-8	Normal critical hit, crew dazed
9-11	Normal critical hit, mecha knocked prone
12-14	Severe critical hit, crew dazed, mecha stunned
15-17	Severe critical hit, mecha knocked prone
18	Crew hit (normal damage)
19	Normal damage, equipment damaged
20	Normal damage, equipment destroyed

MECHA CRITICAL HITS

Whenever you confirm a critical hit against a mecha, you may choose to roll percentile dice and consult the Table: Mecha Critical Hits instead of dealing the normal critical hit damage for the attack. However, you must accept the results of the roll, even if those results are less than desirable.

NORMAL DAMAGE

The attack deals normal damage (do not apply critical hit bonus).

CREW DAZED

Each crewmember aboard the mecha, including its operator, must succeed on a Fortitude save (Difficulty 15) or be dazed for 1 round. Unable to act, a dazed character can take no actions, but still retains his or her full Defense.

NORMAL CRITICAL HIT

Calculate critical hit damage normally.

MECHA KNOCKED PRONE

The force of the attack knocks the mecha prone. All crewmembers and passengers aboard take +2 bludgeoning damage as they are knocked about their cockpits. A prone mecha takes a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls and can't use thrown ranged weapons. The mecha gains a +4 bonus to Defense against ranged attacks, but takes a -4 penalty to Defense against melee attacks. Standing up from prone is a move action.

MECHA STUNNED

The mecha automatically drops what it is holding and can take no attack or move actions for 1 round. While the mecha is stunned, apply a -2 penalty to the mecha operator's Defense (even though the operator is not stunned).

SEVERE CRITICAL HIT

Add +2 to the normal critical hit damage for that weapon.

CREW HIT

The attack bypasses the mecha's armor and superstructure. Apply normal damage to the pilot, ignoring the mecha's Toughness.

EQUIPMENT DAMAGED

One piece of equipment (attacker's choice) is damaged and will not function until repaired. It can be a flight system, sensor system, defense system, weapon, or miscellaneous system. Repairing a damaged system requires 1 hour of work and a successful Craft (mecha) check (Difficulty 20).

EQUIPMENT DESTROYED

One piece of equipment (attacker's choice) is destroyed and ceases to function. It can be a flight system, sensor system, defense system, weapon, or miscellaneous system. A destroyed system cannot be repaired, only replaced.

KAIJU

Born in the heart of atomic fires, the kaiju come in a shocking variety of forms. Whether moving on land, sea, or air, these mysterious beasts are a threat to the entire world, especially to Japan. After the destruction of the first kaiju, its genetic material was collected for scientific examination. Research revealed little of its origin, but established that the material could be readily blended with the DNA of other creatures to create new kaiju.

Throughout the 1940s, these experiments were merely an academic exercise, until Communist North Korea gained samples of the material. Using the remnants of the nuclear weapons program established by Japan at the Chosin reservoir, the North Koreans bred a new generation of kaiju. These new kaiju were restricted to defensive use by international law after they were used against American Marines in the early 1950s. These creatures have prowled the Korean demilitarized zone ever since.

North Korea claims to have total control of these creatures, but over the years, dozens of kaiju have escaped the country and attacked targets outside the borders. What no one can explain is why the beasts do not attack nearby targets. Instead of rampaging west into China, or south against their creator's sworn enemies, the kaiju head east across the Sea of Japan and attack the island nation that first spawned them.

These raids have greatly influenced the culture. A special breed of otaku (super-fan) appeared in the late 60s, concurrent with the first giant robot cartoon, dedicated to identifying and naming the kaiju. A kaiju "higaisha no kai" (survivor's group) was formed at roughly the same time, to help victims deal with the trauma of kaiju attack.

The monsters are classified into three basic forms. The "Originals" resemble the first kaiju, a bipedal reptilian creature with a devastating energy blast. "Flyer" kaiju are as graceful as they are deadly, with wings that make them the fastest creatures on earth. "Gargantua" are the most humanoid kaiju, with quick movement and unmatched regenerative power. Though many breeds have been recorded over the years, most kaiju fall within these three broad categories.

FLYING KAIJU

Type: 4th-level kaiju

Size: Huge

Speed: fly 120 ft. (good)

Abilities: Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha +0

Skills: Intimidate +7, Notice +9

Feats: Flyby Attack, Snatch

Traits: Claws, Damage Reduction 5/piercing, Darkvision (120 ft.), Fast Healing, Fly-Supersonic, Secondary Attack (Wing)

Combat: Attack +7, Damage +13 (claws), Defense +10, Initiative +5

Saving Throws: Toughness +20, Fortitude +9, Reflex +6, Will +2

Claws: Claws convert a kaiju's slam attack into a claw attack that does Slashing damage. Add the kaiju's strength to the Claw damage, which is based on the kaiju's size: Huge +6, Gargantuan +8, and Colossal +16. The claws have a critical threat range of 19–20.

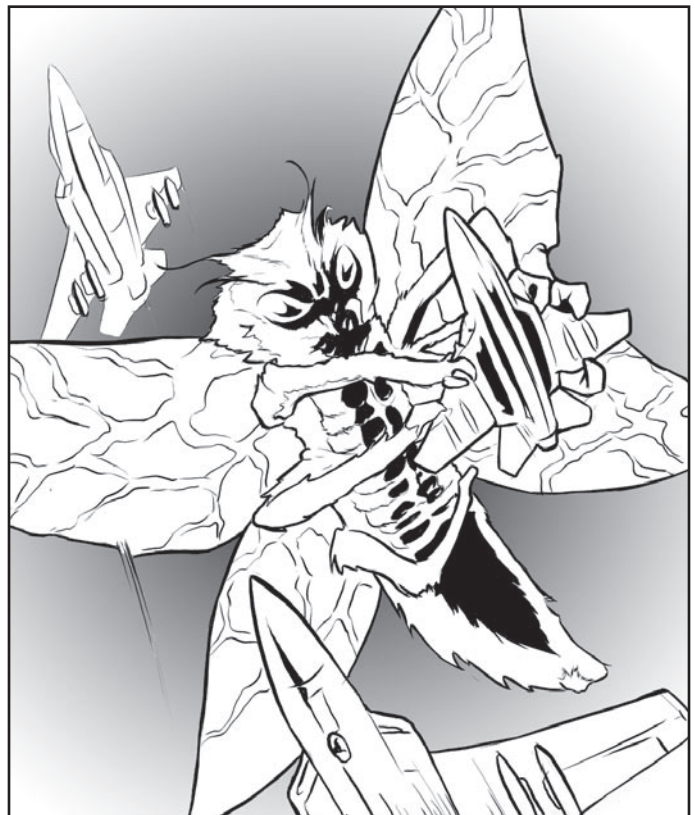
Fast Healing: The creature makes recovery checks at an exceptional rate. Recovery checks are made once per round for staggered and unconscious, once per minute for wounded, and once per hour for disabled.

Dying has its own particular check; once you are stable, dying becomes disabled. Fast healing stops working when a creature is dead. Except for its speed, fast healing works just like natural healing, and it doesn't provide any benefit against attacks that don't deal damage. It also doesn't allow a creature to regrow or reattach severed body parts.

Fly-Supersonic: The kaiju can achieve incredible flight speeds, 500 miles per hour multiplied by its level. For example, a 4th-level flying kaiju can travel 2,000 mph, or nearly Mach 2. The kaiju must spend one round moving all-out before going to supersonic speed.

Flyby Attack: When flying, the creature can take a move action (including a dive) and another standard action at any point during the move. The creature cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack. Without this feat, the creature takes a standard action either before or after its move.

Snatch: The creature can choose to start a grapple when it hits with a claw or bite attack, as though it had the Improved Grab feat. If the creature gets a hold on a creature three or more sizes smaller, it squeezes each round for automatic bite or claw damage. A snatched opponent held in the creature's mouth is not allowed a Reflex save against the creature's breath weapon, if it has one. The creature can drop a creature it has snatched as a free action or use a standard action to fling it aside. A flung creature travels up to 30 feet, and takes +2 damage per 10 feet traveled. If the creature flings a snatched opponent while flying the opponent takes this amount or the appropriate falling damage, whichever is greater.





GARGANTUA KAIJU

Type: 8th-level kaiju

Size: Gargantuan

Speed: 50 ft., climb 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +12, Dex +3, Con +8, Int -2, Wis +0, Cha +0

Skills: Intimidate +14, Notice +11, Jump +23

Feats: Accurate Attack, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Grapple, Improved Strike (+2), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Training, Attack Focus (Slam)

Traits: Conviction (4), Damage Reduction 10/piercing, Darkvision (120 ft.), Fast Healing, Regeneration

Combat: Attack +7, Damage +14 (slam), Defense +11, Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +24, Fortitude +14, Reflex +5, Will +2

Fast Healing: The creature makes recovery checks at an exceptional rate. Recovery checks are made once per round for staggered and unconscious, once per minute for wounded, and once per hour for disabled. Dying has its own particular check; once you are stable, dying becomes disabled. Fast healing stops working when a creature is dead. Except for its speed, fast healing works just like natural healing, and it doesn't provide any benefit against attacks that don't deal damage. It also doesn't allow a creature to regrow or reattach severed body parts.

Regeneration: This ability works like fast healing, except regeneration can restore severed limbs and continues working even when the creature is dead, allowing it to make recovery checks to heal from death as if it were only disabled. Regeneration also grants +4 to all Recovery checks. Creatures with regeneration must choose a certain damage types, like fire, from which they do not regenerate, and which can kill them permanently. Note that this can make recovery checks for the largest kaiju automatic, making them extremely hard to kill.

ORIGINAL KAIJU

Type: 12th-level kaiju

Size: Colossal

Speed: 60 ft.

Abilities: Str +7(+17), Dex +3(+2), Con +5(+11), Int -3, Wis +0, Cha +0, Cnv 12

Skills: Intimidate 14 (+14), Notice 11 (+11), Jump 11 (+23)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Diehard, Great Toughness, Greater Attack Focus (Claws), Greater Attack Specialization (Claws), Improved Critical (Claws), Rage, Attack Focus (Claws), Attack Specialization (Claws),

Traits: Blast (fire), Claws, Damage Reduction 15/piercing, Darkvision (120 ft.), Swallow Whole

Combat: Attack +8, Damage +33 (claw), Attack +6, Damage +33 (claw), Attack +4, Damage +17 (tail), Attack +4, Damage +27, Range Increment 100' (Fire Blast), Defense +7, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +30, Fortitude +14, Reflex +5, Will +2

Blast: The kaiju can fire a blast of destructive power at its enemies, like the Elemental Blast power from **Chapter 4**. Any energy type can be used, and damage equals the Kaiju's level +15, with a range increment of 100 feet.

Claws: Claws convert a kaiju's slam attack into a claw attack that does Slashing damage. Add the kaiju's strength to the Claw damage, which is based on the kaiju's size: Huge +6, Gargantuan +8, and Colossal +16. The claws have a critical threat range of 19–20.

Swallow Whole: If the creature begins its turn with an opponent held in its mouth with a grapple, it can attempt a new grapple check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If it succeeds, it swallows its opponent and deals normal bite damage. The opponent must be at least one size category smaller than the kaiju. The swallowed opponent is still considered grappled, and the kaiju can apply grapple damage without taking an action to do so. Escaping the grapple puts the swallowed opponent back in the creature's mouth, where it may be bitten or swallowed again.

THE MECHA ASSAULT FORCE

The people of Japan were only just recovering from the devastation of the first kaiju attack when they suffered a second. Fishing villages were crushed flat and the whole of downtown Tokyo lay in ruins. One man, a brilliant physicist named Surakowa, thought he had an answer. A man of peace, he had quite by accident discovered a power that could be used as a terrible weapon. Fearing its military application, he trusted no one with the weapon, and used it against the kaiju himself. In destroying the creature, Surakowa destroyed himself, taking the secret of his weapon with him.

With the kaiju threat now a reality, and conventional weapons useless, the government created the “Anti Kaiju Force” to develop weapons and tactics to use against the monsters. A brilliant student of Surakowa, Prof. Rampo Kyari, was the first technical director, and holds the post to this day.

When the next kaiju, a flying insect, attacked Japan, the A.K.F. fielded truck mounted gravity cannons, or GAZERs. Though they could not destroy the creature, they were able to drive it off. The next attack came in the form of a humanoid “gargantua” kaiju. Though more powerful tank-mounted gazers were employed against it, they were not able to counter the greater mobility of their new foe. The A.K.F. needed a faster, more maneuverable weapon to use against the kaiju.

After sea encounters proved that heavy naval bombardment could harm kaiju, Prof. Kyari decided to create a mechanized land-based battleship, which he called “mecha.” His first creation, “Metaru Jaianto,” was a giant remote-controlled robot, intended to slow the progress of kaiju while gazer tanks moved into position to deal the final blow.

While military leaders saw these new “mecha” as only a support element to the A.K.F.’s armored corps, the exploits of Metaru became a pop-culture phenomenon in Japan. Toys, t-shirts, even animation for the infant medium of television were all the rage. Even though Prof Rampo had created a voice-activated Metaru Mk.II, the limitations of simple robots were becoming clear to the A.K.F. leadership. To fight the increasingly powerful kaiju, they would need a true battleship of the land: a piloted mecha.

Because Gazers still needed substantial support personnel and vast amounts of power, the military instead armed their diesel-powered mecha with large naval guns. By the late 60’s, the “*Senkanbuku*” (battleship warrior) was defending Japan with its five-man crew, and the A.K.F. had a new arm—the “Mecha Assault Force.” In 1976, in part to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Japan’s first victory over the kaiju, the M.A.F. introduced the first gazer-equipped mecha, *Kagutsuchi*. This mecha was designed to be as much a prestige project as a military weapon.

Today’s “Tetsujin” (iron man) class mecha are much more utilitarian, capable of numerous mission-specific configurations. Because of this, pilots often customize their mecha to suit their fighting styles. This versatility allows the modern group to better deal with the changing nature of kaiju attacks.

THE ANTI-KAIJU FORCE

Though often overlooked today, the A.K.F. did not disappear with the formation of the M.A.F. The Anti-Kaiju Force is home to all non-mecha based Kaiju defenses, including listening stations, sea-based radiation detectors, and all gazer-based research and development.

The A.K.F. fields 3 Gazer tank divisions—one on the main island of Honshu and one each on the southern islands—and a full squadron of advanced tactical fighters equipped with the latest kaiju-fighting technology.

The A.K.F. is the first line of defense against the mysterious beasts, but is usually only capable of delaying tactics, holding the creatures at bay until the M.A.F. arrives. Because the M.A.F. gets most of the press and is always provided with the latest equipment, there is a great deal of rivalry between the two organizations. The A.K.F. Early Warning Division is constantly improving their detection equipment, but is still often overshadowed by the M.A.F.’s all-female Intelligence branch, the “Mikos.”

OGRES OF NORTH KOREA

After the fall of Japan in 1945, Korea was occupied by the Soviet Union north of the 38th Parallel and the United States south of that line. When the two nations failed to agree on a unified government, two separate governments were formed in 1948. North Korea fell under the dictatorship of Kim Il-sung, who saw an opportunity to create a great empire by unifying the country. But to combat America’s nuclear might, he needed an atomic weapon of his own. For that, he looked to Japan.

The true reason for Japan’s surrender was a closely guarded secret. The Japanese did not speak of the kaiju for fear they would return again, and their existence soon became only a legend. The American occupiers maintained the secret while examining the kaiju’s genetic material. But such a monumental event could not remain secret forever, and as America relaxed its hold on the island nation at the end of the 1940s, infiltrators entered Japan, determined to change the face of war.

Kim had restored the nuclear research facility at the Chosin Reservoir, but knew that he could not compete with America bomb for bomb. Instead he sought to create the next great weapon of terror, and for that he needed agents inside Japan. He called the organization “OGRE,” after the legendary monsters that tormented Japan. Their mission was to infiltrate the island nation and obtain a sample of kaiju genetic material. If nuclear power created the creature, then it could recreate it as well.

OGRE succeeded beyond Kim’s expectations, and by 1949 North Korea was in the process of creating new life with which to menace its enemies. Flush with their success, the OGRE agents volunteered to remain behind and continue their espionage as sleepers. The agents took residence, got jobs, married one another and gave birth to a new generation of OGREs.

This generation was indoctrinated by their parents, and began spying on Japan at an early age. Through the 1960s and into the 70s, these young people, along with their parents, formed the roots of an organization that would wreak havoc on the island nation for years to come. Through deep cover infiltration and advanced martial-arts techniques, the OGREs uncovered every secret of the Japanese government, and served as secret spotters for kaiju attacks.

Their most successful tactic was to marry into powerful Japanese families. The second generation took on this mission with the same determination as any other, becoming romantic heroes and devoted family members in the eyes of their spouses. Their mission was two-fold. First, those they married were connected to important families: politicians, industrialists, military officers. Through these family contacts they uncovered the deepest secrets of the Japanese government.

The second reason was equally important. If the OGREs were to continue their mission, they needed a third generation, new soldiers to take up the fight. But because they had gone outside their original group, their indoctrination would have to be covert and subtle. Couched in fairy tales and proverbs, the character of these children was quietly twisted

into a shape the OGREs could use. But some of the third generation took shapes unanticipated by their parents, and this has created a volatile mixture of fanaticism towards OGRE's goals on one hand, and rejection of those goals on the other. Only time will tell which path will be followed by the bulk of these young adults.

THE SUPERNATURAL

Japan is a nation following two diametrically opposed paths. One pushes towards a gleaming future of robots, computers, and post-human culture. The other reaches into a distant past of tradition, respect, and legend. The two paths of the supernatural mirror this opposition.

SHINTO

Shinto is the indigenous religion of Japan. Before Buddha brought the concept of Zen, or the teachings of Confucius were adopted by the emperor, Shinto taught that everything in the world had a spirit, called a "Kami." The Kami were divine, no matter how simple or mean their source. From stones on the ground to the mountains above, each contained a living soul that could be contacted, respected, and even entreated for service.

The rituals of honoring and communing with these spirits became the basis for the Shinto religion. Shinto teaches man to honor nature in all its specific forms. In this way they also honor the specific Kami connected to that form, and gain their favor. In return, the Kami helps man to succeed and prosper.

The Kami do not care what other beliefs man has, and so Shinto has existed harmoniously alongside every other religion and philosophy for over 5,000 years. Today, with the very nation of Japan threatened by the kaiju, the Kami are taking action. When the very mountains can be crushed by monstrous fists, then those mountains must act, and the Kami have called on their agents to do so: the Shinto priesthood, and their young progeny.

The priests of Shinto, along with their sons and daughters, have been called into battle with the kaiju, and each has answered that call in different ways. Some content themselves with simple prayer services during attacks. Others hold specific ceremonies to bolster the Kami in hopes that they might do direct battle with the mysterious beasts. Many in the younger generation take more direct action, honing

their mystic abilities to serve as a direct counter to the assaults of the kaiju. This has led some to enter the Self-Defense Force in order to become part of the M.A.F.

These preparations have not gone unnoticed by the forces of OGRE. Knowing that the kaiju are mighty physically, but of a weak spirit, the OGRE spies keep close watch on all priests and their families, and ensure that they do not interfere with kaiju attacks.

Because Shinto priests draw their power from interacting with spirits, Charisma is the key ability for their power.

PSYCHIC POWERS

The human mind is evolving at an accelerated rate. In the past 100 years, mankind has gone from flying a few hundred feet in a glorified bicycle, to launching probes beyond our solar system. These feats were not accomplished through magic, but through will. Man decided it would fly, and it flew. A challenge to reach the moon was made, and met. The spirit of man pushes back the boundaries of reality, reshaping it as it pleases. That is the essence of the psychic.

Psychics manipulate the mind, body, and physical world through the power of their will. They can read the human heart, explore the physical world, and influence the forces of nature, all simply because they wish it. A psychic is born, not made, but some uncover their potential late in life, after pursuing other ventures. The mind is slippery, and reveals itself only reluctantly. The psychic's gift is to catch the spirit of man and expose its secrets.

The psychic mind is open to influences most people never encounter. They are open to the voices of spirits, allowing them access to a world hitherto unknown by anyone outside the Shinto priesthood. Kami often seek out a psychic when priests are unavailable. Entreaties can be made to Kami by psychics as well, though they are usually closer to business deals than religious ceremonies.

Another strong influence on the psychic is the presence of kaiju. Psychics can feel the savage emotions of the kaiju—in fact, they are hard pressed to shut them out. It overwhelms their own inherent spiritual defense and fills them with a sickness of the soul. Some have learned to refine this sense into a kind of kaiju radar, able to track the mysterious beasts wherever they travel.

For this reason, the Anti-Kaiju Force cherishes the few psychics they find. They hide them away in secure bases and severely limit their contact with the outside world. Thus, many psychics that seek to combat the kaiju keep their skills a secret and attempt to find service in the M.A.F. The Mecha Assault Force does not pamper its psychics, but puts them right out on the front lines where they can do the most good. They use their skills to the utmost to ensure that when a mecha encounters a kaiju, the good guys win.

Because psychics draw their power from strength of will, Wisdom is the key ability for their power.

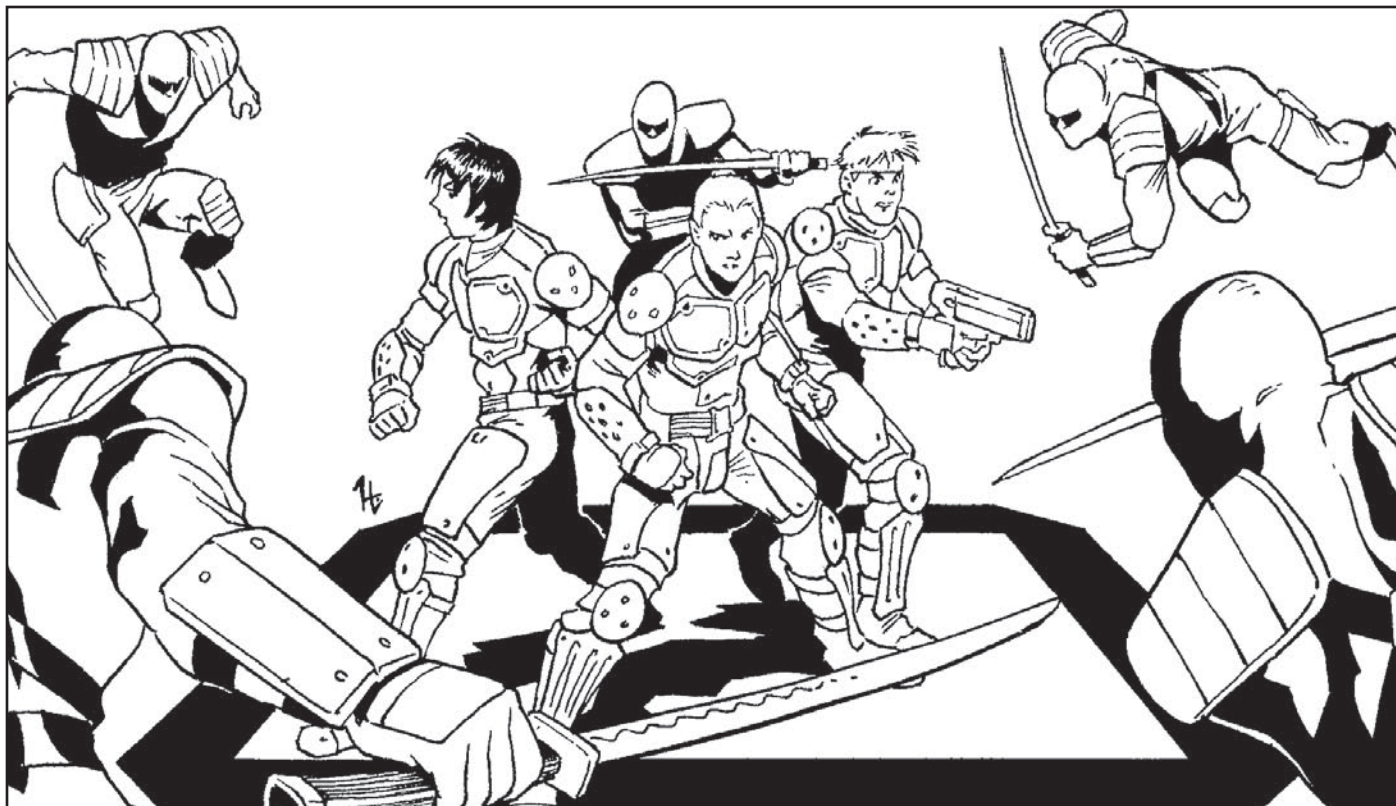


USING KAMI IN GAME

Kami are the spirit of a place or idea. As a spiritual life form, the Kami can make itself visible, but not tangible. It can speak to anyone but cannot interact with the physical world nor be affected by it without the use of supernatural power.

Kami are bound to the thing they represent, and cannot leave it. The Kami of a stone cannot leave that stone, nor tell you about anything beyond the area it occupies. The Kami of a mountain cannot leave its mountain, but is aware of a much larger area than a stone.

Kami can dispense advice or answer questions about anything within its experience. It can also use any of its Supernatural Powers to aid or hinder those around it. The full extent of the power of the Kami is left to the Narrator's discretion.



ADVENTURES

The following are some introductory adventures for a *Mecha vs. Kaiju* game, along with some plot hooks Narrators can use to spin-off their own adventures.

THE CALLING

It is important that characters start with no knowledge of Mecha Operations or Mecha Weapons, though mecha-related skills are allowed based on their origin and back story.

The characters are all prospective members of the Mecha Assault Force. None of them know one another when they are invited to meet with an M.A.F. representative at a local coffee house. Before the meeting can commence, the group is attacked by masked assailants. The fight displays the combat abilities of the group, warning them of the threat of OGRE spies.

Lt. Jasmine Kasuragi arrives with an M.A.F. security detachment to bring the team in. They are driven to a military base outside the city. Adeptly entering the base may feel a strange sense of comfort, indicating that it is protected from the supernatural. There they are introduced to Commander Geretsu, who tells them the truth about the Mecha Assault Force.

The last team—pilots who had served in the M.A.F. for over five years—went MIA while on a mission into North Korea. Both they and their mecha have disappeared, and the government has covered it up to prevent an international incident or make citizens worry. The normally centralized Anti-Kaiju Force is dispersed across the nation, but the truth is that at the moment, there is no defense against kaiju attack.

They are given a brief history on the team, as well as a name to connect to their attackers: OGRE. Geretsu knows nothing about the group, but fears they know much more about the M.A.F. For security reasons, he

keeps the team's contact with the rest of the M.A.F. to a minimum, using Lt. Kasuragi as their training liaison.

The party enters the hanger and tries out their mecha. The mecha of the previous M.A.F. team had been heavily customized, and each had its own look. The mecha left over are converted training units. There is one Tetsujin Heavy and two Tetsujin Light units. In addition there are several suits of Sennyojin powered armor.

The group is just getting a feel for the suits when there is a report of a flying kaiju attack in the city. Untrained and unsure, they must take to the streets and protect the citizens. Lt. Kasuragi deploys with them in her personal Sennyojin suit to watch over them.

COMMANDER GERETSU

The base commander is a stern man with a cold demeanor that hides great guilt at having sent the previous M.A.F. team into what he knew was the jaws of nearly certain death. Geretsu will do everything in his power to ensure that does not happen again to the current team. By the same token, he will remain distant from them, to ensure that if he must send them to their deaths he will not be emotionally affected as deeply.

LT. JASMINE KASURAGI

The sister of Ace Kasuragi, an M.A.F. pilot now missing in action, Jasmine is the base training officer. She is bitterly resentful that a new team is being brought in while, as she puts it, "Jack-squat-nada is being done to find my brother!" She will ride the team mercilessly, harping on every mistake. Kasuragi's great strength derives from a secret government super-soldier program, which requires her to take regular boosters to prevent her body from consuming itself. However the drugs aren't working as well as they once did, and she must take stronger and stronger doses.

LT. JASMINE KASURAGI

Type: 4th-level warrior (otemba archetype)

Abilities: Str +6, Dex +2, Con +2, Int +0, Wis +0, Cha +0

Skills: Computers 5 (+5), Craft (mechanical) 5 (+5), Drive 4 (+6), Intimidate 7 (+7), Pilot 7 (+9)

Feats: Armor Training (light), Firearms Training, Great Toughness, Mecha Focus (Sennyojin), Mecha Operations, Mecha Weapon Training, Rage

Combat: Attack +4, Damage +6 (unarmed), +4 (pistol), Defense +4, Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +3, Fortitude +6, Reflex +3, Will +1

Conviction: 4, **Wealth:** +4, **Reputation:** +1, **Virtue:** Brave,

Vice: Angry

Equipment: heavy pistol

KASURAGI'S SENNYOJIN

Size: Large, **Strength:** +10, **Speed:** 30, **Toughness:** 10

Reach: 10, **Attack:** +8, **Slam Damage:** +9, **Defense:** +3

Equipment: Comm. System, Renda Chaingun: (Dam +10, Crit 20, Range Increment 60'), Orakuru Targeting System Mk. II, Shi-rudo Shield, Moderu Ni Sensor System, Jump Jets

BATTLE CRY

The team fights their first big kaiju battle. Everything is new to them, which means they will need to make untrained skill checks for nearly everything. Roleplaying opportunities abound as they must struggle just to get their mecha out of the hanger and to the city. By the time they arrive, the city is in chaos, people still running about heedless of the nearby kaiju shelters and the beast demolishing a 10 story shopping center.

While the three mecha fight the flying kaiju, those in power armor attempt to keep the crowds safe as they head to kaiju shelters. Crowd control quickly changes to crowd defense as OGRE ninjas attack, using high-power weapons and martial arts to kill those in power armor. The battle ends when the kaiju is Disabled, at which point both it and the OGRE agents will flee.

Make notes of every mistake the characters make in combat. During the team's debriefing, Lt. Kasuragi brings up every single flub, and makes frequent comparisons between the players and the previous team, "The REAL mecha runners!"

OGRE NINJAS

Type: 4th-level expert (ninja archetype)

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +3, Con +2, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha +0

Skills: Acrobatics 6 (+9), Bluff 7 (+7), Climb 6 (+8), Disable Device 6 (+7), Escape Artist 5 (+8), Jump 5 (+7), Sleight of Hand 6 (+9), Stealth 6 (+9)

Feats: Acrobatic Bluff, Dedicated (to destroying the MAF), Challenge (Fast Task: Feint), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Surprise Attack, Weapons Training

Combat: Attack +3, Defense +3, Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +2, Fortitude +6, Reflex +4, Will +3

Conviction: —, **Wealth:** +4, **Reputation:** +2

Equipment: fragmentation grenades, sword

VOICES

The team meets Prof. Rampo Kyari, designer of the Tetsujin mecha. An aged man with wild white hair, he explains that the weapons used against the power suits were military issue. He wants the team to examine the scene of the battle and see what they can uncover.

Amidst the rubble of the battle, the adepts will detect a strange mental sensation that draws them forward. This leads to the discovery of

some kind of transmitter. At this point, the team is attacked by OGRE agents, determined to get the transmitter. A battle ensues, with victory dependant on who has possession of the transmitter.

The signal is like a mental beacon to the kaiju, something that adepts can discern within 30'. Upon their return Lt. Kasuragi will fault them, either for losing the transmitter, or for taking too long in finding it and disrupting her training schedule.

The team can now gain a level and take the Mecha Operations feat in a spectacular training montage as each member gets their own mecha. The adventure ends with Cmdr. Geretsu informing the team that their all-female intelligence service—the Mikos—have detected another transmission like the one they detected before in a nearby city. The team deploys in their mecha to attempt to head off the kaiju attack.

One question the heroes—especially adepts—may ask is how the M.A.F. intelligence unit detected a *mental transmission*?

LONG NIGHT

It's a knockdown, drag-out fight between the M.A.F. and a much more powerful gargantua kaiju. The extraordinary healing abilities of the gargantua may prove too much for the team, but finding and moving the transmitter will drive the beast away.

PLOT HOOKS

Any anime series offers a wealth of adventure ideas and plot hooks. Here is just a sample of some of the numerous hooks available. Note that most of these involve the heroes outside their Mecha. While every adventure should feature giant robots beating on giant monsters, Mecha vs. Kaiju is much more than just a tactical combat or skirmish game. Make sure to have plenty for heroes to do that leads up to climactic battles at the end of the adventure.

BATTLE

Super-charged gladiators fight in an underground bloodsport. Someone is stealing super-soldier formula, and Lt. Kasuragi is the prime suspect.

GIRL

A mysterious woman takes an interest in one of the team members. Her gift to him—a silver bracelet—causes bad luck.

HAZE

Something burning in the country causes lethal haze to engulf the city. OGRE agents use the opportunity for espionage.

POISON

One of the team members is poisoned just before a massive kaiju incursion.

RESTLESS

A battle in a temple causes unrest in the spirit world. The team adept must restore the temple and calm the restless spirits.

SPIRIT

A stone Kami is spying on the outside of the M.A.F. bases. The little girl who passes the stone on her way to and from school is an OGRE adept that appeases the Kami.

UNDERCOVER

M.A.F. members must infiltrate an OGRE-controlled Mah Jong parlor.



BORROWED TIME



8/2/06

Time flows like a river out of the infinite energy at the beginning of the universe, into the infinite reservoir at the end of space and time. Human beings can't stop it any more than monkeys could dam the Nile by throwing sticks at the river. But they can use and shape its flow.

Physics is mostly right about time. It usually moves from past to future at one second per second, speeding up and slowing down as local spacetime conditions change, just as the equations predict. It can do more, though. It can run faster or slower than usual, or drift sideways into improbable outcomes and away from predictable conditions, and it can even turn back on itself to make events happen again, or change its flow so some things never really happen(ed) at all. Furthermore, in addition to following its own, sometimes surprising, internal dynamics, time can and does change when conscious minds manipulate it with the right combinations of logic, tools, and sheer force of will.

Just as people turn aside rivers to make reservoirs and irrigation systems, so they can turn aside some of time, too. There are "pockets" or pools of unused time waiting for people to draw on them when the moment is right. There are mathematics for borrowing time in this way. A tiny fraction of a second can reverse a moment's misfortune for one person. The more people involved and the deeper the roots of the problem, the more time must be borrowed to change a situation. It could take days or years of accumulated hidden time to save a planet. The scope of the reservoirs varies along with the quantity of borrowed time needed: some are bound to specific people or places, some can be tapped from anywhere in a city or continent, some are available worldwide and even farther.

It's possible both to set aside time and to borrow it later without any deliberate effort. Activities that focus the mind away from external

BORROWED TIME

reality help detach the soul from time's normal flow, and can help channel a little time into a quiet pond. Desperate need and desire can open up a sluice gate and bring that time back out. People remember intense experiences and

their weird luck in them, both good and bad, not just for reasons of primate psychology but because, thanks to time borrowing, the world really *does* work differently in those moments.

Borrowing time on a bigger scale requires more effort, and doesn't happen by accident. Nobody knows who first discovered the rituals. "First" may not even mean all that much, given the possibilities for moving around, above, and below the normal routes from past to future. The fact is that the rituals exist and have been used. Storing time on the small scale is a little distracting; the experience of *déjà vu* often points at a moment where the person unconsciously stored away a little time. The larger the scale, the greater the trauma can be, including hallucinations, "missing time" on the scale of hours and days, amnesia, false memories, and worse. This is why, long before recorded history began, rituals were concealed inside justifications of other sorts. Carnivals, year-end "between time" days, and calendar reforms requiring a shift of several days all provide convenient rationalizations for the disruptive experience.

One way or another, every few centuries, some individual or group with strong influence on their society manages to set aside several days' worth of borrowed time. This is what keeps the world safe. If the big reservoir ever ran dry, there would be no last-minute escapes, no fortunate survivals, just the iron law of probability ticking the fixed beat until inescapable doom wipes us all out. The last time the reservoir got refreshed was in 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII provided the cover for his team of temporal scholars. Modern histories sometimes play up



FAR, FAR AWAY: EXOTIC POSSIBILITIES

Borrowed Time focuses on modern-day Earth and its inhabitants, with the Red Harvest thrown in for variety. This doesn't exhaust the fun options your group may wish to include. Alien spaceships cruising faster than light thanks to temporal drift? Spies, invaders, or refugees from alternate histories, and one or more different pasts and futures? It's all fair game, or can be if the Narrator and players want to include it. The intent here is to describe a range of options and suggest an attitude rather than to lay down boundaries beyond which you must not go.

Borrowed Time also works well as a "capstone" setting for *True20*, able to "overlay" any of the other settings in this book, giving them a hidden layer of temporal conspiracy. Imagine, for example, time channelers operating in the Crucible of Nexus Sector in *Lux Aeternum* or behind the scenes of the Sultan's palace in *Caliphate Nights*. You can even combine *Borrowed Time* with multiple *True20* worlds, setting them up as parallel realities for the heroes to visit.

ABOUT NARRATOR APPROVAL

Many temporal feats become available to characters only with the Narrator's approval. So when should the Narrator approve them? This is a matter of the campaign's focus. If you want to deal with the gradual discovery of time manipulation and its possibilities, allow them into play once the characters have dealings with others who know and can teach the secrets. On the other hand, if the characters start off with the right clues, these feats should be available at the start of the game. Just make sure you and the players agree on what's sensible and suitable for this particular game.

peasant hysteria about the fate of their souls on the days lost in changing from the Julian to Gregorian calendar, and other sorts of superstitious fears, but in truth that's all part of the cover story. What really upset them was the sensation of losing those days, and it was important to keep the masses from getting close enough to the truth to interfere with things. It all worked: the world's reservoir of borrowed time was nicely full again as 1582 came to an end.

The years and centuries went by and various groups, both heirs to the Gregorian time channelers and others who had the secret, gradually drew the reservoir down. Bad as the history of the last half millennium has sometimes been, it would have been worse. Global draws of borrowed time fended off at least one meteor strike, two humanity-destroying

plagues, one nuclear war and two conventional ones that would have escalated into collapses of civilization, and several more exotic threats. What remains is the often tragic, but nonetheless survivable mundane, observable sort of peril.

Along the way, something went wrong: the secret of setting aside time on a large scale got lost. Nobody today seems quite sure how it happened. It could be a calculated effort by someone who wants the world to lose its borrowed time altogether, or the sort of freak coincidence that surrounds those who manipulate time. Many groups can and do set aside time on smaller scales, but nobody can now renew the global reservoir...and it's running dry. It has no more than a few weeks left in it, perhaps only a few days, and the global threats haven't stopped coming.

NEW FEATS

Most of the feats presented here have the classification Temporal. This is vague, and deliberately so. As noted above in **Far, Far Away: Exotic Possibilities**, there may or may not be other things going on in the game world, like magic, psionics, other times and species intruding, and so forth. Where feats that clearly warrant the Adept label are in play, the Narrator may wish to rule that the Temporal feats are also Adept. But it may make sense for a specific setting that the temporal feats *not* be supernatural. Since *True20* worlds can vary so much, *Borrowed Time* leaves you some room for maneuvering on this point.

TEMPORAL BORROWING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

There isn't an infinite supply of hidden time to borrow. The impact of repeated borrowing is easy to measure and increasingly dire in its consequences. The Narrator should keep a record of temporal feat usage in an area, and note down each round in which someone rolled a 1 or a 20 on a check involving time-manipulating powers. For every 5 rounds in which a 1 was rolled and every 10 rounds in which a 20 was rolled, the Difficulty of all temporal feats in the area rises by +1. This is a *permanent* increase, until and unless someone manages to renew the depleted hidden time in that area.

The area affected is one hundred feet square if it's indoors, or one thousand feet square if it's outdoors. The penalty tapers off: full effect in that area, one point less for a hundred feet indoors or a thousand feet outdoors all around, and so on by those range increments until it's down to zero.

Characters feel this depletion as a draining, tugging sensation. Anyone with a temporal feat can tell that there is a difficulty barrier in the area and identify its particular strength with a Concentration check of Difficulty (20 – the penalty). The fact of its existence also explains a crucial cinema-like feature of the major groups' behavior. They maintain strongholds and sanctums in which the routine use of temporal feats is prohibited so when they really, really need the help, it won't be messed up. Regular temporal manipulation goes on in places far away from the bosses' lairs.

Renewing the hidden time should be possible by any of several means, except that the key lore is missing. For the moment, it takes sacrifice: to remove a point of temporal penalty, an individual must sacrifice 1 point of an ability score (any ability will do) or accept a permanent reduction in Conviction by 2 points. Understandably, this doesn't happen often, and certainly not as often as opportunities for penalty accumulation.

BETWEEN MOMENTS (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

Using time manipulation in accordance with your group's methods, you can draw on stored time to act more rapidly than usual. Time goes slow for you, for a moment. You can take several actions in the space of time that just one normally requires. The sequence is known as an "action stack".

An action stack can include up to one standard action per point of your Dexterity, plus any bonus actions from feats, artifacts, and other sources. If you have Dexterity +2, you may stack two additional standard actions on top of the one normally possible in that moment. You can stack any mix of free, move, standard, and full actions, subject to the following limits.

- You can change from move actions to standard or full actions, or from standard or full actions to move actions, just once in a stack. You can leap at a mook and pummel him, or use a whirlwind kick against a mob and then leap away. You can't leap, pummel, whirlwind kick, and then run away.
- If you choose a full action, it has to be the last one in the stack. Normal time resumes after it.
- You may not take more than two move actions in a row.

The Difficulty for the stack is as follows:

Difficulty = Difficulty of most difficult single action + 1, 2, or 3 per additional action, depending on type + 0 or 1 per additional action depending on opponent

- Add +1 Difficulty for each standard, non-ranged action.
- Add +2 Difficulty for each standard ranged action.
- Add +1 Difficulty if the action is aimed against an opponent with supernatural defenses of any kind.
- Add +1 Difficulty for each full action.

If you meet or beat the combined Difficulty, you enjoy full success: every action in the stack happens in its turn, with its usual results. If you don't meet the combined Difficulty, though, you may still enjoy partial success. Check your result against the first action in the stack. If your result meets or beats that, you get that action. Then go to the next one, adding in the above Difficulty modifiers. If it's also enough to succeed, you get that action as well. Work your way through the stack until you come to one whose total Difficulty is above your result, and stop. In addition, you automatically succeed at the most difficult action, whatever its position in the stack, if your result is enough to take you that far into the stack.

Example #1: Four mooks surround John, and more are coming. He decides to grab the mook in front of him, toss him over his shoulders and spin around, knocking the other three out with their buddy, then dodge as the mob approaches, throw the hapless mook at them, and



run. The Narrator decides the hardest part of this is throwing the mook, with a Difficulty of 16. Grabbing the mook adds +1. Doing the sweep attack adds +1. The wary waiting is total defense, and adds +1. Running away adds +1. The final total Difficulty is 20. John's player rolls a 19, which means he gets partial success. He grabs the mook, sweeps with him, and gets his full defense bonus should the approaching mob shoot or throw things at him, and hurls the mook at them...but doesn't manage to do all this in time to run away. He's still on the spot when the reinforcements arrive.

Example #2: John now faces six more mooks and one very angry improvised missile, all coming in to kick him. He wants to perform a back handspring, kick the mook at his feet, then one on the other side on the way down, and then go to full defense. The Narrator decides the hardest part of this stack is the kick, with a Difficulty of 18. The second attack adds +1, and enough dodging to deal with the three mooks who'll be in range this turn adds +3, for a final total of 22. John's player rolls 18. He gets the first kick, but doesn't even land on his feet.

Failure has an additional price. For each attempted but failed action in the stack, you suffer a -2 Initiative penalty in the next round. In the first example, John would suffer -2 Initiative the next round; the second, he suffers -4.

COMBAT CALM (WARRIOR)

You add half your warrior level, rounded up, to Concentration checks in combat and action situations. Players and Narrator should make sure they agree on when this applies, at least in general terms, before the crunch arrives. Any scene calling for initiative checks and detailed resolution of tasks may qualify. The more it's limited to combat, the more specifically martial action shines; the more it extends to other action, the wider the scope for character coolness.

COMBAT MASTERY (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITES: COMBAT CALM, IMPROVED COMBAT CALM

You add your warrior level to Concentration checks in combat and action situations. Combatants with this feat have been known to actively seek out fights and adrenaline rushes, saying they think better in the midst of the action.

CONCENTRATION BETWEEN (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: BETWEEN MOMENTS

You may perform the aim action as a standard action. If you're damaged while concentrating, you may ignore the damage penalty to the Concentration check's difficulty. You may also spend 1 point of Conviction to retain your usual dodge bonus.

Example: Sheila realizes she can't dodge the gauntlet of laser cannons she's facing, and decides to shoot the control panel responsible for them all. She easily makes the Concentration check and gets a +5 bonus on her attack on the control panel, shooting it out and rendering the whole array of laser cannons inert.

EDDY (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

You can siphon small quantities of time out of their normal flow, making an area where time passes slower than usual. It takes a full round's concentration and a Will save of Difficulty 15 to create the temporal eddy, which you associate with an object or place within arm's reach. Anyone who holds the object or goes within five feet of the place must make a Will save of Difficulty 10 + half your character level + your Intelligence. Those who fail can take one less move action than usual each round they're subject to its effects.

The eddy lasts for one hour per point of Intelligence you have. You can make an eddy once each hour, and can have up to (2 x Int) eddies

active. If you make more than that, the oldest one dissipates when the new one is created.

People affected by an eddy automatically feel a sense of strangeness, but may not consciously recognize what's wrong. Each round they're subject to its effects, they can make an Intelligence check with the same difficulty as the Will save to recognize either that they're moving slower or nearby things are moving faster. Concentration checks triggered by the actions of individuals affected by the eddy have their normal difficulty; other checks are harder, with the Difficulty increased by half the creator's character level.

You can focus the eddy with Conviction. Spend one Conviction to do either of the following: target a single individual, affect an area as usual but exempt yourself from it, or last for (Int) days rather than hours.

HASTENING BETWEEN (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: BETWEEN MOMENTS

You get two additional benefits, along with those available to those who know the secrets of Between Moments.

- You may take an all-out movement as the first action in a stack and not immediately thereby bring it to an end.
- Your movement rate for all other move actions in the stack is double.

Example: John is surrounded and his partner is more than 200 feet away, unable to help. His new ally Sheila uses a stack of all-out movement followed by a flying-kick to enter the fray.

IMPROVED BETWEEN MOMENTS (TEMPORAL)

Prerequisite: Between Moments

You can perform up to 2 x Dexterity actions in an action stack. You may take this feat twice; if you do, you can perform up to 4 x Dexterity actions in a stack.

IMPROVED COMBAT CALM (WARRIOR)

PREREQUISITE: COMBAT CALM

You can take 10 once per round in the midst of combat or other stressful action.

IMPROVED CONCENTRATION BETWEEN (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITES: BETWEEN MOMENTS, CONCENTRATION BETWEEN

Once for any opponent in the course of a fight, you may double your Aim bonus. As with regular Concentration Between, the act of aiming is a standard action, and if damaged you may ignore the damage penalty to the Concentration check, and you may spend a point of Conviction to retain your usual dodge bonus.

Example: Sheila didn't get to John in time, and one of the mooks now has him in a headlock. She draws her .45 and closes for the headshot. She gets to aim as a standard action, and with the benefits of this feat, she gets a +10 bonus to her attack roll once she's in melee range.

IMPROVED HASTENING BETWEEN (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITES: BETWEEN MOMENTS, HASTENING BETWEEN

You may spend a point of Conviction to retain your dodge bonus during all-out movement when it's part of an action stack.

You may take this feat twice. If you do, you may spend an additional point of Conviction and double your Dodge bonus for all-out movement as part of an action stack.



Example: Sheila's path to John takes her through a gauntlet of heat-tracking laser cannons. Her player spends 2 Conviction, and her dodge bonus increases from its normal +3 to +6 for the duration of her all-out run between, over, and around them.

IMPROVED QUICK EYES (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITES: BETWEEN MOMENTS, QUICK EYES

You get the benefits of Quick Eyes, and a bit more. You may spend a point of Conviction to mitigate the damage of a particular attack. Spend the point *before* your opponent makes the attack roll. If the result is a normal hit, the damage is reduced to zero; it glances off or just misses. If the result is a critical hit, ignore the critical damage bonus and halve the normal damage.

Example: John senses an attack coming and concentrates. His player spends a point of Conviction. The Narrator rolls a 20 for the attacker, which would normally be a critical hit. Thanks to Improved Quick Eyes, the attack does only its regular damage, which is then halved. The assassin's knife slashes at John's jugular vein, but he twists just enough so it slashes his shoulder instead.

IMPROVED QUICK MIND (TEMPORAL)

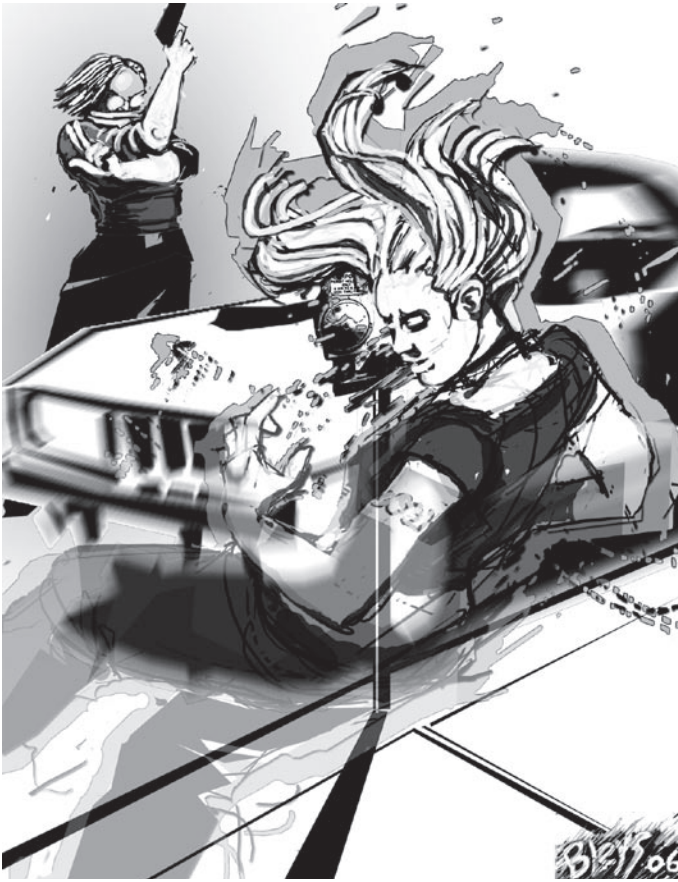
PREREQUISITE: QUICK MIND

You may stack up to 2 x Intelligence actions in a mental action stack. You may learn this feat twice. If you do, you can stack 4 x Intelligence actions.

IMPROVED SOUL ON FIRE (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: SOUL ON FIRE

You can make more flexible use of the pauses between moments than with basic Soul on Fire. The duration of your stay there is now one minute, or (if you spend a point of Conviction) one minute per point of your Wisdom. Furthermore, you may project someone else within your line of sight into the pause. You and the target must both make the



Concentration check, and the target must be willing. The target can't spend Conviction to stay longer than the minimum time.

You may acquire this feat twice. If you do, the pause lasts one *hour* as the minimum time, and otherwise behaves the same.

IMPROVED SOUL ON ICE (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: SOUL ON ICE

You can more effectively trap someone outside normal time. You may choose whether your target remains visible but frozen, or actually disappears into one of the many pockets of hidden time and reappears only when the freeze ends. It takes the same contest of Wills to freeze your target in time, but it lasts for one minute per point of your Wisdom, and requires a Concentration check once per minute to maintain. Furthermore, when it's about to lapse, you may try to renew the effect with a second contest of Wills. Your target gets a +5 bonus the first time you try, +10 the second, and an additional +5 every time after that, making it unlikely to go on a really long time, but not quite impossible.

You may acquire this feat twice. If you do, the freeze lasts one *hour* per point of your Wisdom, and otherwise behaves the same.

IMPROVED STEALING MOMENTS (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITES: BETWEEN MOMENTS, STEALING MOMENTS

You may interfere with others' action stacks as with Stealing Moments, but now success on the opposed Will check lets you truncate the stack by one action for every point of Intelligence you have.

IMPROVED TEMPORAL CALM (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: TEMPORAL CALM

It takes the same effort to create a calm area as with Temporal Calm, but you get stronger results. Dice roll results shift by 2 points toward 10, and the range increases to 10 yards. The duration is 5 rounds or (if you spend a point of Conviction) 5 x Wisdom rounds.

This situation feels slightly weird and uncomfortable to most people. Anyone trying to analyze it must make a Will save with a difficulty of 10 + half your character level + your Wisdom to realize what's specifically wrong is the behavior of apparently random events. Everything is less variable than it should be.

IMPROVED VORTEX (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITES: Eddy, Vortex

You can make eddies and vortexes that last much longer: if you choose at the time of creation, your eddy or vortex lasts indefinitely, as long as you take a standard action's worth of concentration and make the same Will save as required to make it, once per day. This isn't a strictly every-24-hours thing; you can make that check any time between 23 and 25 hours after you created the temporal anomaly, and then again 23-25 hours after that, and so on. If you get a critical success on a renewal roll, you don't have to check again for a full week. If you get three critical successes in a row on renewal checks, the eddy or vortex becomes permanent. Permanent eddies don't count against the total of eddies and vortexes you can have active at any one time, either.

Affected people have a harder time identifying what's wrong with eddies and vortexes made when you know the secrets of Improved Vortex. Add 5 to the Difficulty of the Intelligence check, or 10 if you got a critical success on the most recent renewal check or the anomaly has become permanent.

QUICK EYES (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: BETWEEN MOMENTS

You've trained yourself to make constant, minute checks of your surroundings. You don't have awareness qualitatively better than that of other human beings, but you make much better use of the data available to all observers. You are very hard to catch off-guard. Halve all effects of surprise applied to you, including damage bonuses for surprise attacks.

Example: *John didn't quite escape from all the mooks. One jumps him from the shadows as he's trying to sneak off. Without Quick Eyes, John would lose his +4 dodge bonus and take an additional -2 Defense penalty, reducing his Defense from 17 to 11. Since he has Quick Eyes, he loses half his Dodge bonus and suffers a -1 penalty, taking his Defense from 17 down only to 14. If he's hit, the damage from the surprise attack is also halved.*

QUICK MIND (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

The Between Moments feat allows you to *act* in faster-than-normal ways. This one lets you *think* faster than normal, in ways useful outside combat. You may take one additional mental or social action per point of your Intelligence, plus any bonus actions from feats, artifacts, and other sources. If you have Intelligence 2, you may take two additional actions, and so on.

You can only stack one additional interaction skill check, no matter how high your Intelligence. The limiting factor here is others' ability to perceive and respond to you.

Among the skill checks that can stack as high as your Intelligence allows are useful items like Sense Motive, using Diplomacy to remember foreign customs relevant to the current situation, Knowledge checks to retrieve crucial lore when time is tight, and Notice and Search checks as long as you're relying on your senses rather than physical manipulation of the scene.

SOUL ON FIRE (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

You can slip into the gaps between the ripples that make up time's current, and move around while the rest of the world is frozen to you. You can't

interact with the rest of the world: if a door is shut, you can't open it, you can't hear what anyone is saying (and trying to guess from the shape of their lips and mouth in a single instant is not a profitable use of your time), you can't fire a gun, and so on. You can go where a trickle of water or gust of air might go, as long as there are openings big enough to accommodate your body, and you leave no marks as you pass.

The benefit to existing in this condition is, of course, what you can see and where you can go while no one can stop you. It allows you the chance get past guards, to see who's in a meeting, and so on.

You must make a Concentration check of Difficulty 15. If it succeeds, you enter the no-time state for one round; you may spend a point of Conviction to extend that to one round per point of Wisdom.

SOUL ON ICE (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

You can trap someone in a bubble of timelessness. While your target is frozen this way, no force can affect them. They're literally as rigid as a statue: they can be picked up and moved, but not bent or adjusted in their position. They perceive nothing happening around them, and when the freeze ends, their awareness moves from the last pre-freeze instant to the first post-freeze instant without interruption, creating an effect like a cinematic jump cut.

To put a soul on ice, you must win a contest of Wills. If your target has any temporal feats, they get +5 to their roll. If you succeed, the target is frozen for one round per point of your Wisdom. While they're frozen, you must make a Concentration check of Difficulty 15 each round, taken as a standard action with all the usual limitations; if you fail, the target returns to normal time immediately.

SYNCHRONIZATION (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: BETWEEN MOMENTS

You and one or more allies can coordinate your action stacks. You pick your reference point from something in the environment: a song, the beat of a jack hammer, the pulse of traffic, anything that lets you all measure your time the same way. When you all know Synchronization, the length of your action stacks grows by half the character level of the lowest-level participant, rounded up.

The player of the character with the most difficult stack makes the check for success, and the outcome applies to all the characters using Synchronization that round.

Example: John, Sheila, and Koshi prepare to sweep down on their enemies' current headquarters. Koshi is the young one here, level 4 where John and Sheila are now level 7. They all know Synchronization, so their action stacks can each be (4/2) or 2 actions longer than usual. They take as their benchmark the sounds of a canal lock operating nearby, with a regular steady rhythm of pump, fill, door open, door close, drain, and so on, all echoing through this industrial district.

John has the most difficult stack, with a final Difficulty of 25, so he makes his check. His outcome is only 19. Koshi's stack has a Difficulty of 17; he completes all of his actions just fine. Sheila's stack has a Difficulty of 22. Some of her actions won't go through, and she'll suffer a -3 penalty to her initiative check next round. John is the one who really suffers, with much of his stack not working out and a -6 penalty to initiative next round.

STEALING MOMENTS (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: BETWEEN MOMENTS

You can sense when others nearby are manipulating time to create action stacks, and can try to interfere. Make an opposed roll of Will saves. If you succeed, your opponent's next stack is truncated by one



action for every 2 points of Intelligence you have, rounded up. The challenge is a full action.

Example: John spots the mooks' boss entering, and knows that he has the secrets of time stealing at his command. John immediately summons his own lore to create an eddy of slow time where he expects the boss to be. The boss senses the snare, resists...and fails, because John's player wins the challenge. John has Intelligence 3, so the boss's stack can't grow as long as usual: 3/2 is 2, rounded up. The boss has Improved Between Moments, and would normally get 2 x Dexterity actions. Since he has Dexterity 3, that would mean 6 actions. But now it can get no longer than 4 actions.

TEMPORAL CALM (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: NARRATOR APPROVAL

You can use very small quantities of borrowed time to smooth out extremes of probability, making events in your vicinity happen in an average sort of way. To create a temporal calm, you must concentrate as a standard action and make a Will save, Difficulty 15. If you succeed, on the next round, all outcomes within five yards of you are more average than they'd otherwise be. All die roll results shift by 1 point toward 10: rolls of 1 become rolls of 2, while rolls of 20 become rolls of 19. Furthermore, if the modified roll is still in the threat range of a critical hit, the player of that character must spend a point of Conviction to achieve the critical.

You may spend a point of Conviction to increase the duration of the calm, from one round to a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom.

TEMPORAL RIGIDITY (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: IMPROVED TEMPORAL CALM

It takes the same effort to create a calm area as with Temporal Calm, but you get very strong results. All checks within 10 yards of you automatically achieve the results of taking 10. Anyone wishing to get

any other result must make a Will save with a difficulty of 10 + half your level + your Wisdom. If this roll is a success, the player can roll as usual and the die result isn't shifted toward 10, but a roll within the threat range still doesn't become a critical hit unless the player spends a point of Conviction. It takes the same roll for an observer to realize what's responsible for things seeming creepy and unusual.

All random phenomena follow the same course: all drips coming off a faucet land in the same spot, a coin flipped always lands the same side up, and so on.

The temporal rigidity lasts for 10 rounds, or (if you spend a point of Conviction) 10 x Wisdom rounds.

VORTEX (TEMPORAL)

PREREQUISITE: EDDY

You can make a more lasting and significant delay in the flow of time than Eddy allows. With a full round's concentration and a Will save

of Difficulty 15, you make a temporal vortex that you associate with an object or place within arm's reach. Anyone who holds the object or goes within five feet of the place must make a Will save of Difficulty 10 + half your character level + your Intelligence. Those who fail can take only one standard or move action or make a single interaction check. Affected people with Between Moments or other means of temporal acceleration can use their power to take their normal set of actions, but no more than that.

The vortex lasts for one day per point of Intelligence you have, or one week per point of Intelligence if you spend a point of Conviction. You can make one vortex per hour, but can only have one vortex per point of Intelligence active at one time.

People affected by a vortex automatically feel a sense of strangeness, but may not consciously recognize what's wrong. Each round they're subject to its effects, they can make an Intelligence check with the same difficulty as the Will save to recognize that either they're moving too slowly or nearby things are moving too quickly.

FACTIONS

This is a collection of factions ready to use in a *Borrowed Time* game. By default, none of them is particularly pleasant, and even when they have some good ideas they tend to take it too far. They, therefore, make fine antagonists. Each also has a brief suggestion on aspects to change if you want to use them as sponsors or allies for the players' characters. The sample characters for each group are pretty unpleasant people, but they can be rivals and antagonists even within a generally good group—no institution is composed solely of saints and heroes, after all.

ACELOMETRICS

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 14,000

HEADQUARTERS: ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

HISTORY

For more than six hundred years, a small monastery in the French province of Alsace guarded several key books of time lore. In 1871, the Prussian army conquered Alsace and annexed it, and troops gathered up valuable items to help pay for the war's cost. Thus the books came to be part of the Prussian imperial library, where they were misfiled and shelved among textbooks on botany. After the First World War, an anti-Nazi émigré sold them and the books around them for her passage out of Germany. In 1935, the Belgian book dealer who acquired them actually looked at them while taking a routine inventory, realized some of what he'd found, and took them with him on his own trip to Switzerland. Time manipulation became the foundation of his business in Zurich, which flourished during the war with arms and other smuggling, and afterward with crooked reconstruction.

Assets acquired with time manipulation led to the, newly named, Combined European Enterprises Fund playing a major role in establishing the post-war telecommunications infrastructure of central Europe. That, in turn, gave it a foot in the door in essentially every realm of business and government. It's not the most powerful player in European commerce, but it's one of the most thoroughly distributed and hard to avoid.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Acelometrics, as the board renamed the firm ten years ago, operates as a middle man: providing connections, trading in information, managing backups, holding reserve funds, and the like. It's almost never visible to the public. Its customers and clients are governments and businesses, to whom it sells the theme of "everything you need, sooner than you imagined". Its

headquarters remains in Zurich, but it has branch offices in the capitals of more than two-thirds of the world's nations, so that the hourglass-and-A logo can be found almost anywhere that there's an interesting secret or unexpected opportunity for profit in nation-level transactions.

The headquarter's Office of Forward Reaction houses the time manipulation group. Their primary concern is the management of ideology, and the treating of *all* strong political, philosophical, and religious conviction as a threat to commercial opportunity. Even too-zealous championship of an economic doctrine may warrant OFR response. This brings it into direct conflict with all the other major factions working with borrowed time - most of whom have at some point dealt (wittingly or otherwise) with Acelometrics and are therefore vulnerable to attack from the inside.

AS ALLIES

Emphasize Acelometrics's opposition to totalitarian systems in any sphere of life, and the opportunities that come when people can choose and invent their destinies, with money-making opportunities in plenty without requiring abuse or rampant exploitation.

HENRI VIENTILLE

Type: 1st-level Warrior

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +1, Constitution +1, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +2, Charisma +2

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Diplomacy 4 (+6), Gather Information 4 (+6), Sense Motive 4 (+6)

Feats: Assessment, Between Moments, Combat Calm, Firearms Training, Improved Combat Calm

Combat: Attack +2, Defense +2, Initiative +1

Saves: Toughness +1, Fortitude +3, Reflex +1, Will +2

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +7, **Reputation:** +0, **Virtue:** Bold, **Vice:** Fanatic

Weapons: Masterwork heavy pistol (+1 attack bonus, +4 damage)

Equipment: fashionable suits, cutting-edge laptop, cell phone/PDA/surveillance pod

The Vientille family has served Acelometrics since its founding. Henri grew up knowing many of the organization's secrets and learned the rest as a young man with a strong aptitude for time manipulation. He now works as one of the OFR's junior troubleshooters, with the authority to investigate and respond to many kinds of interference, and the standing to call for help when he needs more force than he can provide himself.

THE EXTRA INNING

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 80

HEADQUARTERS: THE EXTRA INNING, MISSISSIPPI RIVER, USA

HISTORY

After the American Revolution, many British loyalists lost everything in looting either sanctioned or supported by the revolutionary government. One such victim had several manuscripts in his library dealing with time borrowing, and one of the looters hung onto them, on a whim. Silas Whittier quickly learned the fundamentals of the art, and put it to use—not for power, which held no appeal for him, or for any grand ideology, but simply to get comfortably rich. He and a few trusted companions used their powers to manipulate races and sporting events, and the occasional market transaction. They passed the secret along, some to their children and some to younger associates who'd proven themselves the right sort.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Eight generations later, the group has no formal name or complicated structure. It's just "we who know these secrets, thanks to Silas and those who've come after". They do have a meeting place, a casino in a Mississippi riverboat, named the *Extra Inning*. It hosts face-to-face and Internet gambling of all kinds, bringing in money and crowds to cover the group's paranormal activity. Those in the know refer to the boat as a convenient shorthand for all their people and work. As a matter of policy, none of them rise to the ranks of the Fortune 400, or anywhere close to it. They are multi-millionaires of a relatively ordinary sort, who can get what they want when they want it and so don't need vast accumulations.

If there were no other time manipulators, the *Extra Inning* group wouldn't matter to the course of world affairs at all. As it is, though, they pose an unintentional but significant threat. Their sporting tweaks create a steady flow of temporal "noise" that interferes with others' work, leading to mysterious successes and failures that no other group currently understands well at all. The gamblers don't suspect any of the great conspiracies. If they and the others learn of each other, there's likely to be some very messy temporal battling.

AS ALLIES

The *Extra Inning* group can be a great home for characters who just want to have a good time without worrying about global issues of morality and duty. It can also support brokers in information and other characters with more of a cyberpunk attitude of gliding through the world's cracks and dealing between institutions for their own gain.

TANNER JEFFSTON III

Type: 1st-level Expert

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +2, Constitution +0, Intelligence +1, Wisdom +2, Charisma +1

Skills: Bluff 4 (+5), Diplomacy 4 (+5), Disguise 4 (+5), Drive 4 (+6), Gather Information 4 (+5), Knowledge (popular culture) 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+6), Sleight of Hand 4 (+6), Stealth 4 (+6)

Feats: Fascinate (Bluff), Firearms Training, Suggest (Bluff), Temporal Calm

Combat: Attack +2, Defense +2, Initiative +2

Saves: Toughness +0, Fortitude +0, Reflex +2, Will +4

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +6, **Reputation:** +1, **Virtue:** Innovative, **Vice:** Overconfident

Weapons: heavy pistol (+4 damage)

Equipment: laptop computer, flashy suits, competition trophies and medals



Tanner comes from a wealthy North Carolina family, and joined the *Extra Inning's* social set in his college days, in the same fraternity as some of the members' offspring. They recognized his useful combination of genuine affable good cheer and completely amoral self-interest, and put him to work. He specializes in scouting out potential markets for the gamblers' long-term use, from net-based specialized markets to local lotteries. He really does like traveling and meeting new people, and offers a lot of useful advice on how to make gambling efforts more profitable, whether or not the *Extra Inning* is going to milk them, so he has a small but growing reputation as a consultant for such things.

THE HERODIAN BROTHERHOOD

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 2,300

HEADQUARTERS: MONASTERY OF ST. THOMAS,
SOUTHERN LEBANON

HISTORY

According to Gnostic teachers of the first and second centuries AD, Jesus was a necessarily flawed incursion by God into the material world. God as pure spirit has no innate tie to Earth, which is the realm of the fallen powers of darkness, and His effort to help mankind escape their clutches was doomed to end in the redeemer's miserable death. At least Jesus managed to deliver some good teaching on his way to martyrdom. It wasn't his fault, these sages said; it was simply the way things were. They determined that they would help God by forestalling any future incursion of the same sort. Ever since, they and their followers have wiped out bloodlines that seem to have messianic potential and killed individuals who display any of the signs of divine indwelling, so that the dark prince of this world can't get at any more of God's power.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Brotherhood doesn't believe there's much truth to currently fashionable claims about families descended from Mary Magdalene's

marriage to Jesus, but its leaders also believe in not taking chances. They support a variety of terrorist organizations and their own in-house assassins to strike at alleged “Grail lineages”, and to corrupt potential messiahs with drugs and other vices that will lead to deaths that don’t look like assassinations. There’s an ongoing debate within the Brotherhood about whether civilization-ending plagues and the like would liberate trapped souls to return to God’s domain (which would be good) or give them into the care of the fallen powers (which wouldn’t). Both sides watch and sometimes contribute to natural and man-made disasters, to study the consequences in hopes of settling the argument.

AS ALLIES

Not many groups of characters are likely to really embrace violent Gnosticism as a creed for heroes, but then this is about imaginary worlds. A campaign with a heroic Brotherhood is likely one with a lot of magic and demonology flying around, so that there’s supernatural danger as a recurring challenge.

MARTHA VINH

Type: 1st-level Warrior

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence +2, Wisdom +0, Charisma +0

Skills: Acrobatics 4 (+6), Escape Artist 4 (+6), Knowledge (tactics) 4 (+6), Notice 4 (+4), Sense Motive 4 (+4), Stealth 4 (+6)

Feats: Between Moments, Blind Fight, Far Shot, Firearms Training, Improved Between Moments,

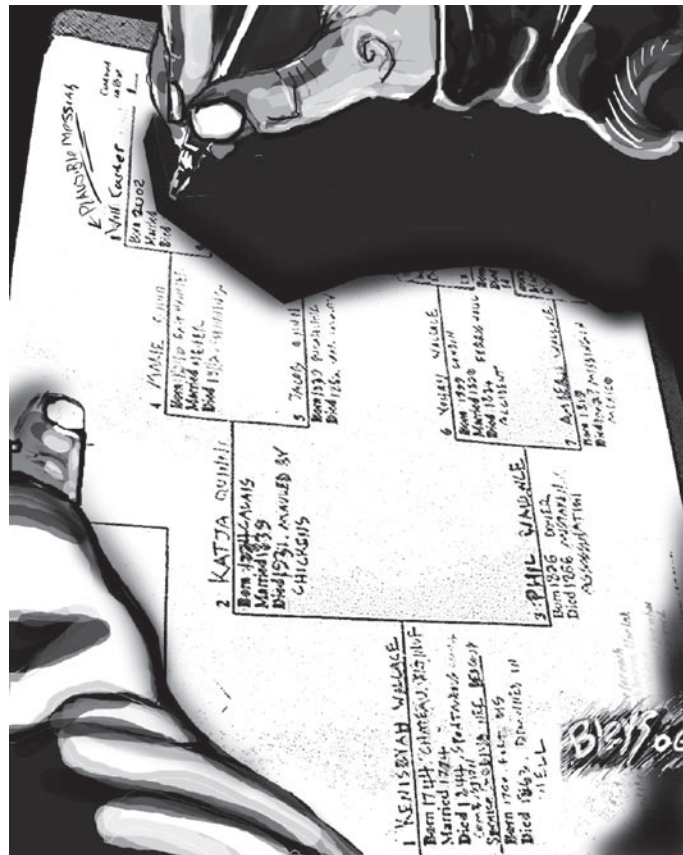
Combat: **Combat:** Attack +3, Defense +3, Initiative +2

Saves: Toughness +2, Fortitude +4, Reflex +2, Will +0

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +7, **Reputation:** +0, **Virtue:** Brave, **Vice:** Callous

Weapons: Masterwork pistols (+1 attack bonus, +3 damage)

Equipment: Spare pistols and ammunition, nondescript outfits, untraceable currency for many parts of the world



Martha grew up in orphanages during the Vietnam War and the later war between Vietnam and Cambodia, and developed the belief that the world had already gone to what the preachers described as Hell. She did contract killing for the Brotherhood for several years before they realized how much more useful she could be if she understood more. Now she devotes herself fully to the cause, going wherever there might be someone so open to the divine that God could use them as the next messiah, and killing them before that awful fate can happen.

THE MILLENNIUM CLUB

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 550

HEADQUARTERS: THE MARLOWE CLUB, LONDON, GREAT BRITAIN

HISTORY

The Marlowe Club hosts many of Britain’s most dedicated wanna-bes. All either fabulously wealthy or extremely well connected to power despite relatively modest personal wealth, the club’s members spend their days reinforcing each other’s beliefs about how they could have been contenders. They overlook weaknesses like poor heads for details, small attention spans, and lack of physical prowess in explaining why MI-5 turned down this one, the Metropolitan Cricket Club that one, and the Foreign Office the other. Wistfulness, envy, and bouts of bitter hatred mix in Marlowe minds as smoothly as the ingredients of the drinks their expert bartenders create. It is therefore not the best thing for the world at large that some Marlowe men discovered secrets of time manipulation in the 1950s.

The circumstances of that discovery have been lost. All the Marlowe men involved with it later tweaked the surrounding time, and the chain of causality shattered badly. Other time-shifting groups are vaguely aware that the Marlowe Club is a sort of causality sinkhole thanks to this sort of thing, though none have yet investigated it in detail.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Millennium Club is a club within the club, consisting of those chosen to share time’s secrets. The Millennials aim to prove themselves worthy and destroy the boring and/or evil rivals who held them back from their rightful glory. They carry on like would-be cinematic secret agents and masterminds, and generally make such a mess that only their temporal powers let them escape. They don’t, usually, *mean* to endanger lives, break fragile peaces, or promote violent chaos, it just happens that way.

AS ALLIES

Perhaps the institutions of power aren’t just snobbish but subverted by real perils that only the Millennials are aware of. Dismissed as twits, they nonetheless fight the good fight as best they can. This is also a good group of allies or patrons for characters who just want adventure.

PHIL BLASSINGWAITE

Type: 1st-level Expert

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +1, Constitution +1, Intelligence +1, Wisdom +1, Charisma +2

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Diplomacy 4 (+6), Drive 4 (+5), Gather Information 4 (+6), Knowledge (business) 4 (+5), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+5), Knowledge (history) 4 (+5), Ride 4 (+5), Sense Motive 4 (+5)

Feats: Between Moments, Connected, Eidetic Memory, Wealthy

Combat: Attack +1, Defense +1, Initiative +1

Saves: Toughness +1, Fortitude +1, Reflex +1, Will +3

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +11, **Reputation:** +0, **Virtue:** persistent,

Vice: foolhardy

Weapons: heavy pistol (damage +4)

Equipment: Custom-tailored outfits for all occasions, luxury cars, PDA filled with numbers for valets, escorts, and other services in many world cities.

Philip is practically the archetypal Millennial. Not terribly smart, he nonetheless used his eidetic memory to gain academic and commercial success, then set his sights on breaking into the spy game. Unfortunately, he approached it in too typical a business spirit, trying to use blackmail and covert leverage, and found that this time he was up against experts who casually broke his schemes and tossed him out of their circle. He was actually literally broke for a little while, before finessing his way back into wealth. Friends introduced him to the Millennials, who welcomed him in as one of their own and trained him in the fundamentals of time manipulation. Now he travels the world being what he thinks of as a freelance rectifier of political woes, and what others might think of as a psychotic terrorist.

MINISTRY OF STANDARDIZATION

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 6,700

HEADQUARTERS: MINISTRY OF STANDARDIZATION,
ROME, ITALY

HISTORY

The oldest continuously active group in the struggle for time control, what's now the Ministry of Standardization was born many centuries ago, in the middle of the first century BC. A small group of sages and scholars who gathered in Rome for conversation discovered some of the secrets of time borrowing and adjusting, and pondered the implications. They were already a skeptical bunch, inclined toward stoicism and philosophical disbelief in the gods and all things supernatural. With their new lore, they dreamed of escaping chance into the realm of pure fate, where whatever happened would be what should happen.

Through all its various permutations, the group has maintained that focus. The great enemy is chaos, and the great victory is the establishment of a predictable order. Everything else, including what most people think of as justice and mercy, is irrelevant. Some members of the group have believed that other virtues would follow once perfect regularity is achieved, and others believe that no other virtues actually matter at all.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Since the mid-1800s, the group has chosen to present itself as an obscure branch of the government of whatever area one of its task forces may work in. It has stationery, badges, and other gear identifying the Ministry of Standardization, or Office of Standardization, or Bureau of Standardization, and well-rehearsed speeches about measuring and controlling unpredictable events for the sake of public wellbeing. Confident manner and the right suit let an agent go almost anywhere.

Everything in which chance looms large is a potential target for the Ministry of Standardization. Gambling of all sorts is a constant enemy, from lotteries to Internet casinos. Most members of the Ministry are also hostile to unregulated commerce, preferring very strong governments that inspect and authorize business, publishing, and all other aspects of social life. In recent years the Ministry has also become active in intellectual property matters, favoring strong and lasting patents and copyrights so as to reduce haphazard innovation in the arts and sciences.

Finally, all other individuals and groups who can adjust time are top-priority targets, for isolation and elimination as soon as possible.



AS ALLIES

It's not hard to step from randomness to destructive chaos, or to play up that connection for Ministry members and their allies. This is also a good group to use when the campaign is going to involve the discovery of a new level of manipulator, whether alien, extra-temporal or otherwise exotic: the order behind the chaos is as bad as the chaos itself in this case.

MARIA VANUCCE

Type: 1st-level Expert

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +2, Constitution +0, Intelligence +2, Wisdom +2, Charisma +0

Skills: Bluff 4 (+6), Computers 4 (+6), Concentration 4 (+6), Drive 4 (+8), Knowledge (art) 4 (+6), Knowledge (civics) 4 (+6), Knowledge (current events) 4 (+6), Knowledge (streetwise) 4 (+6), Pilot 4 (+8), Sense Motive 4 (+6)

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Talented (Drive, Pilot), Temporal Calm, Improved Temporal Calm

Combat: Attack +2, Defense +2, Initiative +2

Saves: Toughness +0, Fortitude +2, Reflex +6, Will +2

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +5, **Reputation:** +1, **Virtue:** Calm, **Vice:** Uncaring

Weapons: Usually none

Equipment: Driver's licenses for many countries and vehicles, lines of credit at rental agencies

Maria was a professional racer who literally ran into two members of the Ministry's senior council three years ago. They recognized her subconscious use of time control and brought her into the organization. Now she's a driver for Ministry field operatives, going all over the world on short notice. She loves it: she gets to drive vehicles she could never afford on her own, and she's a born tourist. She appreciates the Ministry's long-term goals, but it's the pleasure of the mission that most interests her.

THE RED HARVEST

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 100

HEADQUARTERS: CAVES IN THE APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS,
KENTUCKY, USA

HISTORY

Late in the Cretaceous period, one of the small, obscure lineages of dinosaurs achieved self-awareness. They weren't glamorous predators or even very interesting to look at: they remained almost entirely quadrupedal, relying on branched tails and psychic powers for what little manipulation of the environment they engaged in. They also developed an innate sense for time flow and the ability to manipulate it by force of will. When the cascading disasters came and destroyed all the dinosaurs, the Wise Ones (as they called themselves) hid themselves in pockets of borrowed time. They've glided through the millennia and epochs ever since, sometimes emerging in hopes of building a new home, sometimes just scavenging for what they need to continue life in their temporal dens. Humanity, the fourth intelligent race between then and now, has spurred them to new activity.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Red Harvest is the Wise Ones' name for their current goal. They want to warm the world, wipe out human civilization while retaining us as a race of savages and servants, and find some way of renewing all their time pockets and getting out of the solar system without the sort of mechanical technology we use. They don't understand us very well, and their psychic links transmit emotions and images much more clearly than words or ideas. So their human-mingling scouts concentrate on stimulating states of mind they hope will be useful to the great plan, and on inducing particular conditions to study the results. Red Harvest teams are therefore surrounded by unstable people prone to

violent rages, inexplicable depressions, unsettling nightmares, and the like. So far there's no grander purpose to any of it, but the chaos makes everyone else's plans that much harder to achieve.

AS ALLIES

The Red Harvest would be a harsh patron for anyone who finds the prospect of dinosaur rule and human subjugation less than delightful. They really are the stuff of strange villains rather than allies or patrons.

CARRION TALON

Type: 1st-level Warrior

Abilities: Strength +3, Dexterity +0, Constitution +1, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +2, Charisma +0

Skills: Intimidate 4 (+4), Notice 4 (+6), Survival 4 (+6), Stealth 4 (+4)

Feats: Aggressive Attack, Between Moments, Blind-Fight, Combat Calm, Weapon Training

Combat: Attack +1, Defense +1, Initiative +0

Saves: Toughness +0, Fortitude +3, Reflex +0, Will +2

Conviction: 3, **Wealth:** +0, **Reputation:** +0, **Virtue:** Brave,

Vice: Inhuman

Weapons: claws and teeth (+3 damage), dagger (+4 damage), club (+5 damage)

Equipment: Hides, medicine pouch, souvenirs from slain humans

Carrion Talon is one of the Red Harvest's new breed of enthusiastic trouble-makers. His name refers to his habit of not washing off his hands very carefully after a round of murders; he says that he likes the reminder of the kill and its excitement. He's built like most Red Harvest hunters: a dinosaur about the size of a very large dog, capable of pulling upright for a number of rounds equal to his Constitution, fast and vicious. People who see him usually assume he's a movie special effect, at least until the bloodshed starts.

PLAYING THE GAME

This is a collection of advice on aspects of the high-action style. There are no game mechanics here, just discussion of how to use the *True20* rules and ways of presenting your thoughts and decisions in play to maximize the coolness of it all.

LINES AND MOVES

Roleplaying in the high-action style isn't much like watching a finished, polished action movie, or reading an edited and revised action novel or comic. It's more like being in the midst of the creative process, working with very little opportunity for revision and having no clear idea where it's all going. Fortunately, there are some things that you can do as a player or Narrator to improve the quality of play with very little fuss. The key word is "prepare".

Action protagonists usually get off at least one particularly good line of dialogue in the course of their adventures, and many have recurring taglines. Before play, or between sessions, players can work out some good lines for their characters and write them down, and tell the Narrator that they'd like an opportunity to use their lines. Then the Narrator can look at those lines, and work out a situation for each in which it's a good response. For simplicity's sake, start off with one line per character per session, and add more if and when everyone feels comfortable with the one and ready to add more.

Action protagonists also usually have a few signature maneuvers, distinctive things they do in fights, upon being introduced, or in some other recurring situation. It might be the twirl of a pistol or

an elaborate sequence for spinning out an empty ammo clip and slinging the next clip into the gun, a tilt of the hat and tug of the lapels, a certain tone of voice and sequence of questions aimed at prospective clients. These also lend themselves to being written down and consulted before the next session, with the Narrator arranging the right moment to perform it.

These things help players feel that their characters are special in that action-hero way, and since this is a game of that sort, it plays better and more entertainingly when everyone helps set up these bits. None of them is a full scene. Indeed, most of them are less than one full round's worth of action. But, players who reliably get a few cool moments every session come away happier, and also more likely to contribute more cool things.

The Narrator can likewise build up a small library of signature moments for the Narrator characters: the arch-villains' favorite taunts and ripostes, the characteristic opening or closing moves of a particular squad of flunkies, a common reaction among bystanders to seeing certain feats in action. If a particular Narrator character has just one common response to a particular situation, then you're set: it happens, and the response goes forth. If you have several good possibilities, you can select from among them in an easy way, like writing each on an index card and drawing one at random. This sort of preparation is also something the players can contribute to, either in discussing the particular Narrator characters and their motives and abilities, or just by bringing up good inspirations that the Narrator can borrow from.



MAKING IT UP AS YOU GO

The flip side of preparation is leaving room for brilliant ideas—or even just plain fun ones—on the spur of the moment. Action movies, comics, and the like are often constructed with a mix of both. The creators have some ideas in advance and make sure that the props are in place for them. A long-standing rule of theatre says that if you show the audience a gun in the first act, you must have someone fire it by the third act. But many of them also expect some improvisation, as people who’ve been thinking about what they’ll be doing and getting in the right frame of mind invent new bits and see if they fit with what’s already there.

The trick to allowing for good improvisation is to start off with a description that sets a few key elements in place while not nailing more down right away than is necessary for the start of a scene, and for any planned major moments later. Make use of the fact that the other players know something of the world too. If you, as the Narrator, tell the players that their characters have entered “a big ballroom full of gilt trimmings, antique French furniture, and famous paintings”, then they can expect end tables with expensive vases, heavy sofas with tapestry covers, and something like *The Blue Boy* in a heavy frame. They can nail down simple touches thanks to your good initial cue, like having their characters diving behind the nearest sofas, and be right in the flow of things. There are going to be those sofas, and they’re going to be along the walls every so often, and it’s a short jump to one unless you specifically need it otherwise for some particular reason.

In action stories, what matters most is the antagonists’ and protagonists’ cleverness, courage, strength, speed, and other internal qualities. The world at large is the stage for their contest of wills. As the Narrator, you need to teach yourself to relax and not worry about all the details in advance, and to ask yourself whether you’re nailing down this particular detail because it will help the ambience of the

game, or for some other reason that may not actually help much here. There are games in which it’s fine to limit the characters’ ability to have their way with things; *Borrowed Time* just happens not to be one of them. As a player, though, you need to respond to the freedom the Narrator should be offering with courtesy and cooperation. Trust the Narrator to have a reason for some special touches, and be willing to negotiate a little. Maybe, for instance, there’s something hidden in that sofa for a villain to grab later in the scene, but your character could smash up an end table for an improvised club and get the same effect. Good will has to flow in both directions for this to be most entertaining for everyone.

BEING IN ON THE SECRET

There is real satisfaction in roleplaying the discovery of hidden truths behind everyday appearances, but also a lot of potential for things to derail or just plain drag. Furthermore, it’s very common for the protagonists of stories about secret wars with paranormal aspects to already know what’s going on. You may wish to fold in the exposition right at the outset: the characters have just been inducted into a new level of secrecy, so their trainers tell them what’s up, who they’ll be facing, what sorts of resources the enemy can bring to bear, and so on. The focus of play shifts from “What’s going on?” to “Given that this is going on, what can we do to save the day?” The second question isn’t innately better than the first, but sometimes it supports fast action play better.

There’s nothing wrong with letting players read about all the groups, for instance, and play characters who’ve been well-briefed. This is entirely compatible with them starting at first level (or third, or something else without a huge amount of implied experience). Even first-level characters can do neat things, and groups in a serious struggle may well decide that information makes for better grunts as well as better generals.



YOU GET WHAT YOU REWARD

This advice applies both to players and Narrators, though Narrators have more opportunities to act on it. If you find that your game isn't as high-action as you want, or lacking something else you want, stop to see what you make easy or hard for the players. If you routinely drag out lots of Difficulty penalties for wild-eyed crazy ideas that are cool and suitable but sort of push the boundaries of ability and skill definitions, then players will calm their eyes and restore their sanity and not try them so often; repeated failure teaches them, "Don't try that." The more you apply a cautious and sensible standard of judgment for Difficulty (and even the sheer possibility of a scheme), the more your players will have their characters proceed in ways that seem cautious and sensible to them. To get action, you have to reward action.

The key shift is the way you think about what players (and characters) have or haven't earned. Many roleplaying games deal closely with matters of fairness in the sense that special abilities are supposed to come at a cost, be earned over time by doing less dramatic things first, and so on. *Borrowed Time* can work that way if you'd like it to, but it doesn't have to. If you need to identify a cost that characters or players pay for the neat stuff, think of it like this: they're giving up other possibilities for this campaign, and putting their time and effort into it. That's enough price.

The potential problem with players inventing dramatic moments is, of course, that sometimes they invent things that you, the Narrator, have no idea how to respond to. The key to sustained fun is managing to pause to think without denying their good ideas. If you're inclined to say "No!" simply because you don't know what a good response is, suppress yourself. Say "Yes!" followed by, "Now I need to think what this does to what's going on around you," or some other honest admission of your

need for a fresh thought. If you have a cooperative group, you may well find that players have good ideas for what their characters' enemies can do that's clever and cool too. Even if not, players will generally give you some breathing room. (If they don't, you probably shouldn't play with them anyway; they'll get you into some other trouble sooner or later.) It's better to go slow and accept and incorporate their ideas, than to go fast at the cost of imposing an inappropriate realism.

If you need a "realistic" rationale for the more exuberant action possibilities, just remember this: the whole point is that the major protagonists and antagonists are slipping around outside the normal boundaries of reality. They know they're cheating, and talk about it, and previously innocent bystanders can recognize it as weird and abnormal. Furthermore, the conditions around our heroes are supposed to vary moment by moment. If they do something super-cool this round and not the next, well, that's the way it works for them. Variability as well as boundary-breaking is built right into the framework. So there's no need to pretend that this is just how things work if that makes you or your players uncomfortable.

ON BEING STYLISH

Some gamers have a solid grasp of real-life fashion and style, and don't need any help mastering it for use in play. If you're one of those, you won't find anything very deep here and can skip along to the next session.

It turns out that the basics of fashionable culture are accessible and easy to master. The best sources are the magazines *GQ* and *Vogue*. *GQ*, the modern incarnation of the venerable *Gentleman's Quarterly*, combines reviews of men's fashions with interviews, photo essays, and good journalism, and its ads show you how the fashionable like to think of themselves. *Vogue* provides the same service for women. You don't have to confine yourself to vague handwaving about "my character has whatever looks good at the moment," not when you can point at a few pictures and identify the designer of your character's clothes and mention a few details. The magazines aren't very expensive to buy, and many libraries have subscriptions so that you can browse them without spending any money at all on it.

Cable television provides more information, both documentary-style exposition and collections of interesting and useful imagery. The Travel Channel is a wonderful resource for getting into the mindset of the sort of luxury traveler many *Borrowed Time* characters are (or pretend to be), with its coverage of resorts, unusual means of travel, expensive toys, and so on. The Home and Garden Channel sometimes profiles mansions and unusual dwellings, which make fine locations for your next action sequence. The sports channels' news shows sometimes report on athletic competitions around the world and in relatively obscure venues, all very useful local color. The Food Network does the same for places to dine and dishes on which to dine there. Furthermore, these channels all have web sites that let you retrieve data and further links long after a show has aired.

You can also get interesting insights by talking to local sales people. Tell the people in the suits or jewelry department of a good department store that you're a writer interested in what's fashionable this season and what the budget versions of it are, and very often they'll be happy to share. Successful sales people generally genuinely do like to do it. They will also tend to assume a higher baseline of knowledge than you have, but if you're honest about starting from scratch, they'll shift and help you, or at least try. Just make it clear that you're not looking to make a purchase right now and don't keep them from the current paying customers, and you can learn a lot. And while you're there, watching the customers can tell you things, too.

APPENDIX: D20 SYSTEM CONVERSION

The game systems in *True20* are based on the popular *d20 System*. However, there are a number of important differences, notably in how *True20* handles damage and injury. This appendix offers conversion guidelines for players familiar with other *d20 System* games and products who are interested in adapting those materials for use with *True20*. Among other things, this opens up a wide range of source material usable in your *True20* game, including various creatures, supporting characters, supplemental rules, and so forth. It also allows you to adapt material from *True20* to your favorite *d20 System* games as well.

ABILITIES

Other *d20* games rate ability scores on a scale from 1 to 20 or more, with ability modifiers based on the ability score. Those modifiers are equivalent to the -5 to +5 or more scores found in *True20*. When using other *d20* creatures in *True20*, drop the ability scores and just use the ability modifiers. When converting *True20* creatures for use in other *d20* games, determine ability scores by doubling the *True20* ability modifier and adding 10. Treat a result of 0 as 1. So Strength +1 becomes Strength 12 (1 x 2 + 10), while Intelligence -5 becomes 1 (-5 x 2 + 10 = 0, which becomes 1).

DAMAGE AND INJURY

Damage in most *d20 System* games is recorded using hit points. Essentially, each character and creature has a number of hit points based on their level (modified by things like Constitution), and each attack inflicts a number of hit points of damage. When hit points drop to a certain level, certain conditions, like disabled and dying, come into play.

The *True20* system of damage involves a Toughness saving throw in place of hit points, with damage conditions showing the effects of damage.

When converting a *d20* character to *True20*, give the character a Toughness bonus based on Constitution, with any appropriate modifiers for the Defensive Roll and Tough feats.

TOUGHNESS AND HIT POINTS

Damage Reduction: A creature with damage reduction receives +2 to its Toughness save bonus for every 5 points of damage reduction. This bonus does not apply against damage from sources that bypass the damage reduction. For instance, a werewolf does not gain a Toughness bonus from damage reduction for damage inflicted by silver weapons.

Energy Resistance: A creature receives +2 to its Toughness bonus for every 5 points of energy resistance it possesses, but only against energy attacks of the matching type.

Toughness feat: A character receives a cumulative +1 to his Toughness bonus every time he takes the Toughness feat, the equivalent of the Tough feat in *True20*. When converting *True20* characters with Tough to hit points, the Tough feat grants 3 additional hit points on top of the character's total (based on level and Constitution).

DAMAGE BONUS

In *True20*, attacks have a damage bonus, used to determine the Difficulty of the target's Toughness save. In *d20*, attacks have a damage roll, a

die roll plus a modifier determining how many hit points the attack removes from the target.

To quickly convert *True20* damage bonus to dice of damage, divide the base damage bonus (not including modifiers for abilities like Strength) by 2; the attack does that many d6 of damage. If there's a remainder left over, the attack does an additional d4 damage. Add the attacker's Strength modifier to the total damage, so Strength 18 adds +4 damage to the attack's total damage, after it is rolled.

To convert *d20* damage to *True20* damage bonus, see the **Damage Dice to Damage Bonus** table. If an attack does multiple dice of damage, multiply the damage bonus on the table by the number of dice rolled. The exception to this rule is for attacks based on a d3 or d2, since multiplying by zero gives a result of zero; in this case, every additional die adds +1 to the bonus (so an attack of 4d3 has a bonus of +3).

To this base damage bonus, add any damage bonuses for Strength, magical enhancement, special abilities, and the like, as normal. If an attack includes bonus damage dice, such as a rogue's sneak attack bonus or energy damage from a magical weapon, convert that damage to a bonus as above and add it to the attack's base damage.

DAMAGE DICE TO DAMAGE BONUS

Die Type	Base Damage Bonus
d3 or lower	+0
d4	+1
d6	+2
d8	+3
d10	+4
d12	+5

In some circumstances, attacks may do a bit more or less damage than normal. A critical hit does more damage than usual, while many attack spells do only half damage if the target succeeds in a saving throw.

MAGICAL HEALING

Instead of healing a certain number of hit points, *d20 System* healing spells in *True20* grant a magical recovery check, using the normal Difficulty. The character using the healing magic makes the recovery check for the wounded subject, as follows:

$$d20 + \text{caster level} + \text{magic bonus}$$

The magic bonus depends on the spell used; see the **Spell Changes** section later in this appendix.

The recipient heals the most serious wound condition if the magical recovery check succeeds. Every 10 points by which the magical recovery check result succeeds, the recipient's next most serious damage condition heals. (Unlike natural healing or the Cure power, magical healing can heal multiple damage conditions at once.) If an attempt to use magical healing on a dying character fails, the recipient of the spell still stabilizes automatically.

SUPERNATURAL HEALING

The paladin's lay on hands ability, the monk's wholeness of body ability, and other such supernatural healing powers allow characters to make

one or more magical recovery checks per day. The total hit points the character can heal per day using the standard *d20 System* rules becomes a bonus to his magical recovery check. The character decides how much, from a minimum of +1 to the full bonus, to allocate to any given magical recovery check. Once the total bonus is used up, the character can make no more supernatural healing checks that day. This otherwise works the same way as a healing spell and can improve damage conditions by multiple steps.

Example: Donovan Rel is a 4th-level paladin with Charisma 14, giving him a +8 bonus (4th level + 2 Cha modifier) to magical recovery checks when using lay on hands. He could use this bonus for eight separate magical healing attempts, each with a bonus of +1; he could make just one check with a bonus of +8; or he could make anywhere from two to seven magical healing attempts with various bonuses, as long as the total bonus used for the day does not exceed +8.

DAMAGE TO OBJECTS

Just as *True20* characters and creatures suffer damage conditions instead of losing hit points, so too do inanimate objects. The effects of damage are slightly different, since objects don't feel pain or suffer from wound trauma, but the core system remains the same.

TOUGHNESS AND HIT POINTS FOR OBJECTS

In *True20*, each object has a Toughness bonus. In d20, objects have two qualities: hardness and hit points. Hardness serves as damage reduction; the object ignores points of damage equal to its hardness each round. Hit points work like those of creatures, except objects are destroyed at 0 hit points instead of being disabled.

To convert from *True20* Toughness to d20, give the object hardness equal to its *True20* Toughness and hit points equal to 2.5 times its *True20* Toughness (rounding down).

To convert from d20 hardness and hit points to *True20* Toughness, give an object +1 Toughness for every 5 hit points and +2 Toughness for every 5 points of hardness.

Example: A strong wooden door has hardness 5 (+2) and 20 hp (+4), giving it a total +6 Toughness bonus in *True20*. A stone door has hardness 8 (+3) and 60 hit points (+12) for a total +15 Toughness bonus.

FEAT CHANGES

The d20 System metamagic feats Empower Spell and Maximize Spell must be changed in *True20* to reflect the nonvariable nature of damage and healing spells. Empower Spell increases the bonus of such spells by 50 percent (round down). Maximize Spell doubles the bonus of suitable spells. If a spell is both empowered and maximized, its bonus increases by 150 percent. All other aspects of the feats remain the same.

Example: An *explosive runes* spell inflicts 6d6 damage in d20, which translates to a +12 damage bonus. An empowered *explosive runes* has a +18 damage bonus (+12 x 1.5); a maximized *explosive runes* has a +24 damage bonus (+12 x 2); and an empowered, maximized *explosive runes* has a +30 damage bonus (+12 x 2.5).

SPELL CHANGES

The following d20 spells have altered effects or mechanics in *True20* to reflect the nature of the damage system.

- Cure Critical Wounds:** This spell provides a base +12 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +20 caster level bonus).
- Cure Light Wounds:** This spell provides a base +3 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +5 caster level bonus).
- Cure Minor Wounds:** This spell provides a +0 bonus to the magical recovery check, with no caster level bonus.
- Cure Moderate Wounds:** This spell provides a base +6 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +10 caster level bonus).
- Cure Serious Wounds:** This spell provides a base +9 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +1 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +15 caster level bonus).
- Cure, Mass:** All *cure* spells (except for *cure minor wounds*) have corresponding *mass cure* versions. Each provides the same bonus to the magical recovery check as the single target version, but the maximum caster level bonus increases by +20. *Mass cure moderate wounds*, for example, provides a base +6 bonus with a maximum +30 caster level bonus.
- Harm:** This spell inflicts damage on the target, with a base +10 damage bonus, and an additional +2 damage bonus per caster level (to a maximum +30 caster level bonus). The total damage bonus is halved if the target makes a successful Will save, and the spell cannot reduce the target past disabled.
- Heal:** This spell provides a base +10 bonus to the magical recovery check, with an additional +2 bonus per caster level (to a maximum +30 caster level bonus). All other factors of the spell function as described in the *Player's Handbook*.
- Regenerate:** In addition to regenerating the subject's body parts, this spell provides a base +12 bonus to the recovery check, with an additional +1 per caster level (to a maximum +35 caster level bonus).

Spells inflicting hit point damage (other than *harm*) should be adjusted as shown on the **Damage Dice to Damage Bonus** table.


CONVERTING CREATURES

Converting d20 System creatures for use with *True20* is a simple process:

1. Use the creature's Constitution and Size to determine its Toughness.
2. Convert hit point damage of the creature's attacks to a damage bonus.
3. Convert any spell-like abilities into equivalent powers.
4. Convert any *d20 System* skills to *True20* skills. Generally, this means combining skills like Listen and Spot or Hide and Move Silently, using the average of the skill bonuses.

Most other creature statistics remain the same between the two systems, so it's fairly easy to use creatures from any *d20 System* book in *True20*.



Name		 <div> <div>TRUE20</div> <div>ADVENTURE ROLEPLAYING</div> </div>						
Background								
Role								
Level								
Description				Character Portrait				
Abilities		Combat		Saving Throws		Other Statistics		
Strength		Initiative		Toughness		Size		
Dexterity		Dodge		Fortitude		Speed		
Constitution		Parry		Reflex				
Intelligence		Base Attack Bonus		Will				
Wisdom		Melee Attack Bonus		Characteristics				
Charisma		Ranged Attack Bonus		Virtue				
Damage Track				Vice				
0	5+	10+	15+					
Bruised	Dazed	Staggered	Unconscious					
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Hurt	Wounded	Disabled	Dying	Dead	Wealth and Reputation			
Fatigue Track				Wealth				
	Winded	Fatigued	Exhausted		Prof. Skill			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reputation			
Weapon		Attack Bonus		Damage Bonus		Range		
Skill		Bonus	Skill	Bonus	Skill	Bonus		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
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		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Feats								
Powers								
Special Abilities								
Equipment								
Conviction		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

INDEX

A

Aberration (creature type)..... 120
 Abilities..... 6, 14–15
 Altering..... 15
 Choosing..... 14
 Debilitated..... 15
 Nonexistent..... 15
 ability..... 11
 Ability Damaged..... 108
 Ability Drained..... 108
 Ability Focus (creature feat)..... 126
 ability score..... 11
 Ability Score Loss (creature trait)..... 127
 Accurate Attack (feat)..... 42
 Acelometrics..... 208
 Acid..... 110
 Acrobatics (skill)..... 30
 Acrobatic Bluff (feat)..... 42
 action..... 11
 Actions..... 11, 96–101
 Adept..... 19
 Advanced Diagnostics..... 194
 Advanced Mecha Operation (feat)..... 187
 Advanced Strike (feat)..... 187
 adventure..... 11
 Adventuring Gear..... 76–77
 Affect the Masses (feat)..... 151
 Age..... 23
 Aggressive Stance..... 102
 Aid..... 9
 Aid (action)..... 97
 Aim (action)..... 97
 Air (creature subtype)..... 124
 All-out Attack (feat)..... 42
 Alternate Form (creature trait)..... 127
 Amphibious (creature trait)..... 128
 Animal (creature type)..... 120
 Animal Empathy (feat)..... 42
 Anti-Kaiju Force..... 197
 An Offer You Can't Refuse (feat)..... 152
 APCs..... 86
 Appearance..... 23
 Apport (power)..... 58
 Apprehend the Djinni's Hand (feat)..... 152
 Aquatic (creature subtype)..... 124
 Archetypes, Caliphate Nights..... 149–151
 Archetypes, Mecha vs. Kaiju..... 186
 Area Attack..... 102
 Ark VII..... 174
 Armor..... 85–86
 Archaic..... 85
 Modern..... 85
 Supernatural..... 88
 Armor, Mecha..... 191
 Armored jumpsuit..... 85
 Armor Check Penalty..... 85
 Armor Training (feat)..... 42
 Ars Lumina..... 165, 175
 Assault rifle..... 83
 Assessment (feat)..... 42
 Astrometry (feat)..... 152
 attack..... 11
 Attack (action)..... 98
 Attack Bonus..... 94

attack bonus..... 11
 Attack Focus (feat)..... 42
 attack roll..... 11
 Attack Rolls..... 10
 Attack Specialization (feat)..... 42
 Attractive (feat)..... 42
 Autofire Attack..... 102
 Awesome Blow (creature feat)..... 127

B

Backgrounds..... 16–17
 Backgrounds, Lux Aeternum..... 181
 Baraka (power)..... 155
 Barding..... 80
 Barike-do Tactical Shield..... 192
 Bat..... 132
 Battleaxe..... 81
 Battleships..... 87
 Bear..... 132
 Bear-shark..... 132
 Beast Link (power)..... 58
 Begin/Complete Full Action (action)..... 98
 Benefit (feat)..... 42
 Between Moments (feat)..... 203
 Binoculars..... 78
 Blaster pistol..... 83
 Blaster rifle..... 83
 Blend In (feat)..... 152
 Blind-Fight (feat)..... 43
 Blinded..... 108
 Blindsense (creature trait)..... 128
 Blindsight (creature trait)..... 128
 Blink (power)..... 58
 Bliss (power)..... 58
 Blood Pudding..... 132
 Bluff (skill)..... 30, 92
 Boar..... 132
 Body Control (power)..... 58
 Bolo..... 83
 Bombers..... 88
 bonus..... 11
 Boomerang..... 83
 Borrowed Time..... 201–214
 Bouheki Tactical Shield..... 192
 Bow..... 83
 Brass knuckles..... 81
 Breastplate..... 85
 Breath Weapon (creature trait)..... 128
 Bruised..... 108
 Burrow..... 126

C

Caliban..... 132
 Caliphate Nights..... 143–162
 Calm (power)..... 59
 Caltrops..... 78
 Camera..... 78
 Camo Clothing..... 79
 Candle..... 76
 Canny Dodge (feat)..... 44
 Carrion Talon..... 212
 Carrying..... 91
 Cat..... 133
 Cell Phone..... 78

Chain..... 82
 Chainmail..... 85
 Chainsaw..... 82
 challenge..... 11
 Challenges..... 8–9
 Challenge (feat)..... 44
 Change Shape (creature trait)..... 128
 character..... 11
 Characteristics..... 23–26
 Charge (action)..... 98
 Charisma..... 15
 Charms..... 88
 check..... 11
 Checks..... 7
 Ability..... 10
 Comparison..... 8
 Power..... 10
 Skill..... 10
 Time..... 8
 Types..... 9–11
 Without Rolls..... 8
 Checks, Opposed..... 7
 Chiri Rocket Launcher..... 190
 Chokehold (feat)..... 45
 Chrysalis System..... 171–172
 Chrysanthemum Gazer Array..... 190
 Circumstance Modifiers..... 8
 Cleave (feat)..... 45
 Climb..... 126
 Climb (skill)..... 31
 Clothing..... 79
 Club..... 81
 Cockroach, Giant..... 133
 Cold..... 110
 Cold (creature subtype)..... 124
 Cold Shaping (power)..... 59
 Combat, Mecha..... 194
 Combat Calm (feat)..... 204
 Combat Mastery (feat)..... 204
 Combat Round..... 11
 Combat Sense (power)..... 59
 Combat Sequence..... 94
 Combined Attack (action)..... 99
 Command..... 93
 Commander Geretsu..... 199
 Command (action)..... 99
 Commlink..... 78
 Comm System..... 194
 Computer..... 78
 Computers (skill)..... 31
 Computer Link (power)..... 59
 Concealed Items..... 76
 Concealment..... 103
 Concentrate (action)..... 99
 Concentration (skill)..... 32
 Concentration Between (feat)..... 204
 Conditions..... 102
 Connected (feat)..... 45
 Constitution..... 14
 Constrict (creature trait)..... 128
 Construct (creature type)..... 121
 Contacts (feat)..... 45
 Conviction..... 11, 24–26
 Conviction, Caliphate Nights..... 156

Convincing (feat).....	26
Corsair Savvy (feat).....	152
Coup de Grace.....	104
Cover.....	103
Craft (skill).....	32
Criminal Gear.....	78
Crippling Strike (feat).....	45
critical hit.....	11
Critical Hits, Mecha.....	194
Critical Strike (feat).....	45
Crossbow.....	83
Crowbar.....	76
Crucible.....	165
Crypt Wight.....	133
Cure (power).....	59
Cure Blindness/Deafness (power).....	60
Cure Disease (power).....	60
Cure Poison (power).....	60
Cutters.....	87
Cybernetics.....	182
Cybernetic Modification (feat).....	182

D

d20.....	11
Daiba Fortification.....	192
Damage.....	11, 106–110
<i>Collateral</i>	107
<i>Lethal</i>	107
<i>Non Lethal</i>	106
damage.....	11
Damage Bonus.....	95
damage bonus.....	11
Damage Reduction (creature trait).....	128
Damage Track.....	106
Darkness.....	110
Darkvision (creature trait).....	129
Dazed.....	107, 108
Dead.....	107, 108
Deafened.....	108
Debilitated.....	108
Dedicated (feat).....	45
Deer.....	134
Deer, Magic.....	134
Defense.....	11
Defense Bonus.....	95
Defensive Attack (feat).....	45
Defensive Roll (feat).....	45
Defensive Stance.....	103
Deflect Arrows (feat).....	45
Dehydration.....	112
Delay (action).....	99
Demoralize (action).....	99
Dependent (creature trait).....	129
Destroyers.....	87
Dexterity.....	14
Diehard (feat).....	45
Die Rolls.....	7
Difficulties.....	114
Difficulty.....	7, 12
Digital Audio Recorder.....	78
Diplomacy (skill).....	33, 92
Diplomatic (feat).....	26
Disabled.....	107, 108
Disable Device (skill).....	33
Disarm (action).....	99
Disease (creature trait).....	129
Disguise (skill).....	33
Dishonest Law (feat).....	152

Djinni.....	160–161
Djinni Summoning (power).....	155
dodge bonus.....	12
Dodge Focus (feat).....	45
Dog.....	134
Dominate (power).....	60
Donkey.....	80
Double Strike (creature feat).....	127
Dragon, Mountain.....	134
Dragon (creature type).....	121
Drain Vitality (power).....	60
Draugmorre.....	167–168
<i>Background</i>	182
Drive (skill).....	34
Drop an Item (action).....	99
Drop Prone (action).....	99
Dwarf.....	17
Dying.....	107, 108
dying.....	12
Dynamite.....	84

E

E'lanari.....	168
E'lan System.....	173
Earth (creature subtype).....	124
Earth Shaping (power).....	60
Eddy (feat).....	204
Eidetic Memory (feat).....	45
Electronics.....	78
Elemental (creature type).....	121
Elemental Aura (power).....	61
Elemental Blast (power).....	61
Elemental Resistance (power).....	61
Elemental Weapon (power).....	61
Elf.....	17
Elusive Target (feat).....	45
Empower (feat).....	45
Endurance (feat).....	45
Energy Shaping (power).....	61
Enhanced Movement (feat).....	181
Enhance Ability (power).....	62
Enhance Other (power).....	62
Enhance Senses (power).....	62
Entangled.....	108
Equipment, Lux Aeternum.....	177–180
Erase Signature (feat).....	45
Escape Artist (skill).....	34
Etiquette (feat).....	152
Evasion (feat).....	45
Evasive Action (feat).....	187
Excellence (feat).....	26
Exhausted.....	108
Exotic Weapon Training (feat).....	45
Expert.....	20
Explosives.....	84
Extraordinary Ability (feat).....	182
Extra Effort.....	91
Extra Inning.....	209
Eye for Treachery (feat).....	153

F

Falling.....	111
Falling Objects.....	111
Familiarity.....	55
Familiar (feat).....	46
Far Shot (feat).....	46
Fascinated.....	109
Fascinate (feat).....	46

Fast-Talk.....	92
Fast Healing (creature trait).....	129
Fatigue.....	108
Fatigued.....	108, 109
Favored Opponent (feat).....	46
Fear (creature trait).....	129
Feats.....	6, 42–52
<i>Prerequisites</i>	42
<i>Types</i>	42
Feats, Borrowed Time.....	203–208
Feats, Caliphate Nights.....	151–155
Feats, Lux Aeternum.....	181
Feats, Mecha.....	187–189
Feats, Mecha Vs. Kaiju.....	187–189
Feats, Structural.....	181
Feats, Temporal.....	203
Feed.....	80
Feint (action).....	99
Fey (creature type).....	122
Fighting.....	94–106
Finesse Attack.....	103
Fire.....	112
Firearms Training (feat).....	46
Fire (creature subtype).....	124
Fire Extinguisher.....	79
Fire Shaping (power).....	62
Flame-thrower.....	83
Flashlight.....	79
Flash Goggles.....	79
Flat-Footed.....	96, 109
flat-footed.....	12
Flesh Shaping (power).....	62
Flight (creature trait).....	129
Flight Systems, Mecha.....	192
Fly.....	126
Free Action.....	97
free action.....	12
Frightened.....	109
Frightful Presence (creature trait).....	129
full-round action.....	12
Full Action.....	97
Full plate.....	85

G

Galleon.....	86
Galley.....	86
Gasshiri Armor.....	191
Gas Mask.....	79
Gather Information (skill).....	35, 93
Gazer Weapons.....	190
Gaze (creature trait).....	129
Gender.....	23
Genetics.....	182
Ghost.....	135
Ghost Touch (power).....	63
Giant (creature subtype).....	124
Gnome.....	17
Goblin.....	135
GPS Receiver.....	79
Grappled.....	109
Grapple (action).....	99
Grappling Finesse (feat).....	47
Grappling Hook.....	78
Greater Attack Focus (feat).....	47
Greater Attack Specialization (feat).....	47
Great Cleave (feat).....	47
Great Fortitude (feat).....	47
Grenade, Flash-bang.....	84

Grenade, Fragmentation	84
Grenade, Sleep gas	84
Grenade, Smoke	84
Grenade, Tear gas	84
Grenades	84
Grenade launcher	83
Grooming (feat)	153

H

Haggling	92
Hair Trigger (feat)	187
Half-Elf	17
Half-Orc	17
Halfling	17
Hammer	78
Hampered Movement	90
Handcuffs	78
Handle Animal (skill)	35
Harm (power)	63
Harpy	136
Hastening Between (feat)	205
Hawk	136
Heart Reading (power)	63
Heart Shaping (power)	63
Heat	112
helicopters	88
Helpless	109
Helpless Defenders	104
Henri Vientille	208
hero	12
Herodian Brotherhood	209
Hide in Plain Sight (feat)	47
Honest Law (feat)	153
Horse	80, 136
Horse Savvy (feat)	153
House Medici	176
Hover (creature feat)	127
Human	16
Humanoid	122
Hurt	109

I

Ice	110
Illusion (power)	63
Imbue Item (feat)	47
Imbue Life (power)	64
Imbue Unlife (power)	64
Immunity (creature trait)	129
Improved Between Moments (feat)	205
Improved Combat Calm (feat)	205
Improved Concentration Between (feat)	205
Improved Critical (feat)	47
Improved Defense (feat)	47
Improved Disarm (feat)	47
Improved Evasion (feat)	47
Improved Evasive Action (feat)	187
Improved Grab (feat)	47
Improved Hastening Between (feat)	205
Improved Initiative (feat)	47
Improved Longevity (feat)	181
Improved Natural Ability (feat)	182
Improved Pin (feat)	47
Improved Precise Shot (feat)	47
Improved Quick Eyes (feat)	205
Improved Quick Mind (feat)	205
Improved Ranged Disarm (feat)	47
Improved Soul on Fire (feat)	205
Improved Soul on Ice (feat)	206

Improved Speed (feat)	47
Improved Stealing Moments (feat)	206
Improved Strike (feat)	47
Improved Sunder (feat)	47
Improved Temporal Calm (feat)	206
Improved Throw (feat)	47
Improved Trip (feat)	47
Improved Vortex (feat)	206
Improvised Tools (feat)	47
Incorporeal	109
Incorporeal (creature subtype)	124
Influence	92
Influential (feat)	26
Informed Citizen (feat)	153
Initiative	96
initiative	12
Inspire (feat)	47
Intelligence	14, 15
Interrogation	93
Intimidate (skill)	35, 93
Invisible	109
Iron Will (feat)	48
Issue Challenge (feat)	153

J

Jack-of-All-Trades (feat)	48
Javelin	83
Jet-assist Wings	192
Jetpack	192
jets	88
Joubatai Gazer Emitter	190
Jump (skill)	36
Jump Jets	192

K

Kaiju	195–196
Kaiju, Flying	195
Kaiju, Gargantua	196
Kaiju, Original	196
Kami	198
Kamodon	136
Kantsu Combat Pike	190
Karorak Trade Unions	176
Knife	81
Knowledge (skill)	36
Kommeto Autogazer	190
Kor'Diel	170
Koutetsu Armor	191
Kurohyou Claws	190
Kyryk	169
<i>Background</i>	182

L

Language (skill)	37
Lantern, Bullseye	78
Lantern, Hooded	78
Laser Sight	84
Leadership (feat)	48
Leather	85
Leather jacket	85
lethal damage	12
Level Advancement	22
Lifting (feat)	187
Lightning Reflexes (feat)	49
Light Sensitivity (creature trait)	129
Light Shaping (power)	64
Light Sleeper (feat)	48
Lock release gun	78

Low Profile (feat)	49
Lt. Jasmine Kasuragi	200
Lucky (feat)	49
Lux Aeternum	163–182

M

Maelstrom, the	174
Manipulate Object (action)	100
Manipulate Object (power)	65
Maria Vanucce	211
Martha Vinh	210
Mass Suggestion (feat)	49
Masterwork Items	76
Master Plan (feat)	49
Master Storyteller (feat)	153
Mecha	189–194
Mecha Assault Force	197
Mecha Crush (feat)	187
Mecha Feint (feat)	188
Mecha Fling (feat)	188
Mecha Focus (feat)	188
Mecha Operation (feat)	188
Mecha Specialization (feat)	188
Mecha Sweep (feat)	188
Mecha Trample (feat)	188
Mecha vs. Kaiju	183–200
Mecha Weapons Boost (feat)	188
Mecha Weapons Training (feat)	188
Medicine (skill)	37
melee attack	12
melee weapon	12
Menacing (feat)	26
Mental Contact	56
Mental Grapple (action)	100
Merciful Combatant (feat)	153
Microphone, Concealable	78
Microphone, Parabolic	79
Military Rank (feat)	153
Millennium Club	210
Mimicry (creature trait)	130
Mind Over Body (feat)	49
Mind Probe (power)	65
Mind Reading (power)	65
Mind Shaping (power)	65
Mind Touch (power)	66
Mini-Tracer	79
Minions	104
Ministry of Standardization	211
Mixed-Role Heroes	22
Moderuichi Sensor System	192
Moderuni Sensor System	193
Moderusan Sensory System	193
Moderushi Sensor System	193
modifier	12
Monstrous Humanoid (creature type)	122
Mosquito, Giant	137
Mounted Combat	105
Mounts	80
Move-by Action (feat)	49
Movement, Mecha	194
Move (action)	100
Move Action	97
move action	12
Move All Out (action)	100
Move Object (power)	66
Moving	90
Mule	80
Multi-tool	79

N		
Name.....	23	
Narrator.....	12	
Narrator character.....	12	
Native (creature subtype).....	125	
natural.....	12	
Natural Armor (feat).....	181	
Natural Attack (feat).....	181	
Natural Flyer (feat).....	181	
Nature.....	24	
Nature Reading (power).....	66	
Nauseated.....	109	
Navigation (feat).....	154	
Negotiation.....	93	
Night Vision (feat).....	49	
Night Vision Goggles.....	79	
non-lethal damage.....	12	
Normal.....	110	
Notice (skill).....	37	
Nunchaku.....	82	
Nuwokou Ronin.....	176	
O		
Object Reading (power).....	67	
Odoshi Armor.....	191	
OGRE.....	197	
Ogre.....	137	
OGRE Ninjas.....	200	
Ooze (creature type).....	123	
Opposed Checks.....	116	
Orakuru Targeting System.....	193	
Orc.....	137	
Outsider (creature type).....	123	
Overrun (action).....	100	
Overrun (feat).....	49	
P		
Pace.....	90	
Pain (power).....	67	
Panicked.....	110	
Paralysis (creature trait).....	130	
Paralyzed.....	110	
PDA.....	78	
penalty.....	12	
Pepper spray.....	81	
percent chance.....	12	
Perform (skill).....	38, 94	
Personality.....	23	
Persuasion.....	93	
Petrification (creature trait).....	130	
Phase (power).....	67	
Philip Blassingwaithe.....	210	
Physical Actions.....	90–91	
Pilot (skill).....	38	
Pinned.....	110	
Pistol, Heavy.....	82	
Pistol, Holdout.....	82	
Pistol, Light.....	82	
Pistol, Machine.....	82	
Plane Shift (power).....	67	
Plant (creature type).....	123	
Plant Shaping (power).....	68	
Plastic explosive.....	84	
Plate-mail.....	85	
Plausible Deniability (feat).....	154	
Point Blank Shot (feat).....	49	
Poison (creature trait).....	130	
Pony.....	80	
Pounce (creature trait).....	130	
power.....	12	
Powerful Charge (creature trait).....	130	
Powers.....	54–72	
<i>Concentration</i>	56	
<i>Fatigue</i>	56	
<i>Maintaining</i>	56	
<i>Multiple Subjects</i>	56	
<i>Using</i>	54	
Powers, Caliphate Nights.....	155	
Powers (creature trait).....	130	
Precise Shot (feat).....	49	
Privateers.....	176	
Prone.....	110	
Prone Fighting (feat).....	49	
Psychic Blast (power).....	68	
Psychic Reflection (power).....	68	
Psychic Shield (power).....	68	
Psychic Trap (power).....	68	
Psychic Weapon (power).....	68	
Puppeteer (feat).....	181	
Pyrrius System.....	173	
Q		
Quarterstaff.....	81	
Quicken Power (feat).....	49	
Quick Draw (feat).....	49	
Quick Eyes (feat).....	206	
Quick Mind (feat).....	206	
Quotable Wit (feat).....	154	
R		
Rage (feat).....	49	
Rake (creature trait).....	130	
Rakurai Shock Rod.....	191	
ranged attack.....	12	
Ranged Pin (feat).....	50	
ranged weapon.....	12	
range increment.....	12	
rank.....	12	
Ranthalion Cartel.....	176	
Rat.....	137	
Rat, Dire.....	138	
Ray (creature trait).....	130	
Reaction.....	97	
Ready (action).....	100	
Rebreather.....	79	
Recovery.....	107, 108	
Recover (action).....	101	
Redirect (feat).....	50	
Red Harvest.....	212	
Regeneration (creature trait).....	130	
Renda Chaingun.....	191	
Renown (feat).....	26	
Reptilian (creature subtype).....	125	
Reputation.....	26	
Resistance to Energy (creature trait).....	130	
Restricted Items.....	76	
Ride (skill).....	38	
Rocket launcher.....	83	
Role.....	6	
Roles.....	17–23	
Roles, Mecha vs. Kaiju.....	185–186	
Rope, Hempen.....	78	
Rope, Silk.....	78	
round.....	12	
Rowboat.....	86	
Run (feat).....	50	
Rush (action).....	101	
S		
Saddle, Military.....	80	
Saddle, Pack.....	80	
Saddle, Riding.....	80	
Safe Passage (feat).....	154	
Sap.....	81	
Sapient (feat).....	181	
saving throw.....	12	
Saving Throws.....	10, 95	
scene.....	12	
Scent (creature trait).....	130	
Scrying (power).....	69	
SCUBA Gear.....	79	
Search (skill).....	38	
Second Chance (feat).....	50	
Second Sight (power).....	69	
Seduction.....	92	
Seize Initiative (feat).....	50	
Self-Shaping (power).....	69	
Sennyojin Power Armor.....	189	
Sense Minds (power).....	70	
Sense Motive (skill).....	39, 94	
Sensitivity (creature trait).....	130	
Sensor Systems, Mecha.....	192–193	
series.....	12	
Set-up (feat).....	50	
Severance (power).....	70	
Shaken.....	110	
Shapechanger (creature subtype).....	125	
Shark.....	138	
Shi-Rudo Shield.....	192	
Shields.....	86	
Shield Penetration (feat).....	50	
Shield Training (feat).....	50	
Shintaku Defense Suite.....	192	
Shinto.....	198	
Shotgun.....	83	
Shuriken.....	83	
Sickened.....	110	
Silvered.....	84	
Size Class (feat).....	181	
Skeleton.....	138	
Skills.....	6, 28–40	
<i>Acquiring</i>	28	
<i>Improving</i>	28	
<i>Specialty</i>	28	
<i>Untrained</i>	28	
Skill Focus (feat).....	50	
Skill Mastery (feat).....	50	
Skill Training (feat).....	50	
Sleep (power).....	70	
Sleight of Hand (skill).....	39	
Slowed.....	110	
Slow Fall (feat).....	50	
Smite Opponent (feat).....	50	
Smoke.....	112	
Snake, Constrictor.....	138	
Snake, Viper.....	138	
Snatch (creature feat).....	127	
Snatch Arrows (feat).....	50	
Sneak Attack (feat).....	50	
Sniper rifle.....	83	
Social Actions.....	92–94	
Soul on Fire (feat).....	206	
Soul on Ice (feat).....	207	

Space battleships	88
Space cruisers	88
Space fighters	88
Speak (action).....	101
Spear	81
Spirited Charge (feat).....	51
Spyglass	78
Stable	110
stack	12
Staggered	107, 110
Standard Action	97
standard action	12
Stand Up (action).....	101
Starships	178–179
Startle (action)	101
Startle (feat)	51
Starvation	112
Stealing Moments (feat)	207
Stealth (skill)	40
Strength	14
Studded leather	85
Stunned	110
Stunning Attack (feat)	51
Stun Ammo	84
Stun gun	81
Stun Mecha (feat).....	189
Submachine gun	83
Submarines	87
Subtle Power (feat).....	51
Suffocation	112
Suggestion (feat)	51
Suggestion (power)	70
Summon (creature trait).....	131
Sundering	105
Supernatural Beast (creature type)	123
Supernatural Focus (feat)	51
Supernatural Immunity (creature trait) ..	130
Supernatural Resistance (creature trait) ..	131
Supernatural Speed (power)	70
Supernatural Strike (power)	70
Supernatural Talent (feat)	51
Supernatural Weapon (power)	71
Suppressor	84
Surprise	96
Surprise Attacks	106
Surveillance Gear	78
Survival (skill)	40
Survival Gear	79
Swallow Whole (creature trait).....	131
Swarm, Killer Bee	138
Swarm (creature subtype).....	125
Swim	126
Swim (skill)	40
Sword	81
Synchronization (feat)	207
Synthetics	167
<i>Background</i>	181

T

Tactical vest	85
Taking 1	8
Taking 10	8
Taking 20	8
Taking 5	8
Talented (feat)	51
Tank	86
Tanner Jeffston III	209
target	12

Targeting Scope	84
Taser.....	84
Taunt (action).....	101
Taunt (feat).....	51
Teleport (power).....	71
Temporal Calm (feat)	207
Temporal Rigidity (feat).....	207
Terranovan Merchant Guilds	176
Tetsujin Heavy.....	190
Tetsujin Light	190
threat	12
threat range	12
Throwing.....	91
Thruster Blast (feat)	189
Thruster System	192
Tireless (feat).....	51
Tonfa	81
Tonshu Archipelago	174
Toolkits	79
Tools.....	8
Tora Claws	191
Torch	78
Total Defense (action).....	101
Tough (feat)	51
Toushi Sensor Suite.....	193
Trackless (feat)	52
Track (feat)	51
Trailblazer (feat).....	52
trained	12
trait	12
Trample (creature trait)	131
Tremorsense (creature trait)	131
Trinity.....	174
Trip	101
True Faith (feat)	154
True Seeing (power)	155
Truth-Reading (power)	71
Trying Again	7
Tsume Missile Launcher	191
Tsunami Gazer Cannon	191
Two-Weapon Defense (feat)	52
Two-Weapon Fighting	106
Two-Weapon Fighting (feat)	52
Tyrin's Veil	174
Tyrin Corsairs.....	176

U

unarmed attack	12
Unbalance Opponent (feat).....	187
Uncanny Dodge (feat)	52
Unconscious	107
Unconscious	110
Undead (creature type)	124
Undercover shirt	85
Undercover vest	85
Unity System	172
Universal Appeal (feat)	154
untrained	12
Usagi Speed Enhancement	194

V

V'la.....	169–170
<i>Background</i>	182
Vampire.....	139
Vehicles	86–88
<i>Air</i>	88
<i>Ground</i>	86
<i>Space</i>	88

<i>Water</i>	86–87
Vehicles, Lux Aeternum	177
Vehicular Combat (feat).....	52
Vermin (creature type).....	124
Vice (creature subtype).....	126
Video Camera	78
Virtue (creature subtype)	126
Visions (power)	71
Vortex (feat)	208
Vulnerability to Energy (creature trait) ..	131

W

Wagon	86
Ward (power).....	71
Warhammer.....	82
Warrior	21
Water	112
Water (creature subtype)	126
Water Shaping (power)	71
Wealth.....	74–76
<i>Gaining</i>	75
<i>Losing</i>	74
Wealthy (feat)	52
Wealth Check.....	74
Wealth Score.....	74
Weapons	80–84
<i>Accessories</i>	84
<i>Melee</i>	80–82
<i>Ranged</i>	82–84
<i>Supernatural</i>	88
Weapons, Lux Aeternum	177–178
Weapons, Mecha	190
Weapon Bind (feat)	52
Weapon Break (feat)	52
Weapon Training (feat).....	52
Weather Shaping (power)	72
Well-Informed (feat)	52
Whip	82
Widen Power (feat)	52
Winded	108, 110
Wind Finesse (feat)	154
Wind Shaping (power)	72
Wind Walk (power)	72
Wingover (creature feat).....	127
Wisdom.....	14, 15
Wish Granting	161–162
Wolf.....	140
Wounded.....	107, 110

X

Xyr.....	165, 170
----------	----------

Y

Yamajin	190
Youma Neural Link.....	194

Z

Zombie.....	140
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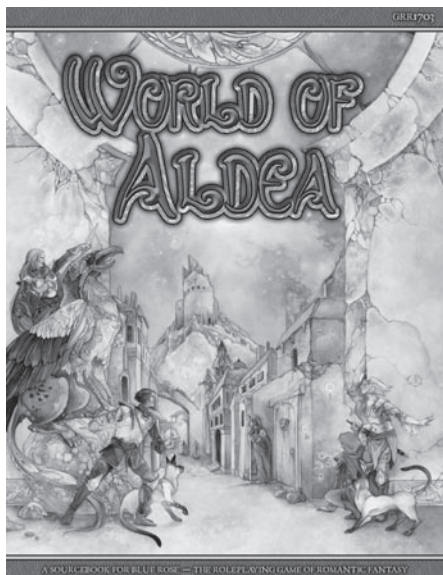
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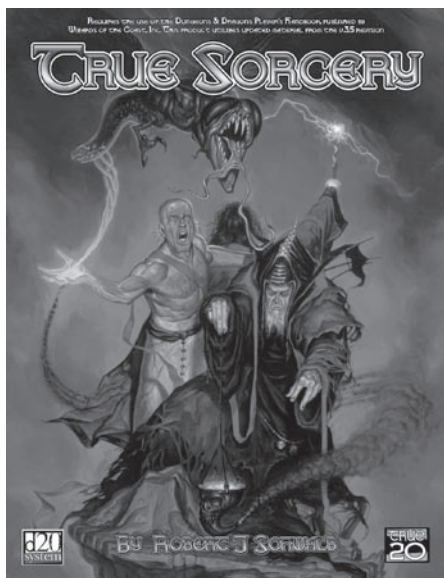
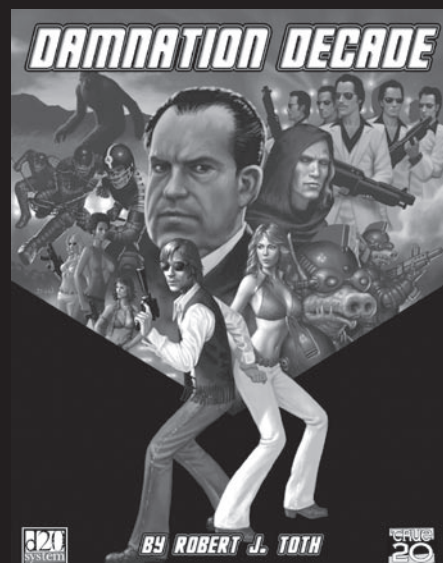
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