Revised Combat System for MWP's *Serenity RPG*
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Basics

Types of Actions: There are three broad types of Actions characters can make. These are Basic Actions, Movement Actions, and Reactions. Basic Actions (BAS) represent everything the character does with his hands and most of his attention: shooting, hacking, throwing, stabbing, lifting, etc. Movement Actions (MOV) represent just that—movement. Walking, running, jumping, and (very importantly) Dodging are all Movement Actions. Reactions (REA) represent things that are automatic, or at least nearly so, and don't cost an Action when used—for example, Innate Defense, Second Wind, Get out of Harm's Way, shouting a warning, and similar things count as Reactions, and can be performed whenever it would make sense to do so. Occasionally, special circumstances may grant the ability to make attacks or other actions as REA instead of BAS or MOV.

Initiative: When the first combat round begins, characters roll Agility + Alertness to determine their order of initiative. If one side was surprised, they still roll Initiative, but cannot make any Actions except Reactions (no Dodging, running, etc), until the second round, when they act normally.
The same Initiative order is kept throughout the combat, and generally does not change. However, at the beginning of every round, all characters have the opportunity to spend one Plot Point to reroll their Initiative for the remainder of the combat. Once the new roll is made, the character uses the highest of their old Initiative or the reroll.
This can only be done *between* combat rounds, and only once per combat round, but each new round gives all players another opportunity to spend a PP and reroll, hoping for a better Initiative. Characters with **Things Go Smooth** can use their reroll(s) from that Asset on Initiative rolls, and can even use it to reroll after several rounds of combat for free, instead of spending a PP.

Declaration & Resolution: The character with the highest Initiative goes first, declaring their Action(s), rolling their dice, and determining their success or failure. As a basic rule, **every character can make 1 Basic Action and 1 Movement Action each turn without receiving a penalty** (see Multiple Actions, below, for details). Characters cannot normally act before their Initiative, except as a Reaction; if they want to pre-empt their Initiative number to perform an Action, see Bought Actions, below.

Optional Cycled Resolution: If you want to spend the extra time, you can make combat a little more 'realistic' and intense by delaying the resolution of Actions that can't be performed literally *at the same time*. For example, a character could declare that they Hustle across a room (1 MOV) and draw their gun (1 BAS), and then fire out the window at a bandit (1 BAS). This goes through the normal process, giving them -2 Skill Steps to all rolls as a penalty for Multiple Actions (see below), but instead of having them perform all of these Actions at once and then moving on to the next character, they would only be able to move and draw on their Initiative. Since firing their gun would have to happen *after* they draw it and move to the window, they would actually fire on the *next* Initiative number—so if they'd rolled 11 for Initiative, they would be firing their gun on Initiative 10, giving other characters a chance to act, or to interrupt their sequence of Actions, making it beneficial to have an Initiative roll that isn't just 1 point higher than the bad guys'. It is also possible to implement this alternative system for highly dramatic moments, or extremely important rounds (like the quick-draw contest of an Old West style pistol duel), if you feel that using it all the time would bog down combat too much.

Held Actions: If the character wishes to wait before acting, they may declare that they are Holding their Action(s), and jump in later to act when appropriate, rolling and resolving at that time—though they must declare all Actions when their Initiative comes up. If they Hold until the end of the round, they must either act then or lose their action for the round.

If they do not declare a Held Action, and still wish to make one later in the round (for example, when someone shoots at them), they must Buy the Action (see Bought Actions, below) or go without—they cannot later declare additional actions.

Once declared, a Held Action can be 'activated' at any time appropriate for that action. That is why any Held Actions must be declared at the same time as normal Actions: they both count for and suffer the penalties of multiple Actions (see below) for the round. This also represents some of the chaos of combat; while you can choose *not* to act instead of doing what you had planned, switching actions takes a few seconds—you cannot simply wait until a later time to declare your actions, since things are happening so quickly.

Multiple Actions: Additional declared BAS and MOV impose a cumulative -1 Step Skill penalty on all declared Actions the character makes in that round, on a one-for-one basis. For example, if the character shoots at someone twice and also makes a Dodge (Two BAS and one MOV), they receive a -1 Skill Step penalty to both Agility + Guns/Pistol rolls and the Agility + Athletics/Dodge roll, since the extra shot counts as a second BAS. Should they have also wanted to run across the room (another 2 MOV), that would be a total of 3 extra Actions (1 extra BAS and 2 extra MOV), giving them a -3 Skill Step penalty on all the rolls for those Actions.

When a player wishes to take multiple Actions, they must declare and resolve them normally: *all* Actions are declared first, including any Held Actions, in order to calculate the Skill Step penalty they will impose upon the rolls. Then all normal Actions are resolved, and the next person in the Initiative order takes their turn.

Since taking multiple Actions requires more concentration that performing a single task, characters who are taking a Skill Step penalty from multiple Actions cannot perform *any* Action that would have its Skill die reduced to less than a d2 by that penalty. Additionally, any action that would normally require a Skill that the character doesn't even have at d2 cannot be attempted when they are taking a multiple Action Skill Step penalty.

The maximum number of Actions the character can take in a three-second combat round depends on the type of Actions, even if the penalties don't stop them earlier:

BAS: Lower of Agility or Intelligence Step (d6= Step 3, d8= Step 4, etc)

MOV: Lower of Agility or Strength Step

REA: As many as necessary; however, the GM may declare certain things (shouting a bunch of different things, rolling Innate Defense against attacks from 20 different people) cannot be done.

Bought Actions: If the player doesn't have the Held Action they need, or has not yet been reached in the Initiative order, they may Buy additional Actions with Plot Points. Their first Bought Action in the round costs 1 PP; each additional Bought Action costs 1 more than the previous: the second costs 2 PP, the third costs 3, and the fourth costs 4—so no character can buy more than 4 Actions at any given time, since buying a fifth in one round would cost a total of 15 (1+2+3+4+5) PP, and no character can have more than 12 PP at once. The exception to this would be through use of the Leadership Asset, which allows one character to spend PP on other characters' rolls; in addition, it allows them to spend those PP to Buy Actions for other characters, as long as they could normally spend them for that character at all (see the Leadership description for details). When Buying Actions for another character using the Leadership Asset, you must spend PP based on the number of Bought Actions *they* have already taken this round—which does not affect the cost of Bought Actions for yourself and which *does* increase the cost for any further Bought Actions for them, regardless of who Buys them.

Bought Actions do not increase the Skill Step penalty imposed by taking multiple Actions, nor do they suffer from any such penalty already incurred by declaring multiple Actions, and they can be used to make more Actions than the character is allowed to declare based on their Attributes (See Multiple Actions above). However, there is one major restriction on how they may be used: **Bought Actions *cannot* be used to make an attack** of any kind—the GM may have to decide in certain situations what counts as an attack, but they should include shooting, punching, stabbing, kicking, or throwing a grenade. Despite this, Actions that are merely combat related should be allowed; these can add greatly to the possibilities for drama and roleplaying (tossing someone their gun at a critical moment, etc).

Movement: Walking at base movement, which is 15 feet, takes no MOV. 'Hustling' goes a bit faster, taking 1 MOV and doubling base movement. Running is full-out, taking 2 MOV and giving you (Base x 2) + (Attribute +Athletics/Running roll) feet in movement. (Same as Core Book, reprinted for reference).

Defense

Innate Defense: At close range, a character who is unconscious or completely and utterly unmoving is considered to be automatically hit with the full force of the roll + damage, as long as *nothing* can interfere with the attack. However, other than that, most characters have a base Difficulty of 3 as their defense, even if they are unaware of the attack, as long as they are moving at least a little or the range is a factor, or if the attacker is distracted. If the target is aware of the attack, or if they are moving erratically, they can make a reactionary Innate Defense roll, rolling their Agility die by itself (or with a PP bonus). This Innate Defense roll cannot Botch, but it can also yield a result lower than the base of 3—in which case they accidently moved in the wrong

way. Ouch! However, this is a Reaction, so it can be used at any time.

Blocking: Costs 1 BAS. Blocking, or parrying, is an attempt to intercept your opponent's attack with a limb, object, weapon or shield. Roll Agility + Skill/Specialty (with a weapon or unarmed) or Melee Combat/Shield (using an appropriate shield or similar, which may add a bonus to the roll of +1 to +4 Skill Steps). If your roll is equal to or higher than the attack, you deflect the blow. However, note that while you *can* Block a weapon while unarmed, you will suffer damage (minus your Armor, if any) equal to the damage die the weapon would have inflicted on a hit. That's usually better than getting actually stabbed, but catching a knife on the arm will still hurt.

If a Block is not successful, the base damage of the hit is equal to the attack roll - the Block roll, so a partial Block will still reduce damage.

Blocking (parrying) is especially effective in combat with light swords or similar, which are popular in 'gentlemanly' duels. When you successfully parry a sword with a sword, you may 'riposte,' making an immediate attack with your sword which cannot be Dodged—though it can be Blocked and, in turn, riposted—**as a Reaction**, meaning that the riposte attack does not cost a BAS as a normal attack would (though the Block still costs 1 BAS, so Blocks must either be declared as Held Actions or Bought with PP, so they can be used after or before the character's Initiative). Ripostes cannot be Called Shots.

Blocking is *not* usually effective against guns or ranged weapons, though if the shield is sturdy enough, it can provide Cover (see below) against ranged and gun attacks.

Dodging: Costs 1 MOV. Dodging can be combined with other movements, such as walking and running, though they cost additional Movement Actions. If a character is Dodging during the round, they are moving quickly and erratically, trying to move behind cover, avoid line-of-sight from enemies, and so on, while doing whatever else it is they are doing. They roll Agility + Athletics/Dodge at the time they declare they are beginning to Dodge, usually during their Initiative (they cannot begin Dodging using a Held Action as a reaction to an attack declared against them; they would have to begin their Held Dodge between other characters' Initiative).

Once the character is Dodging, all attacks against them from that point on are opposed by the original Dodge roll: if the Dodge roll is equal to or higher than the attack roll, then the attack misses. If the attack roll is higher, base damage is equal to the attack roll - Dodge roll.

However, because it gets easier to hit the character as they continue the Dodge (their pattern of movement becomes more predictable as each successive attack forces them to move in a certain way), after each attack is resolved, reduce the Dodge roll by 1 point. For example, a character is Dodging and rolls a total of 12. A gunman takes two shots at him, and then someone punches him. The character opposes the first shot with his total of 12, and then the Dodge is reduced by 1; the second shot is opposed by a Dodge of 11, and the punch is opposed by a Dodge of 10.

Also note that Dodging assumes the character is more or less aware of their attackers, or at least the direction the attackers are assaulting from. If they are Dodging as a result of an attack, and are then assaulted by an attacker they had not perceived, their Dodge does not apply—though their movement may grant them an Innate Defense roll. For example, if a character is Dodging down a hallway in order to avoid a knife-wielding attacker chasing him, he

does not apply the Dodge roll against a shotgun blast from a woman in the room ahead whom he had been running to for help, assuming her to be friendly. However, since he is moving quickly, he does get to roll Innate Defense against the shotgun attack.

Optional Going Prone: If the GM allows, throwing yourself to the ground counts as a Reaction, costing no MOV (though it does mean that no further MOV actions can be taken that round, and then they have to either be crawling or getting up, making Dodging impossible). During that round, it counts as a normal Dodge at the full roll and *not* as being prone normally (see Cover, below); however, during following rounds, it causes the standard bonuses and penalties for being prone. This offers the benefit of sudden Dodges during surprise rounds, but can cause problems for the character during subsequent rounds of combat.

All-Out Defense: Declaring All-Out Defense means that the character is devoting all their attention to staying alive; they can take no Actions during the round except Dodging, Blocking, and other defensive measures. However, they gain +2 Skill Steps to all their defensive rolls until the end of the round. The exception to the 'only defensive measures' rule is that, when engaged in a sword duel, the character may *riposte* (see Blocking, above) while taking All-Out Defense.

Cover: Having Cover, or concealment, adds to the Difficulty of hitting the character (their Defense), depending upon how much of their body is concealed. Against full Autofire (see below) attacks, only apply ½ the Cover bonus. Also note that some objects, if permeable enough that the GM rules they don't count as Cover, may act as armor (see Protective Gear, below).

Light Cover: +4 Difficulty. Up to half the body is covered.
Medium Cover: +6 Difficulty. Up to 75% of the body is covered.
Heavy Cover: + 8 Difficulty. Up to 90% of the body is covered
Total Cover: +10 Difficulty or can't be hit. Body is totally covered. If a hit is possible for some reason, or might do damage anyway (against a huge shield that might still push back on the target), apply the +10 Difficulty.
Prone: Special. Lying on the ground, without much additional concealment.

Against Ranged: Being prone means that, while those within Point Blank range of the target have an easy shot (Difficulty 3 or Innate Defense) since Dodging is impossible, those further away have a harder time; at Short Range, it counts as Light Cover; at Medium Range, it counts as Medium Cover; at Long Range, it counts as Heavy Cover.

Against Melee or Unarmed: An enemy within melee range gets +2 Skill Steps to any attacks against a prone character, who cannot Dodge and may, depending upon the situation, be unable to block (GM's discretion).

Optional Cover and Explosions: Cover may, if the GM rules it applicably useful Cover, reduce damage from explosions.

Light: Remove 1 die of damage.
Medium Cover: Remove 2 dice of damage.
Heavy Cover: Remove 3 dice of damage.
Total Cover: Remove 4 dice of damage
Prone: Remove 3 dice of damage if nearby; take maximum damage but remove 1 die from explosion for everyone else if you are lying on top of a small explosive (GM determines what counts as 'small')

Protective Gear: Armor and other partially impermeable protection reduces damage to the lucky character wearing it; any damage suffered that the armor protects against (see the types of armor for specifics) is first reduced by the Armor Rating of the particular piece of gear in question, and any Wound AR not used by Wound damage then subtracts from Stun damage, if any. For example, a character is wearing a vest that has an Armor Rating of 4W. They are hit for 2W/3S damage. The vest absorbs both points of Wound damage first, and then 2 points of Stun damage. Unfortunately, that isn't quite everything, but the remaining 1 Stun damage isn't really much more than a bruise.

Called Shots (see below) to points on the body not covered by armor, and Exceptional Successes on attack rolls (7 or more points higher than the defense roll), ignore any armor that would otherwise be applied to the damage.

A character hiding behind something the GM rules does not count as Cover may, if fortunate, have the object count as impromptu armor.

Offense

Aim: Aiming at a target for an entire round (performing no MOV or BAS except aiming) reduces the Skill Step penalty of a single Called Shot the next round by up to 3 Steps, *OR* adds +2 Skill Steps to all attacks the aiming character makes against the chosen target the next round. This bonus does not apply to any attacks the aiming character makes against other targets.

All Out Attack: If all you want to do is kill some folk, you can choose All Out Attack for the round. This grants you a +2 Step Skill bonus to all attack Actions that round, but makes you unable to make any defensive Actions such as Dodging or Blocking, and does not allow you to go prone as a REA (see *Optional Going Prone*, above). You cannot even roll Innate Defense.

Range: Range affects only attacks with ranged weapons, except in that someone beyond the reach of a melee or unarmed attack can't be hit at all.

Point Blank: Within 10'. +1 Skill Step to the attack.

Short Range: 10' to First range increment. No modifier.

Medium Range: First range increment to Second range increment. -2 Skill Steps

Long Range: Second range increment to Third range increment. -4 Skill Steps

Called Shot: Targeting a specific point on a person's body, or a smaller area in general, is both harder and frequently more effective than just shooting for their center of mass and hoping to connect. Characters can choose to take a Skill Step penalty to their attack roll in order to produce special effects or a small amount of extra damage; the types of Called Shot are classified by their level of penalty, and the specific Called Shots here should be considered examples that can be used to gauge other possible choices. Note that certain weapons may be unable to make the attacks listed here, and may be able to make other ones not possible with most common armaments.

Minor Called Shot: -2 Steps to attack.

Limb: Target must make an Endurance test against the total damage dealt; if they fail, the limb is immobilized for five minutes (if the attack was Stun or Basic) or broken and useless until healed (if the attack was Wound).

Gut: If the attack was with a Stun or Basic weapon, +2 Steps to the damage die of the weapon, and target must make an Endurance test against the total damage dealt or be Stunned (unable to take BAS or MOV, but able to Buy Actions) for 1d4 rounds. If the attack was with a Wound weapon, +4 Steps to the damage die of the weapon.

Disarm with Melee: If the attacker is using their hands or a melee weapon, they can attack to disarm, sending their opponent's weapon flying (or double the penalty if they are attempting to grab the weapon for their own use). They attack against the target's normal Defense; if they succeed on the attack, they inflict a *maximum* of 1W and 1S, and either force their opponent to drop their weapon or gain control of it themselves.

Moderate Called Shot: -4 Steps to attack.

Vitals: +4 Steps to the damage die of the weapon, and the target is Stunned for 1d6 rounds.

Head: If the attack was with a Stun or Basic damage weapon, the target must make an Endurance test against the total damage dealt or be knocked unconscious for 1d6 minutes + 1 minute per point of damage; if they Botch the Endurance test, they die instead, and if they succeed, they are instead Stunned for 1 round. If the attack was with a Wound damage weapon, +6 Steps to the damage die of the weapon.

Disarm with Ranged: Same as *Disarm with Melee*, but the attack cannot be made to gain control of the target weapon.

Major Called Shot: -6 Steps to attack.

Throat: If the attack was with a Stun weapon, the target must make an Endurance test against the total damage dealt or be stunned and choking; each round, they must make an Average (7) Endurance roll. If they Botch, they suffer d6 Basic damage. If they fail, they suffer d4 Stun damage If they succeed, they suffer d2 Stun damage and are no longer choking; if they get an Extraordinary Success, they suffer no damage and they are no longer choking. If the attack was with a Basic or Wound weapon, the target's throat is injured and bleeding; they suffer 1S each turn from blood loss until someone makes a Hard (11) First Aid roll to stop the bleeding, or they die.

Eyes: If the attack was with a weapon that would go through the eye and into the brain, the target must make an Endurance roll against the total damage dealt or die; if they succeed, they suffer an additional 8 Stun damage from the shock, and lose the use of that eye permanently, or until they receive major surgery (Extraordinary Success halves the additional damage). If the attack was with a weapon that wouldn't be able to go through the eye and into the target's brain, they suffer an additional 4 points of stun damage from the shock, and lose the use of the eye(s)—such an attack can hit both eyes if made with an appropriate weapon.

Heart: If the attack does less than 5 points of Wound damage, the heart itself was missed, but the target is hurt badly—other organs may be damaged, the heart may be endangered. The target is Bleeding internally, and takes d2W every 10 minutes, and every round they perform major activity, until they receive surgical treatment or die—unlike normal Bleeding, the character cannot be helped by First Aid. If the attack inflicts 5 or more points of Wound damage, the heart is hit, and the target dies.

Feint: You can attempt to distract your opponent in order to open them up for a real attack, if engaged in melee or hand-to-hand combat. The attacker rolls Intelligence + (the Skill/Specialty they are fighting with), and the defender gets an Alertness + Perception/Intuition

roll. If the attacker rolls higher, the defender can only use Innate Defense against their next attack; they cannot Dodge, Block or use similar Actions.

Grapple: As per the Core Book (p. 153-154), except that it is impossible to Dodge while maintaining a grapple; however, the grappled character may count as Cover at the GM's discretion.

Sneak Attack: When someone is unaware of their attacker or the attacker's hostile intent, they are usually an Easy target (gaining *only* a 3 for their Defense), unless they are moving around randomly and quickly enough to warrant an Innate Defense roll (possibly the case if they are engaged in combat with someone else). The real benefit of a Sneak Attack is the chance to make a Called Shot with a decent chance of success, to attack without resistance; if the opportunity allows, they need only spend a round Aiming (see above) to also get a bonus on the attack.

Thrown Weapons: As per the Core Book (p. 154), but the basic roll is Agility + Ranged Weapons. The distance you can throw a given weapon a number of feet equal to: your Strength die's maximum roll x 3, with that divided by the weapon's weight in pounds (rounding fractions up, with a minimum of 1).

Special Situations

Automatic Weapons: Many guns can fire more rapidly than one per trigger-pull.

Single Shot: The weapon fires one bullet, which requires one attack roll and counts as one BAS.

Burst: The weapon fires three bullets in a short burst against one target, using one attack roll. To represent the fact that burst fire makes it easier to do damage but harder to target specifically, Bursts cannot be Called Shots, but give a +1 Step bonus to the weapon's damage die. Also, an Extraordinary Success on the attack roll means that multiple bullets hit their mark well; roll an *extra* damage die, equal to the first, to add to the total for the attack. This counts as one BAS, and can be performed a maximum of twice per turn with one weapon.

Autofire: The weapon fires 1/3 of its clip in a large burst against 1 target. Autofire attacks cannot be Called Shots, and give a +3 Step bonus to the weapon's damage die. Also, If the hit was an Extraordinary Success, many bullets hit their mark: roll an *extra* damage die, equal to the first, to add to the total for the attack. This counts as 1 BAS, but performing an Autofire attack disallows any other BAS or MOV that round, and cannot be performed if you have already made a BAS or MOV previously; this means that the character cannot Dodge, Block, Run, or so on. They may move up to Walking distance, which requires no MOV, and they may use Innate Defense.

Autofire Spray: The weapon fires 1/3 of its clip in a large burst. You target a general area, about 5-10' wide, and spray it full of lead. Everyone in that area is in danger of being hit, and must Defend normally (those standing still are Easy targets, movement may allow Innate Defense rolls, they can Dodge if normally allowed, etc). Spray attacks cannot be Called Shots, but owing to the fact that they are not concentrating on one target the bonus to the damage die is reduced to +1 Step in exchange for the possibility of hitting multiple targets. Those who are hit take damage normally. If the attack roll is an Extraordinary Success against any

individual target(s)' Defense, assume they took multiple hits: they take an *extra* die of damage, equal to the first, to add to the total for the attack. Also, Cover only applies ½ of its normal bonus against Spray attacks. This counts as 1 BAS, but performing an Autofire attack disallows any other BAS or MOV that round, and cannot be performed if you have already made a BAS or MOV previously; this means that the character cannot Dodge, Block, Run, or so on. They may move up to Walking distance, which requires no MOV, and they may use Innate Defense. Plot Points may only be spent on attack rolls against a single target, so they may not be spent on Spray attacks.

Conditions: Characters may be affected by a variety of conditions that alter their effectiveness in combat or even at normal, everyday activities.

Bleeding: Bleeding characters take d2W every 10 minutes, and every round they perform major activity (if the Bleeding was inflicted by an Extraordinary Success), until they receive First Aid (difficulty 7, or 11 if the Bleeding was inflicted by an Extraordinary Success)

Drugged: Drugged characters may suffer a variety of problems, based upon the drug in question.

Drunk: Drunk characters suffer -2 Steps to all Attributes, and have 4 points of Stun damage that only disappears as they sober up.

Fatigued: Characters who have stayed awake longer than 24 hours suffer a cumulative -1 Step penalty to all Attributes for every additional 8 hours. After 48 hours, they must also make a Vitality + Willpower roll every 8 hours to avoid falling asleep; the first roll is of Average Difficulty, and increases by one Difficulty category each time. Owing to the fact that combat alertness causes exhausting adrenaline rushes and often involves strenuous activity, the GM may also wish to institute a rule that being actively involved in combat causes the equivalent of 8 hours of fatigue for every half hour.

Stimmed: Characters high on Stims, any one of a number of similar drugs, are at first highly alert. For six hours, the character experiences a state of heightened awareness, eliminating any penalties from being Fatigued (see above) and gaining a +1 Step bonus to Alertness. However, after six hours, the character returns to whatever Fatigued state they were in, suffering an additional -2 Step penalty to all Attributes, until they get at least 12 hours of rest or take another round of Stims. Each round of Stims they come down from before getting real rest causes the penalties to stack, and using them continuously for more than 12 hours can be extremely dangerous.

Stunned: Stunned characters cannot declare any BAS or MOV, but may Buy Actions normally.

Covering/Threatening: If you declare one or more Held Actions to be attacks on a certain person, area, or thing, you are *threatening* that target. If at any point you want to activate those actions (such as a person comes around the corner you are threatening, or the person you are targeting draws their gun), you can immediately act, even in the middle of someone else's Initiative. If you've been threatening that target as your primary Action (not performing other BAS) *for more than one round*, you are considered to have the Aiming bonus (see above) against them. Also, Threatening a person adds +2 Steps to all General Skill/Intimidation rolls against the target, or against anyone who cares about the target in a significant way.

Breaking Stuff, Explosions, Firing into a Crowd, Unarmed Combat: As per the Core

Book (p.154-155).

Flanking: Characters facing multiple opponents are, in addition to being targeted by more than one person, in more than usual danger owing to the fact that concentrating becomes more difficult. If the person is unaware of a character sneaking around to his side, or behind him, see Sneak Attack, above. If involved in combat against multiple opponents who he is actively engaging (making offensive or defensive actions against, including Dodging), he takes a -2 Step penalty to his Alertness on all Perception rolls.

Improvised Weapons: Normally, you can grab and use anything that comes to hand, using the most similar Melee Combat/Specialty you have, with a -1 to -3 Step Skill penalty. However, characters can use Unarmed Combat/Brawling instead, and never take more than a -1 Step Skill penalty. The advantage of using Improvised Weaponry is that it applies a damage die and does more than just Stun damage.

Obscured Vision: Smoke, fog and dim light can make it much harder to hit a target.
> *Dim Light, Thin smoke/fog*: -2 Step Skill penalty to all attacks or attempts to see things beyond 10' (except for Autofire).
> *Dark, Thick Smoke/Fog*: -4 Step Skill penalty to all attacks or attempts to see things beyond 10' (except for Autofire).
> *Pitch Black, Blinded*: When you can't see anything, you have to either give it up or rely on some other means to find a target. Make Alertness + Perception/Hearing (or other Sense) rolls for anyone who wants to attack someone under these conditions; they must get an Average success to target somebody shouting or making a lot of noise, a Hard success to target anyone talking or making a moderate amount of noise, a Heroic success to target someone not moving or making much noise, or a Ridiculous success to target someone making a Stealth roll (though in this case the roll must *also* be higher than the target's Stealth roll, so if they roll higher than a Ridiculous success, the attacker must also). If they succeed on these rolls, they can make a ranged attack with a -6 Skill Step penalty or a Melee or Unarmed attack (if in range) with a -4 Skill Step Penalty. However, ranged attacks with Autofire Spray work normally, as long as you're targeting the right direction—you need only make an Average success on your Alertness + Perception/Specialty roll or beat their Stealth roll, and if you do you have no penalty to the attack.

Unstable Terrain, Zero-Gravity: Same as Core Book (pgs. 155-156)